



## 6. Aland 2016



by Johan Kjellander 2016



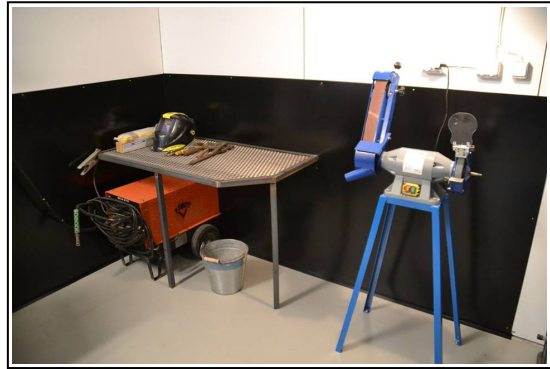
We planned to spend around 7 months at home this season so we came to Aland early in April. The ash tree (Ask) that we planted last year had survived the winter and new leaves were growing. That was a good start.



This summer we wanted to finish the inside of our new economy building (see [2015](#)) but also start rebuilding the old summer house we use for living. Our carport was full of building materials so I started immediately.



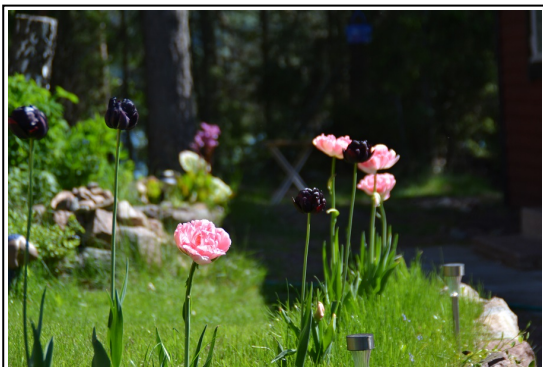
First step was to finish the laundry room. Paint, electricity, plumbing, toilet, shower and so on took me about a month. LED lighting and an automatic moisture sensor controlled fan for ventilation.



After that it was time to work with the garage. Epoxy paint on the floor, workbench, lockers for storage, a welding table and a grinding machine.



Finally I also erected a new wall inside the garage to create a separate section for a future wood workshop. Right now most of the space is occupied by all the stuff that we brought when we moved from Sweden, two years ago, but this is only temporary.



Meanwhile spring turned into summer. The tulips we planted last year seem to feel good...





...and a young squirrel is wondering what I am up to.



Lots of birds breed in our garden. Here is a Spotted Flycatcher (Sv:Grå Flugsnappare) that chose to build its nest where it was easy to access with the camera. We followed the development closely, day by day. It's incredible how fast they grow.



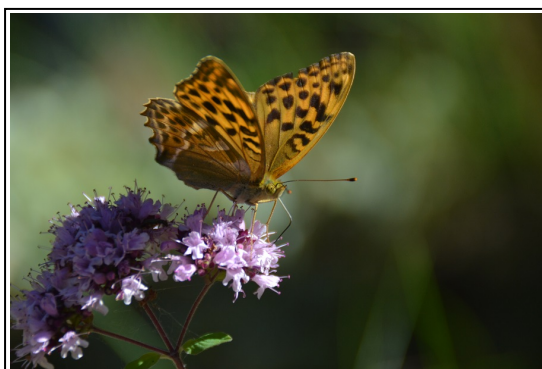
We also had a spider living close to us. The smaller the animal, the greater the number of babies, it seems.



