

JAN VINDAHL POVLSEN

Memorial website

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JAN's P.O.V. (Points Of View) 1959-2006

>>Well – it's been some years since I was born(1959). That was on Nørrebro [in Copenhagen] close to a maternity home at [the street] Stengade. Today it's a hospital or nursing-home. Then I came home to live with my parents in a small cosy flat. We lived at the [the street] Gernersegade in the center of Copenhagen next to Nyboder.

There my parents had a two-room apartment in some demolition-ready buildings in a backyard. There was an indoor lavatory though, but rats ran about in the cellar and there were dustbins in the yard. I recall bits and pieces from there. I have a sense of what it was like but very little 'cause I was only a couple of years old when we moved out again.

That was when my father was a taylor. Incidentally he practiced next to here in a place called Seidelin. I think he sat there sewing suits and what not 'till he found out he could obtain something called regional developmental support. Could be up in Northern Jutland or down in [the island] Lolland, lacking in work places. The employer could re-locate his company there getting governmental grants – like you get today when you move to China. My father didn't leave – he was very much opposed to this development. He didn't want to move out to the countryside I seem to recall. But then he had two kids at the time – so he had to make up his mind in relation to us. I have a sister born 1_ year after me. I can well understand why he refused.

Instead he began at the airport carrying luggage and cleaning or whatever he was told to do. During my upbringing he has worked quite a lot on shifts and what not which is why he wasn't always home. Sometimes a few weeks or something could pass without me seeing my father.

But he stayed at the airport until 13 years ago when he was retired. That became his career where he would be promoted wounding up as a work leader which he was probably well cut out to be. My mother always stayed home looking after the children.

SIBLINGS

Seven years after I was born, I got a kid brother as well. Yea I recall being sent away to my grandparents to be looked after 'cause my father wouldn't know how to. Around this time we moved out to a place called Rørsangervej in the north-west end, where my parents got a bigger apartment, because now we were three kids. We had never tried living in a house – only during summer holidays. It was great – we were three kids.

My mother told me I was jealous of my sister when she came. I didn't want to go to the toilet for days. Then – moving ahead it turns out that my sister's got a bad disease. She has a dual bloodsystem in one of her legs, whereof the one is so close to the skin that the veins burst once in a while. So she had one of those vein bleedings which could actually kill her. That's why we had to take lots of considerations towards our sister – not teasing or wrestle her as she had to always be relatively still. This affected us greatly – me anyway. Well I didn't confront it – always shying away, retiring. And everything that went on around me I would push away –not taking any part of it.

SUMMER VACATIONS

Running around in the courtyard playing ball. The yard was just blacktop and some upright flagstones and a sandbox. That was it. My sister found playmates down there and I believe my brother did too. But I never really found any. Maybe it had to do with my distancing again which is what I did there too. But I did play a lot with my siblings.

SCHOOL

I had started in school by then – not very interesting. I wanted out of school as quickly as possible to work.. I can't really recall what interested me at the time but it sure wasn't to sit reading books – that wasn't for me. I realized though when I was in 9'th grade that I was good at taking photography. And I did know how to cook in home class. That was fun too and I got high marks which I wasn't used to – so that was a new experience. And I've liked it ever since – maybe not photographing but cooking.

Before I left school my father started his rise in ranks at his work place. We were in the seventies when it suddenly escalated and you earned lots of money. He did too. And all of a sudden he had one day bought a car – one of those Volkswagens: a Beetle. It was white and there was a nice parking space for it as there weren't that many cars back then.

HOLIDAY PLACES

So when we went on holiday from that day it took place in that car. And we were 5 people and we had covers, clothes, pillows and what not in the car. And as I grew bigger I had to crouch to fit there. And we weren't heading just for Sorø [Sealand]. It had to be as far away as possible. Like we went to a place called Vigsø up in Northern Jutland. It was nice up there but a long travel and this little car didn't move that fast.

We went to some of the holiday places several times – others just a few. But I especially recall the year we were in Vigsø. We rented a summer cottage through Dansk Folkeferie [peoples vacation] which it was called back then and now. I recall my father taking me and perhaps my siblings (not sure) to a place called Folkets Hus [the peoples place]. It's called Vega today. Then you passed a bowl picking a number. Then you lined up waiting for your turn. Then you walked over asking if you could rent a summer cottage for a fortnight. It took all day but I was prepared for it. And if you realized you had a summer cottage for the requested time period you would be happy. And usually that's what you got.

