

ACM Newsletter

International Association of Customs



Editorial

It was fitting that the last General Assembly of the International Association of Customs Museums (IACM) for the millennium should take place in Scandinavia. It was in this northern region that the seedlings, from which IACM has grown, were planted ten years previously. From an initial contact between the Swedish and Danish Customs museums, the thriving organisation of IACM



has evolved to see representatives from fifteen countries participate in the 1999 General Assembly in Stockholm.

And what better venue than beautiful Stockholm? Poets have waxed lyrical about springtime in the Rockies, England in April and Sintra in summer but September in Stockholm is a real treat, particularly in the good company of IACM people. The General Assembly took place from September 15-17, 1999. It was organised by our Swedish colleagues who did everything possible to ensure not only a successful conference but a most memorable stay in their lovely country.

Indeed, there are few cities more suitable for a conference on preserving our past, than Stockholm. That lovely city which devoted so much energy to extricating the Vasa from its watery bed and then proceeded to lovingly preserve it down to the most minute detail, deserves the highest accolades. Perhaps the most admirable factor about raising and preserving the Vasa is that it actually highlights a historical disaster and a series of errors that led to her sinking in Stockholm Harbour within minutes of setting sail on her maiden voyage in August 1628.

While most countries tend to concentrate on successes of the past, is history not also about things that went wrong? The Vasa highlights something even more important - those in the highest authority who are unable or unwilling to take advice of others are not always correct in their decisions. One may read all the messages and morals that one wishes from the Vasa but the enterprising Swedes have done something wonderful with it. Take many bows Stockholm.

While preserving the past and its relics may be inherent in our Swedish neighbours, they are also excellent hosts with the ability to ensure that everything goes well. Each detail was carefully planned and the conference was very successful with many important decisions taken for the future well-being and strength of IACM. On behalf of all the delegates and their partners who attended the IACM General Assembly in Stockholm, I offer sincere thanks to our Swedish hosts, colleagues and all who contributed to its smooth running. You have left us all with the wish to return again to beautiful Stockholm. (I hope I do not have to wait for my Nobel Prize to see it again).

Sincere thanks to all who supplied the material for this Newsletter.

Paddy Ryan

International Association of Customs Museums

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Cover (front and back): views of Stockholm

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FROM THE TOP TABLE

Rickard Bengtsson's bird's-eye view of the Conference includes some summaries of the IACM General Assembly's sessions.

Detailed minutes have already been distributed to the relevant people.

The 7th IACM conference and General Assembly was remarkable in more ways than one. Ten years have passed since the first contacts were taken between the Swedish Head of the Customs Museum, *Mr. Jan Berggren*, and his Danish counterpart, *Mr. Holger Munchaus Petersen*. These contacts on co-operation in museum matters led to the foundation of the IACM. While this was the last conference of the millennium, it was also a first time for many delegates to visit Stockholm.

Twenty-four delegates from Customs museums in fourteen countries accepted the Swedish invitation to the conference. These were:

- Austria
- Belgium
- Denmark
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Hungary
- Ireland
- Italy
- Luxembourg

- Netherlands
- Norway
- Portugal
- UK.

Wives, husbands and partners accompanied several delegates. There was a total of forty-two people. The Swedish delegates were: *Mr. Jan Berggren* (the host) and myself - *Rickard Bengtsson* - who acted as the conference secretary.

On the evening of September 15, the delegates and partners assembled at the entrance hall of the Customs House (Warehouse). Immediately, we were steeped in the past as this building, dating from the 1780s, has seen many Customs officials, merchants and agents transact their business within its strong walls. After registration formalities, refreshments were

served. Friendships were renewed, absent friends recalled and the buzz of conversation filled the large hall as we looked forward to the next few days.

Mr. Jan Berggren, formally opening the conference, welcomed the party and gave some practical information about proceedings and locations. He also hinted at a surprise in store for the delegates later on that night. *Mr. Kjell Jansson*, Director General of Swedish Customs, followed with a warm welcome to all the delegates. Referring to the importance of this Stockholm Customs House in the history of Sweden and its economy, he wished the conference every success in its work.

Ms. Loes Peeperkorn-van Donselaar, President of IACM, thanked the Swedish hosts for the invitation and the Director General for his kind wishes. She expressed her firm conviction that the conference work would be no less successful than those of previous years. While the agenda of the General Assembly was studied



• Some of the IACM delegates



• Mr. Owe Landgren on the Stockholm waterfront



• Swedish host-team with IACM President, Loes Peeperkorn-van Donselaar

with important items, she was sure that they would all be dealt with efficiently.

After dinner in the restaurant of the Board of Customs, the delegates assembled in Jarntorget (Iron Square). Here, a guide took over for a tour through the Old Town. Her interesting information was very well received by the delegates who heard about such matters as the work of the architect, *Eric Palmstedt*, the Church of the old German Congregation and the German people who lived and traded in this area. In Stortorget (the Main Square), she pointed out the lovely Dutch-inspired 17th century architecture and told of a time when relations with neighbouring Denmark were not quite as cordial as today. The tour, pausing at the Old Stock Exchange, the Royal Castle and other places of interest, ended at the early 19th century obelisk on the top of the Castle Slope (Slottsbacken).

And then for the surprise, earlier hinted at by our host, *Mr. Jan Berggren*. This turned out to be a visit to the mediaeval cellar vaults of the Scottish Arms pub. Most delegates seemed quite at home here where a glass of beer or wine was served on the house. It was a perfect ending to a great day and the anticipation of a good conference ahead. Delegates and their partners seemed to have a good time. And when they left the Scottish Arms, there was another surprise in store. Their hotel was just a block away

The following morning, with heads as clear as the Swedish sky above, the General Assembly gathered for session in the lecture theatre of the Royal Coin Cabinet, near the Royal Castle. It was chaired by the President of IACM, Ms. Loes Peeperkorn-van Donselaar.

