

BINGN seminar @ Järnä
18 – 25 January 2017
Group D
Sivan van Leerzem

It is 2017! A fresh group of BINGNers, the 'BINGN Ds', have just started their 3-year journey with a full and inspiring week in Järnä. On behalf of everyone, I will tell a little something about what we did.

Day 1

The YIPers, of the Youth Initiative Program, allowed us to reside in their big house called 'Tallevana', as they were all abroad. Big thanks to them. This place was excellent for many reasons. Järnä provided an environment rich in BD activity, thus great food, and the house proved to be a good place to have lectures by day and connect to the other BINGN group(s) in the evening. We, the Ds, met in the afternoon, although some of us already met the night before during the graduation of BINGN A. Nevertheless this was the opportunity to share personal stories and to learn how many roads lead to BINGN. We have a nice diversity of nationalities, Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish, Cyprian, Czech, Italian, German and Dutch. 3 Of us will work this year in Norway, 3 in Sweden and 4 in Finland.

Right after, Martin Fellqvist visited to share his experiences as a BD farmer in Järnä and to answer questions. This was very inspiring and a good way to kick off the seminar. There were moments in this conversation that also showed the difficult side of a farmer's life. It was therefore also a way of starting the seminar with both feet on the ground.



Day 2

We started this day off with a eurhythmy session by Regula Schultes-Nilo. We connected to our bodies and learned how we always send signals with our bodies. A lecture on Goetheanistic observation followed. We took a silent walk in pairs to find out that one's perception is not the other's reality. Good thing to remember is that, to stay updated on reality, you need to keep observing. Above all, we might perceive more than we are consciously aware of. After a very tasty lunch in the Kulturcentrum (every single day!), we continued with the origins of agriculture. What is agriculture? What is domestication? Interesting!

Everyday ended with a moment of silence for reflection followed by a sharing circle. It sometimes takes some silence and space to reflect on your own experiences but also to simply share something that is on your mind.

Day 3

We went to Skillebyholm for a day of lectures on 'Live Processes in Nature' with Thomas Lühti. We learned about the consumption pattern of Swedish households and how it relates to the landscape around us. Also we learned about the development of the landscape from the ice-age onward. We could witness this development with our own eyes during a beautiful walk through the surroundings (the sun was shining!). An important moment was the introduction of mankind into this landscape. Many of us perceived this very negatively using words such as control, disaster, power and ownership. However, it did not take long for positive words to come up: care, love, safety, consciousness, art, culture, society and.... freedom!



Day 4

We made a farm visit to Sörbrö Gård. Arthur, from Belgium, who, together with his wife, runs this 240 goat farm, provided us with an amazing amount of information and truly inspired many of us with his positive attitude. In the afternoon we did a sessions with Peter Müller about weather observations. You can observe changes in the weather with basically all senses but your sense of taste (or perhaps even that is possible). Besides, he had a lot to tell about clouds.

Day 5

No lazy Sunday for BINGN! We visited Ullberga Gård. Once again a farm ran by a couple from Belgium, though keeping cattle instead of goats. This farm has an incredibly big cowshed, home to around 50 cows and a couple of sheep, with a high-tech indoor hay-drying storage system. Biodynamic farming does not necessarily mean 'old fashioned' farming. All this technology managed to amaze many of us and it must be said that the hay was really green and really smelled like we think that hay should be smelling. The cows seemed to agree.



Day 6

Back to the classroom for another day of lectures about the origins of agriculture. We went from Persian times to just before modernity. In the afternoon, 2 people of BINGN C gave a presentation to us all about their current farm.

Day 7

We started off again with a eurhythmy session, followed by a lecture on the (relatively recent) history of agriculture in the Nordic by Artur Granstedt. Again we learned many things, such as the development of, what we now would call organic, agriculture using crop rotations and manuring. This was standard until a 100 years ago, when it changed rapidly into a non-recycling way of farming. We finished the day with an inspiring group session on the future of farming. Inspiring, but also confronting. We all think that farming can be done better, but how exactly are we going to achieve this?

Day 8

Already the last day. We spend the morning reflecting, cleaning and getting ready for the coming months. 28 March, we will get back together in Norway at Vidaråsen. I am curious to see everyone's face again, hear their experiences and see what that week will bring!