It was relatively cheap back then. It was something controlled by the unions. And it was only domestic holiday homes – not like charter travel to Malta and what not. They didn't do that back then which they do today.

To me Vigsø was always summer and sun and the nature was amazing and you could run about, acting crazy doing all kinds of stuff. Digging a hole in the ground or whatever you could think of.

UPBRINGING

It had something to do with my sister being seriously ill. Something with lots of consequence in the upbringing. Whenever father was in a bad mood you got smacked upside the head. Nothing much to do about that. You just did what you were told. If you were told not to something, you just didn't however stupid it might be. And it has stayed with me ever since. Not lately – but earlier.

I would never cross the red light or walk next to a pedestrian crossing. Instead I would always walk to and cross where you were supposed to. Even when I had to meet 5 a.m. at work – I would still stand waiting for green light. That's what you do, what you've been told. So it still lingers.

I've also been brought up with acting correctly towards others not to do anything out of bad will (you can unfortunately do harm without being conscious about it). And besides that trying to understand other people and their opinions – you're not always right yourself. That's something

I've learned through my parents' upbringing. It's only in the recent years I've realised what I've learned from them. Didn't think about it at all before – no reason to. I just did what I did. Today I understand what it has meant to me. I also see the importance of it in things I've done, been involved in and am still taking part of.

My parents have been thinking that I was an idiot as far as pranks I pulled. That didn't correlate with their perspectives which I see as a very square and materialistic world. I did more of what I found funny and exciting – no matter if I gained anything from it. That didn't matter. That's how I developed – but still marked by the way I was brought up not crossing for red light, having an understanding of other people.

APPRENTICE

I think my father did a great job getting me an apprentice as painter. And I don't think it was easy getting an apprentice back then (mid seventies). But somehow he conjured up such an apprentice for me which was great. Like I said before I was sorry not to be able to leave school a few years earlier. I recall being cross when they changed the rule so that I had to stay 9 years in school.

I didn't want that but realised I wasn't mature enough to leave school and start working. It had to do with understanding what I was told – that you had to do stuff and being physically fit to do it.

When 9th grade ended I got an apprentice out in [suburban] Vangede. It was with a master painter who turned out to be excellent in all kinds of strange activities from spraypaint workshop to going around speedpainting concrete buildings all around to sitting and fiddle with gobelins and finer craftsmanslike stuff. So it was a huge range. I was thrown into it – very exciting if you took an interest. You started in one end - then mastering most of it. Not least because he had a fine staff who knew how to teach. I especially recall one named Ole Falkenberg who taught me most of what was difficult and required most care and strength at times. Of course now I can't recall all the places we've been working at but I recall being in [church] Vor Frue Kirke – the one in the middle of Copenhagen where [Prince] Frederik was married. We worked there for several months. It had to be renovated which took a lot of effort. From start we were told to paint windows but they didn't realise who they had hired – cause there were only one way to do it and that was Ole's way and no other way! So we went all the way and it shows even today the way it shines just like when I participated in the paintjob back in the days. Since then nothing has been done. So especially Ole has taught me that you should do it properly all the way. I was an apprentice from the age of 16 'till right after I turned 20. So after four years I had to take my apprenticeship test which made me frustrated, cause it was the last test before it turned to EFG [practical training school]. Besides that my master had unfortunately been appointed chairman of the test commission – those who would come and evaluate the work when you took the final exam. As chairman he wasn't allowed whatsoever to give me high marks because that would be favouring his own apprentice. He wasn't supposed to – he would be scolded. But he came to me afterwards telling me I'd done a great job which I should take pride in for myself Other people got the high marks which could result in a visit at the Queens residence getting a bronze medal handed out by her.

I fought for a fortnight or 3 weeks like crazy to make it as perfect as possible. You got like a small room with a door, a window and some wall and you had to paint it and maybe if you felt like it paperhanging or doing some decorating. I had done stuff before to do with decorating. I liked building it up. I didn't know shit about any of it – just jumped right into it hoping to succeed. And I did – very exciting. It looked quite good. They all came to see what the hell I was doing in there. They did hand shadow doggies and whatever they think of.

Meanwhile I painted squares looking like they would tumble and crawl around the windows and weird stuff like that. For some reason I found it funny. You couldn't bring home the test piece so you just photographed it, remembering it that way. That was quite cool.