The main factor in the tragic sinking of the Vasa was that she was furnished with an extra gun-deck, making her too high and unsteady

Meanwhile, the partners were on a tour through the shopping areas of downtown Stockholm. The President, eulogized the first edition of our IACM Newsletter,



• The VASA

issued in co-operation between Hungary and Belgium. Extending warm welcomes to the Portuguese delegates, she regretted that our Czech and Russian colleagues could not be present. Regretting also the departure of former Norwegian delegate Mr. Arne Simenstad, she thanked him for his great work on the IACM logo clips and medals. Wishing him well in his new career, she heartily welcomed his successor to the Assembly - *Mr. Bernhard Hoiden*.

The important decisions made by the General Assembly this morning, included:

- An annual IACM membership fee of 80 euros (or its equivalent) to be paid by member States;
- Creation of an administrative secretary position, whose term will correspond with that of the President; and
- The Paris exhibition 'European Customs at Sea' to be held from September-November will be videoed or filmed in a manner to be decided by a temporarily formed committee.

After lunch at the Royal Coin Cabinet, the partners returned from their shopping tour and joined the delegates. The party then travelled by bus to the Vasa Museum. The Vasa is the best-preserved 17th century ship in the world. She sank

in 1628 on her maiden voyage in the central harbour of Stockholm, in front of thousands of people. About half of the crew were rescued and soon afterwards most of the guns were retrieved. The main factor in the tragic sinking of the Vasa was that she was furnished with an extra gun-deck, making her too high and unsteady. Also, the ballast was too small.

Splitting into two groups, the IACM party was given a guided tour around the huge Vasa, enormous and powerful in the times of the 17th century sailing-ships, now with the masts as almost the only restored parts.

The participants took delight in the beautiful archipelago landscape and the houses sparkling of carpentry happiness

The party admired the sculptures of the ship, mainly located astern, and walked between guns and exhibition cases where shoe-soles, cutlery and other items of the Vasa's crew, are displayed. A video in English with French subtitles, gave the group a good idea of the work involved in salvaging this unique piece of Swedish and European history.

From the Vasa Museum, the party proceeded to the harbour where the archipelago cruiser 'Sadeloga' was waiting to bring them on a three hour voyage through the Stockholm archipelago to the Customs museum at Dalaro. It was also proved that while we may be upholders of the law in our positions as Customs and Tax officials, we are not above the rigours of the law. Here at the harbour as the IACM party was about to embark the Customs Authority of Stockholm appeared in the person of *Mr. Owe Landgren*.

In the full 1856 regalia of a Water Guard Sergeant and, in honour of the day, he put some questions to members of the IACM party. These questions concerned their status and commission as Customs/Tax officials. It is good to report that all members passed with flying colours and were allowed to embark. *Mr. Owe Landgren's* role-play set the mood for a trip to the past. At this point the keynote speaker for that

evening, *Mr. Ulf Larsson*, former Director General joined the party along with *Mr. Inge Lindunger*, Regional Director of Customs in Stockholm as well as the Chairman of the Swedish Customs History Association.

The participants took delight in the beautiful archipelago landscape and the houses sparkling of carpentry happiness. It was a very pleasant afternoon with the sun shining on the white, red and yellow buildings dotted throughout the archipelago and the placid water of the harbour reflecting the trees in their changing colours.

All of this was made even more pleasant with an exquisite tawny

group about the dangers of Custom's Officials over indulging in alcohol. Thinking of our daring Portuguese colleague, we were grateful that his contraband had been consumed on board the vessel!

Following the museum tour, a real Swedish archipelago buffet was served in the restaurant, to the accompaniment of a concertina/guitar duo, playing and singing genuine Swedish dram songs. Song sheets were handed out and the group sang with a gusto. Later, in the top or 'smugglers' storey', *Mr. Ulf Larsson* spoke on the theme of 'Smuggling liquor in the Baltic sea area during the inter-war period of the 20th century'.



• A Swedish welcome to Dalaro

port which *Mr. Joao Abrunhosa*, the Portuguese delegate, liberally dispensed to the party. One had to admire *Mr. Abrunhosa's* ingenuity in getting this liquor past the probing questions and eagle eyes of *Mr. Owe Landgren* back at the harbour in Stockholm.

Landing at Dalaro, the group were greeted by the music of two musicians outside the Customs Museum. The party then toured the museum to view the displays of Swedish warehouse and Customs House interiors. In the rich and beautiful interior of the Director General's office, who should be seated at the old secretary, looking important and powerful, but the ubiquitous *Mr. Owe Landgren*. But he had become a Director General of circa 1856. He warned the

The audience learned that in spite of very rigorous legislation, increased resources of Customs, Water Guard and the improvement of international co-operation, the smuggling gangs always seemed to be a step ahead. The measures taken by the Nordic Governments culminated at the end of the 1930s in Sweden and Finland officially purchasing the alcohol surplus of

Estonia. This measure was taken to try to curb the flow of illegal deliveries. Up to 1939, when World War 2 intervened and the deliveries were stopped, Sweden had bought 1.25 billion litres of alcohol.

When *Mr. Larsson's* most interesting lecture concluded, the party, instead of going out to the archipelago to stop illegal alcohol, retired downstairs to consume legal alcohol, listen to more music and - for those inclined to shake a leg - dance. Around midnight we returned by bus to the city.

The final day (September 17) was dedicated to the General Assembly in session. The working parties of 1998 reported on the progress of their projects. Among the new

projects decided were that:

- A Newsletter will continue to be published;
- An IACM website will be put in place; and
- Our statutes and rules will be amended so that non-IACM States may attend our Conferences as observers or guests.

