



FaF – A playground and a platform for archaeologists

The difficulty of setting an agenda:
How to juggle between giving space, have fun and be dead serious

EAA conference 2013
Session: The roles and benefits of professional
associations in Europe and beyond

Paper by: Jette Rostock, FaF board member



Good afternoon

I'm pleased to have this opportunity to present our association of archaeologists in Denmark. A playground and a platform for archaeologists.



Foreningen af Fagarkæologer (The association of archaeologists)

FaF was established in 1997

Members are archaeologists from all branches of danish archaeology.

Our aim :

- To create a social and professional society for archaeologists
- provide a platform and a framework for discussions of academic as well as political significance for our profession.

Our mission:

- to develop the discipline of archaeology
- to strengthen the role of archaeology in the contemporary society.



Who - and why - are we?

FaF is the short form for Foreningen af Fagarkæologer - in English: The association of archaeologists. FaF was founded in 1997.

It is a member-organization where anyone with minimum a BA degree in archaeology can become a member. The degrees can be in prehistoric -, medieval-, classical- and near eastern archaeology. We come from all branches and sectors of archaeology – persons in leading positions, researchers, curators, persons doing rescue excavations, heritage management and unemployed people – and some of our members have found jobs far away from the archaeological profession.

FaF is the only organization that embraces all archaeologists in Denmark. (The members do not sign an ethical code).

We want to create a collegial atmosphere that promotes social and professional networks for archaeologists. We want to give archaeologist a platform and a framework for discussions of academic and political significance for our profession. All in all, we want to be an asset to our profession and be actively involved in its development.

The image shows a screenshot of the FaF homepage. The header features the FaF logo and the text 'Foreningen af Fagarkæologer'. Below the header, there are several sections: 'Velkommen til FaFs hjemmeside', 'Arkæologisk Forum nr. 28', 'Efter FaFs tur VIKING', 'Medlemskab', 'NYT fra FaFs bestyrelse', 'Søger du job eller arbejdskraft?', 'Kalender / Konferencer', 'Netop udkommet Arkæologisk Forum nr. 28', 'Projekt 2013-2014 Det arkæologiske arbejdsmarked', and 'Her på hjemmesiden Jobformidling'. Red arrows point from the text on the right to specific elements on the page: 'Trips and excursions' points to the 'Efter FaFs tur VIKING' section; 'Conferences and seminars' points to the 'Arkæologisk Forum nr. 28' section; 'Topic specific groups' points to the 'Medlemskab' section; 'Journal' points to the 'Arkæologisk Forum nr. 28' section; 'Project : The archaeological labour market' points to the 'Projekt 2013-2014 Det arkæologiske arbejdsmarked' section; and 'Job vacancies' points to the 'Her på hjemmesiden Jobformidling' section.

FaF activities

Trips and excursions

Conferences and seminars

Topic specific groups

Journal

Project : The archaeological labour market

Job vacancies

What are we doing?

The small member fee pays for the production of a journal, FaFs homepage, seminars, conferences etc. All work in FaF is voluntary and unpaid, and is performed by members who have their regular job other places.

FaF is marking its presence by the things we are doing – and our homepage is the place (in a more physical understanding) where FaF always can be visited.

Here at the ever changing frontpage you can see some of our most important activities:

- Trips and excursions – and we are planning our next one in November this year.
- The academic journal Arkæologisk Forum
- A project we are working on: “The archaeological labor market”
- And one of our most visited pages on the homepage is the one where job vacancies is listed.

Now I will tell a little more about our activities.



Arkæologisk Forum

The journal Arkæologisk Forum is one of FaFs first and most successful initiatives. The first issue came in 1999 and has since then been published twice a year.

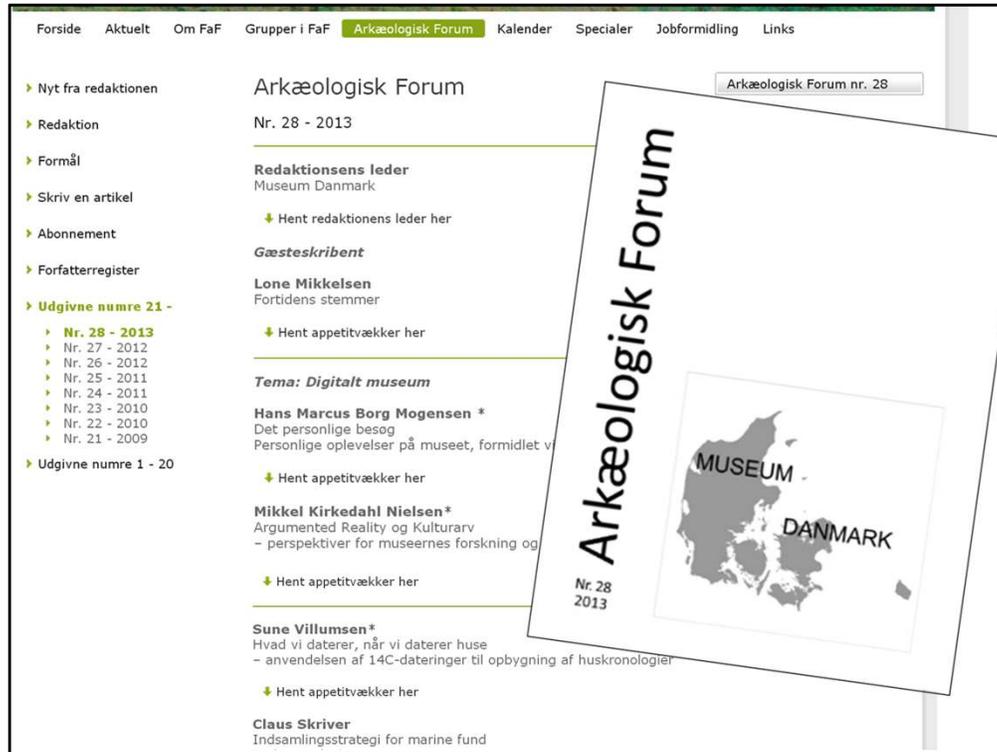
It came into being from a desire for a more open and dynamic culture of debate among Danish archaeologists. And Arkæologisk Forum was the answer to a need in Danish Archaeology at that time. Now Arkæologisk Forum is an established peer reviewed journal.