MILITARY SERVICE

When I was a skilled painter I had to be soldier for nine months. I was in Høvelte in Northern Sealand. From there I could return home each day. That was a phase to get over with preferably as painless as possible. So I wasn't a proper soldier but carried sick people – acting almost like an assistant nurse. But then my back broke unfortunately so I had to partly give it up midway and I wasn't pleased. I'm not sure what happened to my back. They worked out something and it was serious enough to claim that I should be granted a compensation. This meant I couldn't carry on as a painter afterwards when I got home. I believe I kept at it for a fortnight – then I had to stop. I simply couldn't keep it up anymore. Too bad 'cause I had aimed at it.

WORK PLACES

When I stopped as a soldier I got to live near [the square] Mozarts Plads in something called Harald Jensens Gade. That was my first residence since moving out of home. From there I had to create a new existence. But I didn't want to start from scratch. I chose something I had already learned how to do. So I searched lots of apprentices all around colour shops in Copenhagen and one day I was lucky. I forget how long it took but it can only have been a short while for I was never skilled while being there. He didn't think I worked hard enough. But as I recall he either met very late, he didn't work or he cheated. So I didn't mind too much when he told me to stop. He used a lame explanation of course of how he didn't want me anymore. I must admit that I never did what he claimed I had done. And it's still about being conscientious. So it makes me laugh when I pass a shop at 9 or 10 in the morning or whenever they open and they put out their merchandise on the street. You bloody well had to meet 15 minutes early to carry the articles outside and then be ready to open shop at 9 a.m.

Evenings too. It was not 'till half past five and you packed down the stuff bringing them inside. Not like you could do it 5:15. And no overtime pay. That's to be expected. So it didn't bother me to stop and I realised afterwards how strange it had been. But then you had to tackle it again to see if you could complete your apprentice and get a certificate. Therefore I ended up in [department store] Illum of all places.

BACK TO SCHOOL

I used to go around cussing and cursing all day and then was in there always being dressed neatly with polished shoes and stuff – not always easy. I was supposed to be selling paint and wallpaper. But there were no skilled staff in there so I wasn't allowed. I could become skilled in a hardware store instead but I had to go to school. I think I had 9 months left before I had to take the final test in hardware to learn what everybody else had three years to learn.

How I slaved – it was hard. I was 20 years, sitting on the school bench with 15-16 aged – so that was taxing too. I struggled all I could in the minor classes English, accounting and what not and got fairly good marks. I even brought home an English mark that was good. When I was to due for the final exam I knew that if I just showed up I would pass. But even then I scored slightly better than

I'd expected – I wasn't THAT good I thought. No time to learn that in such a short time. Even though it stuck well up here I couldn't be sure.

ILLUM

Otherwise I stayed put in Illum for some years some years after being skilled, selling everything from collars for doggies, glue for wallpaper and power drills. They thought I looked a bit too crappy so they gave me a white coat which I had to iron from home! I wore it nicely – the first week.

I worked vigorously thinking it was exciting for there was some selling to do - didn't sell junk. It had to be proper and you told people if it was no good. And now for the really fun part:

MEETING RENE

At that time my buddy René's mother worked in there and she got a staff discount. René had bought an apartment which is why he came to buy paint and wallpaper from me. But it wasn't until 4-5 years later that we became friends when we met again in another connection (nothing to do with Illum). And then we realise we have met before. So we celebrate our anniversary this year as it has been 20 years since we first met. I don't recall it but René still proudly produces the receipt whereupon I have written how it had to be done rightly and qualified. I told him how to do the work – nothing halfhearted, and now 20 years after he does his apartment once more. But now I have nothing to sell him but I still give him pointers

FRANCE

During my time in Illum I met other people for whom I also provided this service and suddenly one of them came and told me: "would you like to go to France and fix our house down there?" "YES" I replied, going 4-5 months later to France close to Toulon where there's a naval base. That was exciting. I stayed there for some time. _ or _ of a year I believe. I painted the front of the house and wallpapered. I enjoyed myself taking advantage of the nice weather. Watering flowers and what not. That was my first foreign trip for real all by myself. So that was quite a step. I recall my parents worrying about this but I didn't care I seem to recall 'cause I would do fine.