This day's most important event was the elections, the results of which were:

IACM President: Ms. Loes Peeperkorn-van Donselaar, Netherlands, was unanimously re-elected for another three year term.

IACM Secretary: Ms. Ann van Puymbroeck, Belgium, was elected. Mr. Roland Giroire, France, agreed to act as substitute if Ms van Puymbroeck has difficulty in continuing after one year.

Future IACM General Assemblies

A most important aspect the conference is to determine where the Assembly will take place and which State will kindly host it. Venues for the next three years were decided, as follows:

Year: 2000
Venue: Hamburg
Host Country: Germany

Year: 2001
Venue: Oporto
Host Country: Portugal

Year: 2002
Venue: Rome
Host Country: Italy

There is a possibility that Luxemburg may host in 2003. If this does not happen, Norway may be in a position to host it.

Mr. Jan Berggren and myself gave an overhead presentation on our next book, titled 'The 20th century with the Swedish Customs'. Closing the General Assembly, the IACM President expressed her satisfaction with the organisation and efficiency of the conference and extended her grateful appreciation to the Swedish Customs Museum for its hospitality.

- *Rickard Bengtsson, Conference Secretary*

At the IACM Conference ...



• *Interpreters at IACM General Assembly*



• *Swedish Director General of Customs (circa 1856)*

A number of exciting innovations are being introduced in Rotterdam's Tax & Customs Museum (T&CM). These are very much in line with current trends in Dutch museums, where presentations are being adjusted to provide more entertainment and less history. This is what seems to appeal most to the general public. In fact, many Dutch museums no longer present their past by means of a visual history lesson. Instead, they aim at a 'historical sensation or experience'. A recent article in a national newspaper summed up this trend under the title: *'Fish & Chips and Roman History: Dutch museums sort out their collections; a visit to a museum has to be more fun, more exciting and more interactive'*. Education has to make room for entertainment.

SMUGGLING ADVENTURELAND

Rotterdam's new attraction

a museum where customers are encouraged to take a more active role. This is especially so for children visiting the museum. This active participation includes a specially organised children's search where the youngsters, wearing official caps, act as Customs' Officers. Another successful project we have initiated is our birthday parties for children ages 6 to 12. Dressed up as Minister of Finance, the birthday boy/ girl takes his/ her guests on a search around the museum. During this search, they will find the code to open the Minister of Finance's treasure chest, inside which is a small present for everyone.

One of the major challenges facing us in 2000 here in Rotterdam T&CM is the alteration of the basement in this fine building. This was formerly known as the smuggling basement when the exhibitions of the T&CM were held

historical presentations. Yet visitors still ask where the 'smuggling basement' has moved as it used to be the highlight of their visit to the T&CM.

This repeated request ties in well with the national trends on more proactive museums. It also encourages our attempts to offer something special for younger visitors. As a result, we are planning a metamorphosis of our basement into a Smuggling Adventureland (SAL). Despite limited space and financial means, we hope to allow our visitors the unique opportunity to become either a smuggler or a Customs Officer during a wild chase in either the smuggler's or the Customs car.

We hope this project will appeal especially to our younger visitors. In the SAL only replicas will be displayed. We want to use audiovisual means and interactive media to create a dynamic presentation reminding visitors of MTV-clips. However, we also want to smuggle some education into the project with questions, like: What is smuggling? What is a border? What objects can and will be smuggled? Where does the smuggling take place? These are dealt with in a separate section to serve as an introduction to the smuggling show.

The SAL will be the finale of a visit to our T&CM in Rotterdam. It is not only for the young but to provide all our visitors with a unique experience and lasting memories of our museum.

It is to remind them of the important work done by Customs to prevent smuggling of dangerous and prohibited goods.

• Wim van Es



• *Freisian carrier in Rotterdam T&CM*

How has this trend affected T&CM, Rotterdam? It has seen changes on a modest scale towards

here. In 1994, when the collection was moved to and exhibited in the building next door, items on smuggling and fraud were integrated into our permanent,

THE GERMAN CUSTOMS MUSEUM

The next IACM General Assembly, kindly hosted by our German colleagues, takes place in Hamburg in September 2000. In this feature Arne Petrick gives an account of the German Customs Museum and its busy schedule of activities.



• **Phone-a-friend from the German Customs Museum**

Located in Hamburg, the German Customs Museum has thirteen(13) full-time staff and two (2) volunteers, both retired Customs Officers, who work with us one or two days each week. We also hope to soon welcome a new colleague on board for museums-supervision.

FINANCIAL STRUCTURE

- In 1998, for the first time the German Customs Museum was afforded its own title in the yearly national budget (Bundeshaushalts plan). The 20.000 DM allocated was divided into exhibits and exhibition-related costs.
- Due to this permanent lack of money, the private Förderkreis Deutsches Zollmuseum E.V. helped us with funding and buying several historical objects.

1999 ACTIVITIES:

Exhibitions

- *The special CITES exhibition: Zoll schützt bedrohte Natur*, was taken to various Customs offices and other locations in Freiburg (Baden-Württemberg), Cottbus (Saxonia) and Potsdam (near Berlin). Although it returned to Hamburg in the autumn, it is hoped, budget permitting, to rebuild, actualise and have it on offer from summer 2000.

