

OUT University WAY

1949?

Jane Saw Sweden, Returned With An Enlightened View

All Scandinavians without exception take a certain pride in knowing that some second generation Scandinavians assume a very active interest in their heritage. Jane M. Isakson, student at the University of Washington, is a good exponent of this large but seldom publicized group of American Scandinavians. She intends to become a Swedish language instructor.

Miss Isakson made a visit to Sweden two years ago with her older brother and parents, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Isakson, 5027 37th N.E., Seattle. They left in August 1947 and returned a year later after having spent most of their time in Luleo. Jane made a number of observations and returned with a very enlightened view on the country of her forefathers.

"I was particularly impressed with how they care for old people over there," she says. "Another thing that struck me was the cleanliness everywhere; there are no slums, no visible signs of poverty in Sweden."

Liked Outdoor Dancing

Associating with Swedish youth, she discovered that they had a certain advantage over their American counterparts in being able to participate in outdoor dancing in every small or large community, even far out into the country. She thought the Swedish folk parks was a wonderful institution.

"The folk parks offer all kinds of entertainment in all parts of the country," she remarks. "I wish we had something like that over here."

"Another thing I liked was the way they observe their national holidays. They don't commercialize their national celebrations the way we do and in general they seem to get more out of life by not rushing around trying to be everywhere a once. Even the youth seem to share that sense of quiet dignity."

Jane, a former student of the University of Oregon, is majoring in the Scandinavian languages at the university and will get her BA next spring. She will continue another year to get her BA in education. And then? Well, her mind is set. She's going to teach Swedish at some school and she doesn't mean maybe, either. She has already learned of some openings.

Member of Folk Dance Club

Meanwhile she's going to dance and have fun with the Scandia folk dance club at the university of which she is a charter member. She is also a member of Klippan lodge of the Order of Vasa in Seattle.

Oh wait! I forgot to tell you about another of Jane's illuminating Swedish observations. She liked their cafes over there, especially the type that serve customers outdoors. She thought that was an innovation, reminiscent of the French boulevard cafes. While I'm on the subject it's worth noting that Jane was so impressed with Sweden that she hopes to be able to return there soon. She speaks pretty good Swedish, too, and it has a faint but authentic touch of "luleådialekt".

—Bard.