I learned to speak French a good deal while staying there. I watched TV and if I could find a movie with English subtitles I would be glued to the screen to pick up more French. I also shopped alone and had to provide gas, wine and what not. If you wanted something you just couldn't ask mum: "What should I do next?" You solved the problem yourself, no matter what it was. So I had a great time down there – very educational. My fascination with France faded fast though after I got home. By then I had no job, having spent all my money. Nothing to be Francophile about. So I had to start finding something to do instead to get some cash. I can't even recall what it was. I got like 3-4 different kinds of jobs inside a short while. I believe I started in a colour shop then [managed] by a bastard, who just wanted me to do tidy up. I knew him in advance – just didn't realise it was him who owned that shop. Too bad – I could have done without it.

MUSIC

Then I got to know René in a place called Saltlageret (resembling Pumpehuset) where you sell vinyl records. It was where the Planetarium is today. And I went there along with other people to sell records. I had some surplus records I had bought somewhere. Sometimes they wouldn't sell – other

times they did. So there we were. When we met we quickly got to talk about our great mutual interest in music. We stopped rather soon in there but picked it up some other day. I think that when we met again the first time we talked for like 12-14 hours. We began Saturday - then it was Sunday and it just went on. We kept chatting away about all this music we knew and which we found interesting. Some of them were compatible, others very varied.

MERCEYFUL FATE & KING DIAMOND

My music interest came in the late seventies where I would've worked in Illum or the other apprentice place where I was ousted for being a member of [the union] HK. There I met a guy who was also into music. He had contacts within a band called Merceyful Fate fronted by King Diamond.

This was the hardest rock around whatsoever and I was really into it. Going to concerts, buying vinyls – all the way. So now I've built quite a record collection. René wasn't into M.F. or K.D. – never was and never will! His interests lie elsewhere but I'm still interested a bit though not that much. It's become old hat. They've turned so old that it's less interesting. Most are my age and older – like 50 years. And the way they must jump about on stage yelling, screaming and playing makes it less interesting these days.

Rene is a member of [socialist party] S.F. - still is and from that came the deal about community radio all of sudden. And that turned us on 'cause then we could make our own music shows. In the Frederiksberg community S.F. had its party residence where they had designed a studio in the one half, broadcasting S.F. agitprop most of the week and then we aired music the final day. So we sat making our own radio shows. 1_ hour long once a week, broadcasting on the air, deciding ourselves what it should be. We found this very stimulating – being very much into it.

Back then ike in 86/87 when we started, we wanted to make something no one else did. So we tried going out doing live transmissions with bands which by that that time was only done by [national broadcast] Danmarks Radio. We tried it as best we could.

THE CLIFFTERS

There was this band named CliffTERS playing sixties music (and some Shadows), who were very popular when they started out in the early sixties. They [CliffTERS] played a couple of years running (when they had regrouped) in Tivoli [Gardens] and we joined in recording them, through 2-3 years. This is fun now the past catches up on me. It's partly beginning to unfold backwards in time, 'cause I'm selling my vinyls, and partly 'cause I must work out what to do with these recordings. Either throw'em in the bin – or should I hand them over to band members. 'Cause it's part of history and possible that they can be used for something. So I'm making the arrangements now as far as vinyls. Last time I counted I had some 800. Possible doubled today if not more I live in a two-room flat with very little space.

DICK DALE

I've met all kinds of artists over the years. Real fun interviewing them, getting posters and autographs. It got really extensive. I got only one Dick Dale CD not autographed. But 10 years ago [1995] he played the Roskilde Festival and I was the person who saw to it that he went there to perform.

BO DIDDLEY

Another American Musician: Bo Diddley. I made radio broadcasts and interviews with him as well – bringing records for him to autograph. He said about the record I'd brought: "this is a bootleg" and 7 months later he wound up winning millions based on someone having pulled tricks on him – very exciting!

THE VENTURES

In 1989 we were a few who wanted to see a concert – or 2 or 3 or 4 with an American band called Ventures. We weren't quite sure about where or when it took place so it took extensive research, but I ended up in some Swedish company that made concerts. And the idiot just popped the question: "but weren't they supposed to play in Denmark too?" Yes, I replied and ended up in me organising a concert for them. I didn't know shit about what went on but hoped it would work out. Today I realise there were some great mishaps, but they took it well. And it was the best concert ever! Partly 'cause of me being the sole organiser. And they were up there - all the way from America – playing here. It took place in [concert venue] Odd Fellow Palæet, next to [royal castle] Amalienborg for it had to be right soundwise. This was the best place I could get apart from Falkoner Center but the funds weren't sufficient. Too expensive. Unfortunately only 100 tickets were sold making a huge deficit. But I didn't jump into without knowing that I had the money. I could pay it all so I had almost no debt when I was done. Worth every penny!