- *Our temporary exhibition: Zollner-Pascher-Kaffeerieche*, concerning the history of taxation on coffee and, the efforts of smugglers to avoid it, was on display until the end of 1999. It is also hoped to reassemble this and put it on the road for Customs stations and museums in Koblenz, Schwerin and Freiburg, during the second half of this year.
- On October 29, we celebrated the 111th anniversary of Hamburg's membership of the German Customs Union, the official opening of the Freeport and the historical warehouse district by Emperor Wilhelm II in 1888, by offering a small temporary exhibition which was supported by the Town Hall and the Senate of the city. In the following weeks, four (4) special boat cruises, two (2) film/video evenings and lectures (also organised by "KUL Tours" and an actor) and four theme-related slide shows (by our former colleague, Mr. W. Fox) took place.
- *The exhibition: Gabelous et Pataches*, by our French colleagues caused us some intense activity. After the Ministry of Finance allowed us to support this project, provided there was no extra expense, we had to face the fact that the carrier was unable to pack and store the objects properly. Following some diplomatic talks with the Ministry, a small amount was granted for the construction of transport-boxes by ourselves. Unfortunately, Mr. Bente received the invitation for the opening ceremony too late, making it impossible to get head-office approval for this trip.

- The refreshed contact to the other Regional Finance Collections lowered down over the year. Only in some locally related questions the one-to-one contacts turned out very successful.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

- The excellent co-operation with our Danish colleagues continues. In April 1999, *Klaus Bente* and myself spent an impressive day at the Told-Skat Museet in Copenhagen. During the meeting, new ideas were raised for a future project on the history of Customs in (former Danish) Schleswig-Holstein. We look forward to more of this in the near future.
- In November, I was invited to join the workshop, titled: Coastal-Shipping. Hosted by *Holger M. Petersen* in Copenhagen, it consists of some members of north-European shipping-museums (NL, DK, NOR, D). This contact was the first step following the conclusions of our IACM work-group proposals in Stockholm.
- With effect from October 1998, Mr. Bente was accepted as a member of the German branch of ICOM. As a result of some telephone-calls, the ICOM-secretary (located in Berlin, since 1999) produced some useful information, in addition to the regular ICOM-newsletter.
- In June 1999, Mrs. *Byslowskaya*, Russian Customs Administration, who is preparing a local Kaliningrad Collection, visited our museum.
- In February 1999, the short letter exchange with the Lithuanian Customs Museum, Vilnius, which had suddenly stopped in 1998, was resumed.

IN OUR MUSEUM

- The filing of the archive, the library and the pictorial archive are still in progress and slowly but constantly growing.
- During last summer, the bigger and bulkier items of the archive were moved into the larger rooms and slightly better conditions in a nearby warehouse. The shorter distance to our second storing place (beside the rooms attached to our museum) brought some positive effects in filing - the museum's ship

Gluckstadt went for regular inspection and repairs to a local shipyard. After several costly jobs, it was returned to the museum in early September. The planned inspection of the pontoon and security procedures.

- The annual Port of Hamburg Birthday celebrations were cause for activities in and around the Customs Museum.
- For the first time, we started a co-operation with the private company KUL Tours, which organises theme-related boat-cruises in the historic



• German Customs Museum, Hamburg

warehouse district, stopping at local museums. During the summer months some Customs-historical-cruises (guided by Mr. W. Fox) were organised.

- By the end of 1999, we hope to reach the 110.000 visitors-per-year-bench-mark.
- From January 1999 to November 7, 100,270 people have visited our museum. Since opening in May 1992, we have had 720,000 visitors.

FUTURE PROJECTS

Two temporary exhibitions are planned for summer/autumn 2000. These are:

- (a) *Customs and Caricatures*; and
- (b) *Emigrants*. An exhibition about the people who emigrated from Europe via the ports of Hamburg and Bremen. This will

be prepared and furnished by the city of Hamburg, in conjunction with the EXPO 2000.

We also plan to prepare and refurbish the travelling exhibition *Zollner - Pascher - Kaffeerieche* (planned for spring 2000); and (of course) IACM General Assembly and Conference from September 20-22, 2000.

NEW ARRIVALS

During 1999, we got the chance to buy several important historical objects.

Although we failed at some auctions, we were lucky to get two (2) *tschakos* (slightly different forms from the dukedom of Saxony-Weimar and the Kingdom of Saxony; end of 19th cent.)

Our luckiest find was the offer of a GaG 79, a very rare rifle used by Prussian Border Police and Customs Officers since 1879.

On November 16, 1999, our internet access was installed. We registered our e-mail address zollmuseum@gmx.de.

A homepage will be under construction as soon as certain decisions are made.

FINLAND AND FIRE WATER

During the IACM General Assembly in Stockholm, Mr. Ulf Larsson, gave a most interesting talk on the problems Sweden faced with alcohol smuggling over this century. In this feature, Marie Makinen, Curator of the Finnish Customs Museum, traces the background and growth of alcohol smuggling in Finland where it has also been a major problem for most the 20th century.

In the two years up to 1998, Finnish Customs confiscated over 790,000 litres of strong alcohol. This was being smuggled into the country, mainly concealed in trailers and containers. Most of the confiscations took place in the southern district and at the Russian border. While this figure is very high, one may still estimate that the real amount of illegally imported liquor is even larger.

Smuggling strong alcohol has a long tradition in Finnish criminal history. Some alcohol smuggling, on a relatively moderate scale, was recorded in the 19th century. However, this was to reach epic proportions in the 1920s and 1930s when confiscations of illegal alcohol amounted to 1,000,000 litres per year. According to some estimates the total amount of illegally imported "fire water" was probably as high as 6,000,000 litres. This figure is enormous when you consider that the Finnish population in those days was 3,000,000 people.

Why did it grow to such large proportions at the beginning of the 20th century? The answer points towards the Temperance Movement which became very powerful in Finland, after 1880. In fact, it had become so powerful that its influence made Parliament adopt the Prohibition Law of 1907. This, it was hoped, would help people convert to total abstinence from alcohol.