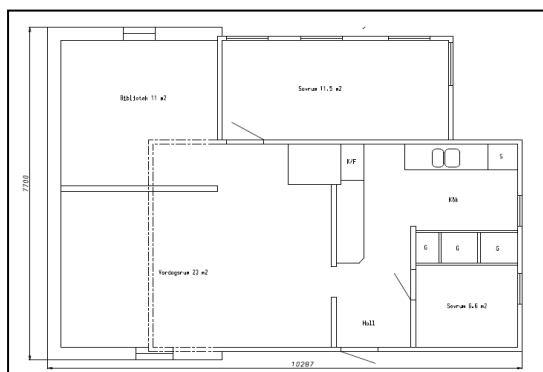
Our youngest son Gustav came to give me a hand with some job. One thing was to put a wooden deck on our jetty. Meanwhile I went to Mariehamn to purchase an outboard for our 40 years old rowing boat Askeladden.



Oldest son Martin to the right, Gustav in the middle and their friend Adam, taking a test ride in the Askeladden with the new engine, a 6 hp four stroke Mercury. Quiet, fuel saving and very nice in all ways, but heavier than the old two strokes.



It was now summer and time to start rebuilding the old summerhouse that we use for living. The weather was warm and sunny. Longwing butterflies seemed to thrive in our garden. (Sv:Pärlemorfjäril, Lat:Heliconiinae)



The rebuilding project is planned to span over several years where we use each summer to work with a smaller part. This year we decided to tear down about 1.5 meter of the old house and construct a completely new part two meters longer than the original. This would give us a new sleeping room and a library, totally about 25 square meters of latest energy saving standard.



On the drawing above the new part is to the left. The dashed lines show what we removed from the old house. There is no heat insulation at all in the old house. The new part has walls 40 centimetres thick and high tech coated energy saving 3-glass windows !



Tearing down an old wooden house does not require a lot of skill but takes time. All the garbage needs to be sorted and taken care of.



With the old house section gone I hired an 8 ton excavator to remove the soil and prepare the foundation of the new building. We soon found solid rock, which is nice to build on. The old house stands on plinths and I could reuse some of them but had to add 6 new ones. After that I started the construction of the new floor with 35 centimetres of heat insulation.



A nice pause from the construction work was a cousin meetup organized in in Oskarshamn Sweden by the end of July. I have many cousins and most of them were there with their families.



In Oskarshamn we also had time for a visit to the museum of woodcarver Axel Petersson, called "Döderhultarn". This is what one of the big newspapers in Sweden wrote about him more than 100 years ago:

*"Axel Petersson's old men are irresistibly amusing. They depict such primitive art as one could wish for, made out of a couple of simple contours using only a couple of strokes, but, from an artist with sure eye and nimble hands. It is a new conception with a personal touch...small masterpieces of complete nonconformative art."*

Search for Döderhultarn on Wikipedia and you will find out all about him and what he did. I can only say, his "simple" wooden figures are very touching.



Back to Åland and back to construction work. It was now time to raise the wall framework and lift the rafters up.



I bought four prefabricated rafters from a company in Åland. They were delivered by truck and one of my neighbours helped me to lift them into position with his timber crane. Thanks for that.





With the rafters in position it was time to put on the roof. Our two sons, Martin and Gustav came over from Sweden for a few days to help.



Another pause in the construction work was a 3-day meeting for sailors we had learned to know in the Canary Islands. We arranged this meeting together with our good sailing friends Ben and Sässi, who also live on Åland.



Ben dressed up in a T-shirt from Sailors Bar in Las Palmas.



Some of the Canary Sailors arrived in their own boats, the rest by car or caravan.



First day was arrival day, next day we split up in two groups. One visited the old castle of Kastellholm and the other made a hike in the Geta mountains. For the evening we went by car to Simskäla island for a superb dinner in a small family restaurant.



Day three we were invited to visit Aland Coastguard in Mariehamn.



From the tower you have a fantastic view over the harbour and its approaches. On the radar screens you can see every ship around Åland and there are also video cameras in various places that are controlled from the tower.





Many cruising ships come here every day. There is regular traffic to Stockholm and Kapellskär in Sweden, Turku and Helsinki in Finland and Tallin in Estonia.