VEGA REVISITED – WITH NOKIE EDWARDS

So here in 2002 someone in the Netherlands suddenly called me asking me if I wanted to do another show. Ventures had 5 members and the 5'th member had never played in Denmark. He would tour Europe. 'Would you do a concert in Denmark?' the Dutchman asked me. YES, YES I replied and made a concert in Vega, November third, a few years ago. Visiting Vega where I went as a little boy.

VENTUREing ON A SEA CRUISE

But even funnier was that I knew already I was booked on a cruise in the USA from L.A. to somewhere in Mexico. I never quite worked out where the ship sailed, 'cause it didn't matter and had nothing to do with the purpose. For The Ventures played on the ship, so that way I got to meet all these jokers again plus the one I'd met a few months before. They didn't know I was coming so they looked puzzled. I was the only Scandinavian on the cruise ship – only two Englishmen from Europe besides me. All others were Americans - some 800. They recalled me o.k. Musicians like them don't forget something like that. They may need time to think but then it's there. They know perfectly well who you are.

And then it was fun seeing other fans, where you just went over saying 'hi, how are you today?' 'Cause I know them well and they thought it funny too. So it was almost like home, that's how I felt, not being nervous whatsoever. Not getting worked up or something. It was peace and quiet, - nice and neat.

Like I told, I knew wherefrom the ship departed but not where it was heading. That's why I didn't dare leave the vessel. What if I didn't catch it back in time. Would be a disaster if it sailed and I would miss out on all the great music and the nice talks you had with all the other people.

RUDOLF HANSEN

Anyway 1_ month ago we lost Rudolf. He played in The Cliffers and was quite a showman. He was the one pulling the stunts. The fun guy on the bass. He was the last surviving member of a band named Defenders. They'd sung the one you've heard on radio: 'Jeg har aldrig fået Noget'. He was the one teaching me the robes. Just standing up there playing bas. He was a cool one, a fun guy telling funny stories – being special. I picked it up from him. Putting on this uniform, going all the way. Offstage he was quite different. If he wasn't surrounded by a crowd we could talk about roast pork and what not, didn't matter. Good to learn, used it ever since. Last time in the great concert in November 2002 where I literally had to put on this façade; nice suit, acting like a businessman, 'cause I had to take a bow in the spotlight and I wanted out! But I knew I wasn't allowed to. That's when I realised I had a role to play. Otherwise there were lots happening up to and afterwards. The part of making it all work. Like don't come to the airport 4 hours later than the flight brought the people. It had to planned and organised properly. It took forever but was very exciting and quite cool. And it all succeeded. There may have been teeny incidents where I got a little confused not knowing if I was heading this way or the other. But by then I had been at it since 7 o'clock in the morning. And I have wondered since: these ideas I've come up with – to other people as well – they were not like useless ideas, not at all. Usually an idea that brought about the result as it was for the best. I might have to check with others if it was do-able and it usually was.

When the concerts weren't that well visited as I would have liked – that's another matter. But it was still a great experience. And that's a good thing no matter how costly.

Unfortunately – now I have to sell all my records as I'm moving into a nursing-home. Luckily I'm getting all the help I need. But I have to be content with CD's henceforward 'cause there isn't room for more. But afterwards I can hand out the money from the collection to someone.

We sat laughing a bit just now that I'm kinda old like those heavy-rockers but I'm still trying to make up for it 'cause I don't feel that old.

EL RAY

So I always get mixed into something that I mightn't do but can't resist. That's how I met some young dudes 'round 30 years playing some hardcore surf music here in Copenhagen [<http://www.elray.dk/>] They are some good friends but sometimes you can't find the time to visit. That's how it is with wife and kids and being sick – getting all parties to meet. They are getting some of my collection – whatever they can use. They're always telling me: "but you know so much of this and everything 'bout that" And then I say: "Heck No, I don't. I know lots but not all" Now I must hand it over to René. Keep telling the story 'cause I don't recall much of it anymore. But I still think it's interesting listening to music. But knowing him, my taste in music has changed into the more quiet genres with lots of instrumental music. Beat, pop and rock had their haydays in the midsixties 'till the midseventies. That's the big passion – has been for many years.