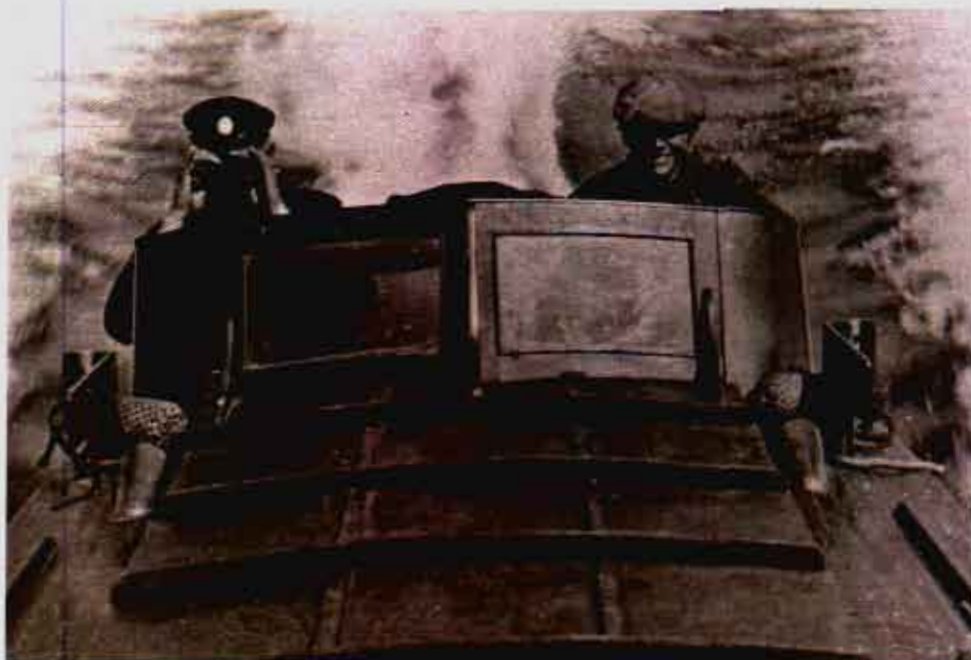
The 1907 Prohibition Law made it illegal: *to prepare, import, sell, transport and store any beverage containing more than 2 % volume of alcohol, except for medicinal or scientific purposes.* Not even the considerable loss of tax revenues for the State, when it declared independence in 1917, could prevent the implementation of the Prohibition Law on June, 1919. This also marked the declaration of the "booze-war" between Customs and smugglers that would last for the next fifteen years.

Customs helpless

The smuggling of strong alcohol in the form of cheap, bootlegged spirits before the introduction of prohibition was aimed at tax evasion. It complemented the normal sales of

liquor. But now with the prohibition law in force, the smuggling took a different flavour. Fast growing into a large and lucrative business, it also became the main spring of alcohol for the thirsty Finns.

The smuggled alcohol came mainly from Estonia, Gdansk and Germany. When Estonia's own Prohibition Laws were repealed in 1920, smuggling to Finland increased. While the Estonian Customs Authorities didn't declare the alcohol cargoes bound for Finland, the transport via Sweden soon became a popular route for them. Several attempts were made to resolve the difficulties but it was clear that the way forward was through international agreement.



• The Customs guards at work

And so began the negotiations which, two years later, saw Finland, *Estonia, Sweden,* Denmark, Norway, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Gdansk and Soviet Union sign an Agreement on the smuggling of strong alcohol. However, the ratification of the agreement took much longer. By 1925 only Finland, Sweden and Norway had actually ratified it. The Soviet Union followed suit four years later.

The Agreement forbade the export of alcohol in seagoing vessels of less than 100 net registered tons. Larger vessels were only allowed to export, when they were *licensed by the authorities of the country where they were originally registered.* The signatory powers were also allowed to deal, according to their own laws, with any vessels suspected of smuggling and found within twelve nautical miles of their coasts. The Finnish territorial waters limit was then only four nautical miles.

the Customs Guards "with their equipment, were simply entirely helpless to confront such difficulties as the smuggling brings about"

However, this Pact of the Baltic Sea wasn't enough to curb the trade in smuggled strong alcohol. The smugglers immediately began to register their boats in countries outside the Agreement. Now boats, flying the Greek, Turkish or Argentinean flags sailed towards Finland. However, their ports of departure and their cargoes were the same as before. Mr. Ville Poppius, then General Director of Finnish National Board of Customs, could but shrug his shoulders and constantly state that the prohibition was impossible to implement and that the Customs Guards "with their equipment were simply entirely helpless to confront such difficulties as the smuggling brings about".

For a time Finnish Customs did not have the resources to deal with the



• Customs' day's catch

faster and better equipped boats of the smugglers. The control systems were not designed to meet the challenges of such large-scale professional smuggling. As only a fraction of the smuggled alcohol was detected, the press dealt harshly with the Customs officials. The main task of Customs - to peacefully collect duties - was overshadowed by this noisy and colorful war against the smugglers. The Customs own trade journals began expressing deep concerns about the unfair and distorted image they were receiving.

Prohibition ends- booze stays

The final attempt was to create a Coast Guard Service to guard the territorial waters and a border guard detachment to control the eastern boundary. Now the situation began to ease for the Finnish Customs, as only the western border between Finland and Sweden was left under its surveillance.

Around this time, prohibition began to meet with increasing opposition. In 1929, Finland was facing a period of deep economic depression. One of the remedies recommended for this poor state of economic health was a tax on beverages. In the referendum of

December 1931, an overwhelming majority of voters supported the abolition of prohibition. Within two month's liquor could be freely bought all over Finland.

Did the end of prohibition also see the end of alcohol smuggling? Not at all. Although the scale of smuggled booze fell evenly, it still continued. Again it changed form and went back to its pre-prohibition role as a means of avoiding taxes and charges, while complementing legal sales of alcohol. Up to the end of the 1930s, strong alcohol remained a most popular commodity for smugglers. Today's confiscation rates prove that illegally imported spirits still strongly attract the Finns.

LUXEMBOURG CUSTOMS MUSEUM

.... A reality in 2003?