Ten years and twenty numbers after the first issue the editorial board celebrated the anniversary with a birthday cake – and a photo of this piece of material culture on the front page.



Subject matter in Arkæologisk Forum

As an academic journal Arkæologisk Forum is the place where both academic and political discussions of significance for our profession can be presented. A place where the interaction between the scientific, social and political becomes visible - not necessarily because the individual articles are expressing such contexts, but because Arkæologisk Forum is the media that establishes the link.



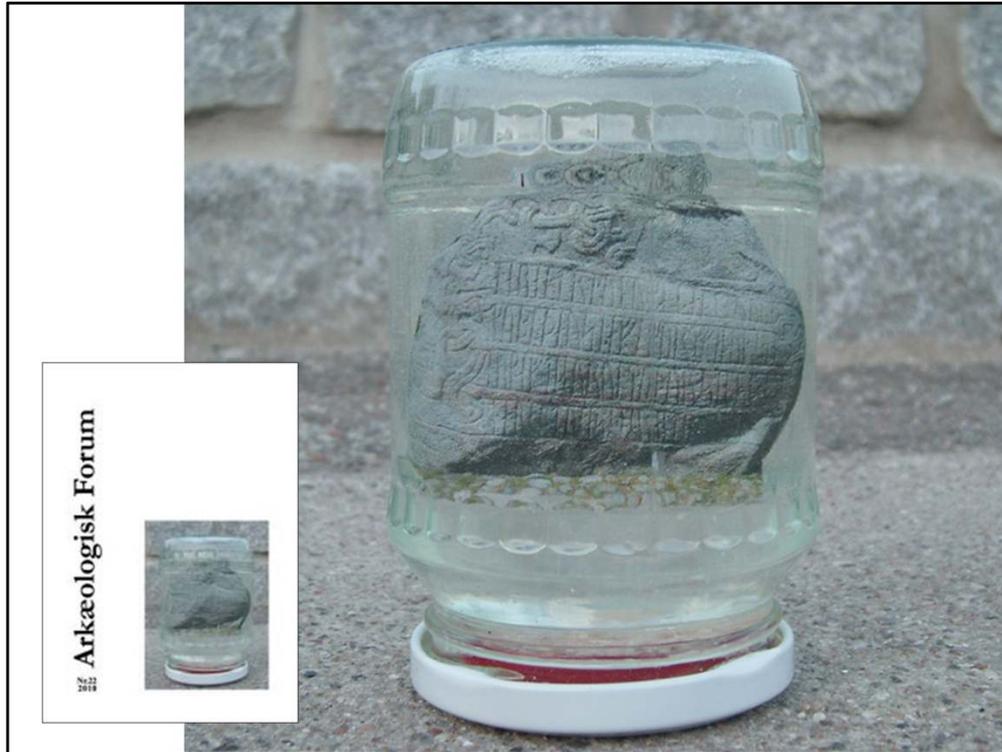
Latest issue of Arkæologisk Forum

Here you see the latest issue of Arkæologisk Forum – and how it presents itself at FaFs homepage.

In the “editorial” the editors of Arkæologisk Forum comments on the present situation in Danish archaeology and the museum world.

In Denmark the museums have the responsibility for excavations. Until now there have been around 40 museums with archaeological responsibility - given to them by the Danish ministry of Culture.

But now the same ministry have decided that the archaeological units should be fewer and bigger, so the archaeological units and the museums are coming together in larger units. New constellations means new names. And there is a trend in the names they have chosen: All starting with “Museum” and ending with their geographical mega-location, for instance “Museum of South Eastern Denmark”.



Protected by glass

We also have fun. Some years ago the editorial board in a creative visualization was commenting on the plans of putting the Jelling stones, a world heritage site, under a protecting glass building.