PIPELINE CONVENTIONS

Before I went on the sea cruise, each Easter I had tried bringing René along to London where there's a festival Easter Sunday with only instrumental music being performed. I've joined for 10-11 years and René for some 5-6 years. I travelled to London to hear all this music as the only Dane.

CALIFORNIA TRIP

I didn't get René to join me on the cruise ship which vexes me. Instead we got a grand experience together which we greatly regret not being able to repeat due to my being ill. We were in the USA for a month where we from L.A. cruised around in a car. We cruised for a month seeing all the sites and landscapes. Fantastic trip. I had been there once before on my own before René joined me there.

LES PAUL

On that same trip where I was on the sea cruise I met a 90 years old guitarist named Les Paul in New York. I've got his autograph in my record collection, and it will never be sold but be framed and hung on a wall. That was unique experience.

MUSIC OR GIRLS

Music is a big part of my life. After I became ill, even more so. But music also meant there was never time for any longstanding relationship. I think that goes for René too. Never enough time for him as well.. You always had to do something. I can just imagine what they might have thought those girls.

'What the hell – is he going out again tonight messing with radio. He just had 20 km. cabel he had to solder and what not.' We could be out recording once or twice a week spending the rest of the week sitting home to produce 1_ hour of the programs. It took a whole week just to produce a show like that. Every alternate week we did it. I worked as a postman – I could squeeze this job in – only just. But only for the salary. This I must admit for that's where I earned good money – enough to maintain these bad habits. Travelling to the states and organising concerts. I could only afford it working there. [Shortly after the funeral, René found a female (lasting) companion, which would have pleased Jan to know]

CANCER

René was always a sparring partner to some degree. We've been talking continually and the things I'd like to tell him, I'll get across in time. Could be in relation to my parents that there were things difficult to talk about. Like when I was going to stay here. It's not the first time I'm at the recovery ward: Bispebjerg Hjemmet. I've stayed once earlier and my parents needed to know. I had been operated on a few times at Rigshospitalet which brought them in contact with a health care assistant who sadly had told them something not quite correctly. So 'those social and healthcare workers weren't sane. – couldn't be trusted to talk with about such matters'. My parents thought you just walked in for some surgery and being cured when you returned. Stuff being done and then it's fixed. Not until the nurse from Rigshospitalet told them I was going here: Then it was o.k. that I was seeking help to recover. They accepted that and also that I was operated on twice. And they accepted that they had to put this poison in me to see if there were anything left to kill. Understood it too. But when it returned [the disease] it took quite a while for them to understand what it implied. They thought it was curable until I took them to a doctor telling them that this cannot be cured. They took it hard. But these days they are as sensible about it as they can be. Here at the ward they think I get too few visits. My parents visit once a fortnight. But like they say: "we have a life afterwards – we can't give up everything and come running time and time again. What are we

to do when you're no longer here?" That may be the most logical solution. So I understand why they don't come and I don't push them.

My parents are sensible people, I think. Always on the move. They've just been 10 days in Greenland. And they also went to Stockholm this year. My father is 73, my mother 66 years old and they still ride bicycles.

POP GOES MY BACK

We were lucky when they sought a bigger apartment through [flat administrator] KAB. Back then it was to do with how long you had been a member – with the number of children and the size of your income. Then suddenly a letter dropped in through the letter slit with an address on it: [sky scraper] Bellahøj. You could see a number but not which floor it was on. I recall us being very preoccupied and it turned out it was high up. But we were convinced until we stood in front of the door that it was on the ground floor. We kids couldn't believe it for that wasn't possible: It turned out to be on the eighth floor with a nice view over Copenhagen. And they still live there. We moved in all together then. Then I had just started being an apprentice so I must have been around 16. So I lived there some years which was nice. And now they have a nice place to grow old in. There they have all they need.

I recall the day we moved in. We had a limited amount of money to work with so you just didn't change the furniture. You brought the old along placing them in the new flat.