The search for a building for the Luxembourg Customs Museum looks like coming to a good conclusion over the next months. The town of Remich, situated on the Moselle river, wishes to welcome our museum within her walls. The mayor of Remich, who was a Customs Officer before his election to the National Parliament, has proposed that it be located in two old houses that are situated on a tourist walk-around.

While the headquarters of the Customs Administration are favorable to the project, there

is still the problem of financing both restoration of the buildings and the incorporation of the museum. Following our last national elections, Luxembourg has a new government with which discussions are taking place. However, the responsible authorities haven't yet given a definitive solution. Perhaps the new century will bring good news.

However, the museum people have not been inactive while all of this was taking place. Although the collection of objects and documents is closed in larger parts, we are still interested to obtain different artifacts. We also began to catalogue and archive all the material stored in the depots of the association. This work needs a lot of time but we are still making good progress, even with the restricted time at our disposal.

Luxembourg Customs Museum has participated in the organisation of an exhibition about the life in the city of Luxembourg in the 1950s. We have also participated in the exhibition about European Customs, organised by our French colleagues in Paris.

During 2000, Luxembourg Customs Museum hopes to organise an

exhibition on the Washington convention C.I.T.E.S. This is being done in collaboration with our German colleagues in the Customs museum, Hamburg, and the Luxembourg Ministry of Culture

and Nature. This will take place at a great international exhibition to be held in Luxembourg city.

• *Henri Nimax*



• *Henri Nimax (Treasurer, IACM) and Jean-Pierre Reuter, Luxembourg delegates in Stockholm*

At the IACM General Assembly in Stockholm, a presentation was made by the Portuguese delegate, Mr. Joao Abrunhosa. He also distributed copies of a beautifully illustrated book on the Portuguese collection which is being rehoused in the restored Customs House in the historic city of Oporto.

Mr Abrunhosa's presentation included a most interesting video on his country's collection which is stored at present in a warehouse in Lisbon and in several archives. It is expected that the new premises will be ready within the next year. Mr Abrunhosa extended an invitation to the IACM to hold its General Assembly in Oporto in 2001.

Workshops Old

This most important part of the Stockholm conference began with a plenary meeting to recap the discussions and conclusions of the previous year in Budapest. It was also to prepare for new workshops and fresh ideas to further strengthen the aims and objectives of IACM.

Archives:

UK and Belgium reported that the replies to the distributed

questionnaire had been swift, with most of the members responding. The draft gave rise to some confusion. This is to be clarified and the conclusion published in this Newsletter. The work continues.

Newsletter:

Belgium expressed thanks to the contributors to the first IACM Newsletter. The result was a very professionally produced

magazine. The work also continues on this important link between IACM members.

Financing IACM:

The President stated that the report under this heading invited further research. The Netherlands said that the replies to the special questionnaire were swift. The results were distributed to the meeting.

.... And New

The following four new workshops were formed:

(a) Archives 2

Continuing with the matters raised at the 1998 General Assembly and conference in Budapest, this workshop consisted of:

Mr Albert Laot (France)

Ms.Cath Leggett (UK)

Mr. Joao Abrunhosa (Portugal)
and

Mr. Marcel Buyst (Belgium)

This workshop reported that the questions in the previous questionnaire had resulted in further questions to be asked of members. These concern the methods of preserving the archives, co-operation and further investigations. No deadlines were set for further work on this project which continues.

(b) Newsletter 2000

Chair:

Paddy Ryan (Ireland)

Members:

Ann Puymbroeck (Belgium)

Lázló Kopf (Hungary)

Marie Makinen (Finland);

Sergio Leuci (Italy);

and

Bente Borg Sorensen
(Denmark).

It was agreed that the co-operation between the member states involved in the production of the previous magazine was excellent.

It was proposed that as this is an excellent means of communication between members and also as a record of the work of IACM that a Newsletter should be issued in 2000. The Assembly agreed with Sweden stating that they hoped to produce it if their budget could allow for it. *Mr. Jan Berggren* promised to notify the result of this to IACM, before October 1, 1999.



Archives Workshop:

Joao Abrunhosa (Portugal), Cath Leggett (UK) and Marcel Buyst (Belgium)
(missing: *Albert Laot (France)*)

Ireland stated that if Sweden is not in a position to produce the newsletter, he could take on the matter. He went to say that the cover should have some Stockholm motif. It should aim for the quality of that produced by our Hungarian colleague. It should contain photos, addresses etc. of the President, the Administrative Secretary and the Treasurer. The Assembly decided that the deadline for receiving material for the Newsletter was December 1, 1999.

us better. It was emphasised that a website is the easiest and cheapest way of making IACM known internally as well as externally. Information can be easily exchanged through it. UK mentioned that every member State will have access to the UK National Archives, via a website. It was agreed that the workshop will meet on December 3, 1999 in Luxembourg to decide on the website.

In a very lively and effective discussion, several possible targets for activity of the IACM were spotted. All members of this workshop agreed on the following list of priorities:

1. That an Internet home-page, representing the aims and objectives of the IACM be installed. (This idea also was introduced by the workshop representative-book). Based on this, an official e-mail-address for fast, effective communication (between members), links to related organisations and existing pages of member-museums could be introduced. This project should be handled with absolute priority.

The members of the workshop representative book have decided to hold an additional meeting (December 3, '99) and prepare questionnaires about the content each member wishes to be on an IACM-page. The information thus collected should also become the base for a (later) printed representative brochure, for Public Relations purposes, on the aims and objectives of IACM.



Newsletter Workshop:

*standing: Bente Borg Sørensen, Ann van Puymbroeck and Paddy Ryan
front: Lázló Köpf and Sergio Leuci*

All material should be in English. It should be finished and distributed in May 2000.