There was also time for a visit to the Maritime Museum and the sailing ship Pommern from 1903, the worlds only four-masted cargo ship still in original condition. On the picture above we are saying goodbye to Barbro and Pekka who have spent a lot of time on their boat Corona Aq in Las Palmas but also crossed the Atlantic many times.

We had a great time during these three days. It was wonderful to meet all our sailing friends from Las Palmas here in Åland.



The weather continued to be warmer and sunnier than usual. One of those days our neighbour Peter invited us to join him in his boat to Rannö, a small uninhabited island in the far north of Åland.



In old times this island was used by fishermen and Peter has a small fishing cottage there. There is a shallow protected natural harbour on the north east side that was once full of activity. Now it was only us.



Not many people come here now days. Nature is beautifully wild and untouched. Somebody made a birdhouse of an old tree and a flat stone, a long time ago.

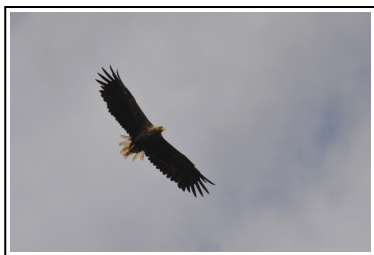


There is an old wooden lighthouse on Rannö, maintained by local fishers on a voluntary basis. The light was not working so Peter climbed up and changed the bulb.





As we left the island we spotted a Grey seal (Sv:Gråsäl, Lat:Halichoerus grypus) resting on the cliffs. Peter drove closer but the seal did not like that and chose to vanish in to the sea.



Aland offers good opportunities to take pictures of birds. Here from left: A White-tailed Eagle (Sv:Havsörn, Lat:Haliaeetus albicill), a Tern (Sv: Tärna, Lat:Sterninae) and a Greylag goose(Sv: Grågås, Lat:Anser anser).

The Goose is not from Aland. I photographed it through a window during a short visit to Örebro in Sweden. I have never before seen a Goose sitting in a tree. The Eagle flew right over our house and the Tern, I photographed during the trip to Rannö.



Maritime rescue organisation in Aland is ÅSRS (Ålands Sjöräddningssällskap). Their main station is in Korrvik harbour in Mariehamn where they have several vessels of various types. Latest acquirement is a 12 meter high technology 30+ knots Search and Rescue boat with a water scooter on the aft deck.



Two big waterjets, controlled by a joystick. Lots and lots of instrumentation on big screens. Captain and mate in comfortable spring mounted chairs.



Toves old godfather Erik, who sailed all his life, passed away during the summer and had expressed a wish to be berried in the Sea of Aland. The family contacted ÅSRS who offered to help, so one day we were out on their new boat in full speed towards the Sea. A different funeral with only the family and a few friends but very dignified and full of love.



Summer passed quickly and it was soon time to finish the exterior of the new house before the cold season. I purchased 950 meters of 22X120 mm wooden panel from a local lumber mill and Tove painted, first with oil and then with traditional red. A few thousand nails later the outside of the house was ready to meet the winter.





With the exterior finished I moved inside and continued working. Heat insulation, plastic film, inner ceiling, a temporary stairway to the attic and so on. Tove seems happy with the result.



We stopped working with the house by the end of October. It was then only two weeks left before we would return to Bird of Passage in Grenada. There is still some job to be done, but that will wait until next year. To celebrate the new space we invited our neighbours for a party.



September is mushroom season. We found these ones in our garden. Parasol mushroom (Sv:Stolt Fjällskivling, Lat:Macrolepiota procera) to the left and Cauliflower mushroom (Sv:Blomkålssvamp, Lat:Sparassis crispa) to the right. Both are rare and very delicious.



It had been a wonderful summer but very dry. Many trees lost their leaves early.



A Swan couple lives in our bay. Each summer they raise a lot of ducklings. This year it was six, they stayed long but when it got colder and snow started falling they took off south for warmer climate. And so did we....



**End of Aland 2016**