Then there was a sleeping couch with some iron frames and it was heavy as hell. But there was a lift – problem was it couldn't go inside. So father Povlsen said. 'Can't you hold on here' And then I had to be in the heavy end behind carrying it up to the eighth floor. I can tell you it was exhausting. How I found the strength to pull it off aged 16, I'll never understand. It was extremely heavy all the way up. And my mother kept telling me since: "you just should have told him no! to do it himself or find some others" Not a chance. Father knows best! I once came home telling my father and mother: "I have a good joke I've heard in school" 'Well are you sure you should tell it to father?' Yeah yeah. Then I told it to him and he became cross and might have taken a hanger, hitting me once. You weren't supposed to do stuff like that. There was respect – not to say no to carrying a sofa up to the eighth floor unless you fell down the stairs.

FATHER

My father softened up not long ago. I called him, crying over the phone. During this he thought it was too much Then he scolded me. That affected my mood for the night. The next day he had to drop by 'cause maybe he felt he had been too harsh. He dared not staying away and he hadn't told my mother. He went on his own. They feel the way they do. They too must distance themselves from it. They too can't live with it in their heads 24/7. Like my self they have to keep it at bay. But it meant something to me that my father came after all.

BROTHER & SISTER

10 Years ago - I believe, my brother and sister broke the contact both to me and my parents. So we actually haven't had any contact for many years. Now being ill I haven't got the energy to contact them even if I wanted, but I can't handle it. But it would be quite all right if contact was resumed. On the other hand then my contact to my parents has improved.

TAKE CARE

I feel sorry for René. Hopefully he will live for many years still. So I directly try telling him to take good care of himself. That goes for my parents too, but they know.

WALK AGAINST CANCER

At Rigshospitalet they taped up a slip with info on going to some training when you got cancer receiving kemo-treatment. I've joined a project like that. Last year I walked the route in the DHL-race here in Copenhagen, 5 kilometres long. There's a guy I still see in training gym. He could only walk and watch but this year we have switched. So now he has to run 5 kilometres while I walk shouting fresh remarks. This offer meant a lot to me. These past years until September last year I was full of vigour. Struggling like crazy to improve myself until I was as fresh as like when I was 18. When I could race around on my bicycle whenever I wanted to. And I almost believe it was doable, had I not been taken ill again.

VIGSØ REVISITED

I went to Northern Jutland up there near Vigsø, where we had vacated earlier. And then one day I thought: I'll take a walk to Thisted from Klitmøller where I had borrowed a summer cottage. It was 20 kilometres and when I came there having a drink, ate and had a coffee while resting I thought: I wonder what'll happen if I walk back again. I had to try so I walked 40 kilometres in a day. It was because of the people in the project that I could do it. So I had trained hard, long and often which is why I pulled it off. I proved something to myself and I think that's why I feel so good today.

A FEW REGRETS

Of the things I haven't done I regret a few. But I realise today that it would have been bad timing if it had happened. After my disease I feel very sorry about not having had a girlfriend or a wife. I would have liked that. To have one to back me up. I could have used that. Instead I've got 25 new girlfriends out here [at the recovery ward]. I would have liked 50 more years. I'm not through with life, you never really are I suppose. But I think it's easier – if that's the word – when you get older, like my parents. That's natural. It's completely unnatural to have a break in your whole lifespan. I can see the tranquility with my parents – not in me whatsoever. That's something I have to learn by and by ...eventually.

NOW IS THE TIME I HAVE FELT MOST ALIVE

Of course I have lived and felt good having all the exciting experiences. But perhaps it's only now I'm beginning to understand it better.<<

EDITORIAL NOTES (SUMMER 2008)

Jan's recollections were recorded (july 31st) 4 months before he quietly passed away early on december 23rd 2006. In November he had one final concert experience with one of his guitar heroes: Dick Dale (sitting on the stage) and meeting him after the show. Ironically in retrospect it turns out that Dale is now well treated (it seems) for another kind of cancer which would have been in its early stages already when they met.

The last music project Jan was involved in was being co-producer of a music video based upon the music of Brian Wilson/Beach Boys and the urban legend of Mrs. O'Leary's Cow. Jan is named in the credits:

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=7270752012161370846&q=furman>

Its sneak preview took place in Copenhagen later that November 2006 (celebrating Beach Boys 40 years Danish concert anniversary in the same venue whereto they now returned).

This became Jan's last public appearance.

This memorial homepage dedicated to Jan has been edited by his friends:

René Hülz, the members of El Ray & Rasmus Skotte.

Any profits from the sale of Jan's collection will be transferred to Kræftens Bekæmpelse (the (Danish) national organisation in the fight against cancer) as requested by Jan himself.

[The editorial clarifications submitted throughout, are the ones in brackets]