Sweden agreed to Ireland's offer and Mr. Jan Berggren will ensure that each Member State will be informed where to send their contributions. Ireland emphasised the importance that the preparation of the articles is begun, irrespective of which country is preparing the Newsletter.

(c) Reference book IACM (partly following up financing IACM)

*Geert Nieman (Netherlands)
George Pullin (UK)
Michèle Périssère (France)
Niels Anker Jorgensen (Denmark) and
Henri Nimax (Luxembourg)*

It was decided that there is no need for a book and that a website representing the aims and objectives of the IACM would serve

Luxembourg agreed to contact its national authority regarding the financing of a website. It was felt there would not be any problems with this matter. A questionnaire, regarding proposals to create the website, will be distributed after the meeting in Luxembourg. It was also established that the museums in UK and the Netherlands have their own web sites and that other museums of the Assembly have access to Internet.

(d) Proposals for new projects for IACM

Chair:

*Loes Peepkorn-van
Donselaar (Netherlands)*

Members:

*Roland Giroire (France)
Steven Butler (UK)
Holger M. Petersen (Denmark)
Klaus Bente (Germany)
Arne Petrick (Germany)*

2. Mr. Roland Giroire (France) mentioned that there is no filed information on Customs and tax-related multilateral contracts and agreements. Because of this lack, some important anniversaries of international Customs history are passing, without a chance of reminding the public.

Mr. Giroire suggested that IACM should take care of the installation of a data file of all important multilateral Customs and tax-related agreements. This idea was picked up and further extended to include all (Customs) historical documents. Several developments and trends of social and economically inspired politics and relations between the nations may be detected through such a data-collection.

A working group, comprising Germany, Austria and Hungary, will create a plan of a possible, computer-based, flexible, and expandable datafile, in a medium term range. No

deadline was set for its completion.

3. As a long term project, *Holger M. Petersen* (Denmark) and *Joao Abrunhosa* (Portugal) proposed that the IACM focus on the co-operation of Customs with other harbour-related branches (e.g. shipowners, sea-men, trading companies, warehouses, forwarding agencies, police, harbour administrations etc.). It is in our interest to show that in the main there was excellent co-operation between these different branches which fulfilled their tasks in every area of the harbour-business.

To further explore this and to get more knowledge about it, H.M. Petersen and A. Petrick will participate in an informal meeting of European Maritime and Naval Museums in November 1999 in Copenhagen. Following that, we may develop the idea of taking part in the travelling exhibition of these museums. This is now installed in a former

Coastal freight ship and travelling around several bigger harbours. Introducing the work of Customs in this exhibition which is connected with the normal maritime jobs, could be a first step for a detailed collection of contacts and material concerning the above mentioned objective. H.M. Petersen will report on the progress of this at the next conference.

A proposal by Steve Butler (UK) to create an IACM internal catalogue of the minimum Requirements on archives, storage, handling and lending of objects was deferred for the moment. While the members recognised the need for standardised handling of these matters, it was felt that it should not be done at this time as the working group archivist is engaged on this project.



Reference Book Workshop:

back: Jean Pierre Reuter, Geert Nieman and Nils Anker Jorgensen
front: George Pullin, Henri Nlmax and Ferdinand G. Hampl



New Projects Workshop:

back: Klaus Bente Steve Butler, Arne Petrick and Holger M. Petersen
middle: Roland Giroire, Loes Peeperkorn-van Donselaar and Bernhard Holden
front: Joao Matos Fernandes

BENELUX IN THE COCKPIT OF IACM

Ann Van Puymbroeck is the first Administrative Secretary of IACM. She works as a volunteer at the Belgian Customs Museum in Antwerp which is also her native city.

Of herself, Ann says: "My name is written the English way. When I was born, my mother decided that it had to be spelled with a double "n". You see my second name is Maria and she was worried that people would call me Anne-Marie, which she disliked. As a Belgian, her wish was strange because we speak Dutch and French and most people prefer the French spelling of my name with an extra "e". No doubt you're wondering why I'm telling you this small detail about my name but you will see how important the English language has been in my career.

Antwerp is my native city where I was born in its old centre. Although our politicians constantly discuss the division of our country into French and Dutch parts, Antwerp is a city of the worlds, known for its harbour, diamonds and different cultures. At ten years of age, our children already learn their first French words. Four years later they can choose between learning French or English. As most industries in Antwerp, require English more than French as a working language, I chose to be taught in English.

When I was eighteen, I enrolled to train as history teacher. The training programmed also included Duty and English courses. Two years later I graduated. For several months, I taught fourteen-year-olds which I really liked. However, in the early 1980s there were more teachers than teaching jobs. No problem there, because



my training made it possible to do all kind of things. After passing some examinations, I was invited to become a Customs Officer.

Soon I was working in one of the newest parts of Antwerp harbour where my task was to validate the documents on the day of ISSUE. After a while, I got very bored with this work kind of job and tried to obtain another post. I was really lucky, because at that time our regional director was looking for somebody at his office. My knowledge of English to deal with invoices, concessions etc. written in that language certainly helped me get the job. Moving to the main building of our administration, I met a lot of new people and began a new life.

One of these people was *Marcel Buyst*, the curator of our museum. I offered my help and soon after I also became a member of the museum committee. At that time

the board consisted of volunteers only. However, last year two Customs Officers began to work full-time for the museum. They are assisted by another seven Officers from the Antwerp region and seven retired colleagues.

I was not chosen as a full-time employee in the museum. However, one of the retired colleagues, mentioned above, was *Jan Hellinx*, the chief-editor of the staff magazine. I took his place when he retired. And like him, I help in the museum as a volunteer. Apart from guiding tours for 2000 visitors a year, there are a variety of other things to do, including the classification of exhibits, maintenance, public relations, national and international contacts. The latter is one of the tasks I'm involved with most.