In the same issue of Arkæologisk Forum we also had more articles discussing if the Jelling stones should, or should not, be put under glass.



And how it looks by night today

Some years later the finished result – this is how it looks by night.



FaF trip to the Jelling-site

When the stones had got their glass houses we decided to make a trip to Jelling for the members of FaF, to see the result and hear about the research project and excavations in the fields around the monument.



Archaeology in a changing World

In FaF We also have a tradition of arranging seminars and conferences – not only for members of FaF but for all in danish archaeology.

We have arranged seminars and conferences about:

- Iron age house
- Archaeology and Natural sciences.
- How they manage their rescue archaeology in Sweden

Just to mention a few.

Our latest seminar was in February this year – with the title: Archaeology in a changing world. Most of the papers were about our relation to the public – what kind of subjects that matters to people and how to make exhibitions and communicate to the public.



FaF trip to Ladby - the grave mound

In FaF we have been on many excursions and tours for longer or shorter periods of time. Longer trips to France and Sweden to visit museums and special sites – in France to look at palaeolithic caves and art. And every year we try to arrange one or to day trips to a museum or site in Denmark.

This next slides are showing highlights from Ladby at Fyn. We saw the ship grave from the Viking age and visited the small Viking Museum nearby. Here we are on location – and inside – the ship is still in its mound.



FaF trip to Ladby – museum and exhibition

Our colleagues at the museum guided us at the site and in the new exhibition.

During the day we also had a presentation of the project “Denmark's prehistory in the landscape”- establishing communication of prehistoric sites and monuments in the landscape for the public. The project is financed by a donation from one of the richest foundations in Denmark, who a few years earlier donated a sum for a new exhibition “Denmark’s Prehistory” at the National Museum of Denmark. Some of us wondered why we still should have this national overtones in the titles – perhaps because the man behind the foundation wanted it so ... question mark – it’s a guess.

All in all it was a day where the participants got information about both smaller and highly profiled projects. And we got opportunity to engage in dialogue with colleagues about how archaeology should be communicated to the public.



FaF trip to Ladby

The trips and excursions are good for socializing and exchange of knowledge. To drive through the country together, walk up the mound, have fun and serious discussions expand and strengthen our association.

Forside Aktuelt Om FaF **Grupper i FaF** Arkæologisk Forum Kalender Specialer Jobformidling Links

> **TeoriGymnastik**
 > Arkæologi og politik
 > Teori i arkæologi 2005-2008

TeoriGymnastik

- en arkæologisk diskussionsklub

I diskussionsklubben TeoriGymnastik dykker vi ned i de rørte vande, flytter rundt på brikkerne og brydes med teorierne:

Hvad siger teorierne?
 På hvilken måde bliver de brugt i arkæologien?
 Hvordan kan vi selv benytte dem?
 Og kan vi måske være med til at udvikle sådanne?

Møder

18. april 2013 - møde i TeoriGymnastik
 Emne: Materialitet

Litteratur:

- Mikkel Bille og Tim Flohr Sørensen 2012: Kapitel 1. Introduktion til materialitetsstudier. I: *Materialitet - en indføring i kultur, identitet og teknologi*. 2012:13-40.
- Mikkel Bille og Tim Flohr Sørensen 2012: Kapitel 7. Tingenes bevaring og rettigheder: Materialitet - en indføring i kultur, identitet og teknologi. 2012:157-177.

24. januar 2013 - møde i TeoriGymnastik
 Emne: Materialitet og fravær

Litteratur:

- Mikkel Bille, Frida Hastrup og Tim Flohr Sørensen 2010: Chapter 1 Introduction. In: *An Anthropology of Absence. Material Transcendence and Loss*. 2010:3-22. [p. 3-22].
- Tim Flohr Sørensen 2011: Tingenes tale. *Jordens Folk* 3 / 2011.

13. december 2012 - møde i TeoriGymnastik
 Emne: Agency og Netværk - teorier



A study group for theoretical discussions
 We dive into troubled waters,
 rearrange the pieces
 and wrestling with theories

Groups

During the years various small groups have been discussing different subjects. At present we have a group studying theoretical issues.



The future – opportunities and plans

Without FaF there would be no place for unemployed and the many temporarily employed archaeologists.

Last fall we made a small investigation among our members. It showed that most archaeologists had been temporarily unemployed or totally unemployed within one year. It means that lots of knowledge and potential for developing our profession is unused and lost.

Today there is no overview of how the museums use the temporarily employed, and we don't know how many unemployed archaeologists there are in Denmark.

At the moment we are working on a project in FaF about "The archaeological labor-market". It focuses on the museums' use of temporarily employed. We are at the moment in contact with our union, and right now we are trying to find out the possibilities of making an investigation together with them. In such an investigation we hope to find out about the museums' use of professional archaeologists.

This field of subject and cooperation with the union is a new way for our association to work for the benefit of our profession.

That's why FaF is so import.



Thank You

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Thank You – contact information

Thank You very much.

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