Four years ago, our museum committee decided that the international contacts should be supported by a Customs Officer, besides our curator Marcel Buyst who is a retired regional director. I was chosen because of my skills with English. And that is how I got involved with IACM. I'm very happy with this job as it not only gives me the opportunity to improve my English, but I even get paid to meet all kinds of interesting people. The first IACM conference I attended was in Rotterdam. I was really flattered at how our Dutch colleagues spoiled us as guests. But I'm sorry to admit that I was very nervous.

Some of you will certainly remember that Belgium also invited the IACM members, although it only was for one day. You had already come such a long way and we wanted to take advantage of this opportunity to show you our beautiful city of Antwerp. Time was valuable, so you only could glance at the oldest part of the city with its Cathedral, the Maritime Museum, the river Schelde and the old market.

There is so much more to see in Antwerp: Paintings of *Rubens* and *Van Dyck* can be seen in almost every important building. If it's diamonds you want, there is no better place to buy them than in Antwerp. Those with less expensive tastes will find plenty to buy in the famous *Marks & Spencers*, *IKEA*, *Decathlon* and so many others. Whatever you want to do, it is all fine by me as long as you make time to enjoy our well known French fries with a glass of Belgian beer.

As a good chauvinist, I speak only well of my native city. As a good Federal Officer, it is also my pleasure to tell you that our museum got a national title, two years ago. However, it is only fair to remind you that the Belgium's capital city is not Antwerp but Brussels and that also these colleagues will be happy to meet you once in their cultural city 2000.

News from your Chairperson

Each Customs museum, although a member of IACM, in the first place is focusing on its national identity. This is a natural attitude for an organisation which is meant to guard the borders. In the meantime, we entered the 21st century which inspires us to look back. During the second half of the 20th century, borders between countries in Europe have started to fade away. The European Union brings separate national States to closer cooperation and integration of Customs services. From our historical point of view this is a very important development and I think we are lucky to be able to take part in it. We are not just lucky to live in this era, but also because we are working for the customs museums, where history of the organisation is cherished and where we are inspired to look at recent developments in a historical perspective.



Being active within the IACM since the nineties, I have noticed that this new international organisation leaves its marks on the Tax & Customs Museum in the Netherlands. More than once, we refer to situations at our colleague's museums, across the border. The similarities, but also the differences were clearly shown at the exposition 'Gabelous et Pataches' in the Maritime Museum in Paris last autumn. This exposition, organised by our French colleagues from the Association pour l'Histoire de Administration des Douanes Francaises (AHAD), gave an impression of the naval activities of European Customs in the past. It was the first occasion where Customs history at a European level was shown to the public. In my opinion it was a first, modest, step on the way to a closer cooperation between customs museums. Almost all members of IACM sent objects on loan for the exhibition. Thanks to your cooperation the exhibition could be realised. I hope it inspires us for future cooperation in all sorts of ways and on all sorts of levels.

The creation of the website for IACM which is in progress, and this Newsletter, are further proof of our progress in the field of mutual cooperation. Progress is slow, but considering our material possibilities, I think we have no reason for grumbling. As your chairperson I am very happy that our Belgian colleague *Ms Ann van Puymbroeck* agreed to become the secretary of IACM. She received permission from her superiors and is now active in her new capacity. We are meeting either in Rotterdam or Antwerp to discuss matters concerning IACM.

Meantime I am looking forward to our next annual meeting, in Hamburg next September. Contacts have been made already in relation to the German initiative to prepare an exposition concerning Customs humour. It is another signal of progressing international activities. I find this very valuable, because mutual respect comes with closer knowledge of each other in person and as a culture. Another useful aspect of IACM is the influence this organisation can exert in situations where Customs museums or collections are threatened in their existence.

In our struggle to become an affiliated member of ICOM, it is interesting to find out that people from different parts of the world have announced the wish to become member of IACM. This is a subject which I am sure we are going to discuss in Hamburg. Anyway it is important that Customs museums are considered as serious partners in the museum world. The ICOM is one of the international organisations to reach this goal.

In relation to this subject I should like to remind you that several member States promised to become a member of ICOM; institutional or personal, so that we reach the needed number. Please inform our secretary *Ann van Puymbroeck* as soon as possible about this subject!

Loes A. Peepkorn-van Donselaar, President IACM

IACM Treasurer and protector of its finances is *Henri Nimax* who works in the Luxembourg Customs Museum.



Henri Nimax

Born in June 1964, Henri lived in the city of Luxembourg until he was six years old. His family then moved 15km to the village of Bourglinster where he still lives. After attending primary school there, he studied at Lycee de Garcons in the city of Luxembourg.

His studies completed, Henri passed the examination for the Administration and began working at the Ministry of the Interior in the Department of Municipalities Finances. After six years there, he changed the administration to join the Customs Service. He was assigned to the Airport office. Two years later, he was nominated as second to the Chief of the Excise Office. Since 1994, Henri who is married with two little daughters, has worked at Customs Headquarters.

Henri's career has always been connected with finances. In fact, he is treasurer of Luxembourg Customs' musical band. So could there be a better choice of IACM Treasurer than Henri?

He says: "When the IACM decided to create the post of treasurer to oversee its finances, it was a great honour for the Luxembourg delegation - the smallest of the Association - and for me personally to be appointed to this important position. I assure you that I'll carry out this task with all the care necessary for a good account of the modest finances of our association. I wish IACM a long and fruitful life and many annual conferences full of friendship and humour like that in Stockholm."

Album of Stockholm...



• **Jan Berggren (Swedish host) and Rickard Bengtsson (Conference Secretary)**



• **Holger M. Petersen (Danish delegate)**



• Delegates at home in the Scottish Arms



• We are Sailing ...

...continued



• George Pullin (UK)



• UK delegates - Cath Leggett and Steve Butler

