

# Welcome to Den Gamle By

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Den Gamle By, November 28, 2017

My presentation is  
about the underground  
Aarhus Story Experience.

How it fits into the  
concept of Den Gamle By.

About our  
principles and guidelines.

15 years ago Den Gamle By  
was a single period Open Air Museum



**A National open-air museum with  
focus on the pre-industrial period**



# Now Den Gamle By is a *Time Travel Open Air Museum*





Of course we still have  
the pre-industrial part



We have added  
the Modern Times as in 1927



With people's homes





# The Car Dealer



# The Telephone Exchange



And a museum



And a new town district with focus  
on the welfare society as in 1974



# The Gynaecologist





## The conventional family with two children, a boy and a girl



## The commune of young left wing students



**The storytelling is  
focused on real people  
and real stories**

On screens you will meet the  
people who lived there in 1974



## The same people 39 years later





# The Mini supermarket



## The second hand shop with magazines



The exhibitions  
inspire nostalgia  
and they stimulate  
discussions.

For instance about the  
pornography exhibited in  
The second hand shop.



In the Jazzbar it is  
allowed to smoke.

This certainly also  
stimulate discussions.





## Back yards



## The house with the small homes



## The retired couple



## Turkish immigrant workers - also a theme for discussions







## Student from Greenland- a story about Danish colonialism





# The kindergarten



Basically this part  
forms the basis for  
discussions about  
Danish identity

Recently we have also made  
galleries for Den Gamle By's  
special collections



## The Silver Gallery



# The Poster Museum



# The Jewellery Box



But basically Den Gamle  
By is an open-air museum  
conceptualized as a time  
travel.

In 2010/11 a new  
task was given to  
Den Gamle By: The  
history of Aarhus

*A little background:*

Den Gamle By is “born” in Aarhus in 1914 and in the first decades large parts of the museum’s houses and collections related to Aarhus.



**From the 1920s Den  
Gamle By was in reality  
both a local museum for  
Aarhus and the national  
open-air museum of  
urban history and culture.**

In 1993 the City Council decided to establish a special museum dedicated to Aarhus' history.

As a consequence Den Gamle By now focused on being a national museum.

In 2011 The City Council decided to close down the Aarhus museum and asked Den Gamle By to take over.

Luckily we also got the staff and the budget for the running costs.

We recognized that Aarhus has had museums for more than 150 years. But never an exhibition telling the history of the city.

So we knew what to do.

And we had to find out how to do it and how to combine the local and the national angles.

We know that the visitor's  
experience at Den Gamle By is  
a good day out in combination  
with content and substance.

We wanted the same for the  
new Aarhus Story exhibition

We also know that many people are fond of Den Gamle By's combination of intelligible exhibitions and the possibility of digging deeper into the matter.

We wanted the same for the new Aarhus Story exhibition



We also know that Den Gamle By always has been a national museum with a lot of stories from Aarhus.

We decided to make a virtue out of that and integrate the local and the national perspective into the upcoming exhibition about Aarhus.

Den Gamle By is a **time travel** from pre-industrial times until to-day.

We wanted the Aarhus Story exhibition to be a chronological survey of Aarhus' history from the city's founding in the Viking period until to-day.

We developed the concept, we made it fit with the museum's other development projects, and we were lucky with the fundraising.

In 2014 we excavated the area



In 2015 we  
hoisted down the centre piece



In 2016 the underground spaces were about to be finished





The Entrance building was built



**11. April 2017 Queen  
Margrethe opened the Aarhus Story**



You start with an elevator  
tour from the present to the past



First you enter the Viking's town



In the well a movie tells  
about the founding of the city



## Then the Bishop's town



1100-1550  
**BISPERNES BY**  
BISHOPS' TOWN

Domkirken rejste sig  
over byens huse.  
Et monument  
over kirkens rigdom og magt.  
Den katolske kirke  
bragte lærdom  
og nye impulser.

The Cathedral towered  
above the city's houses.  
A monument  
to the church's wealth  
& power.



# Townspeople





## Growth 1850 -1950

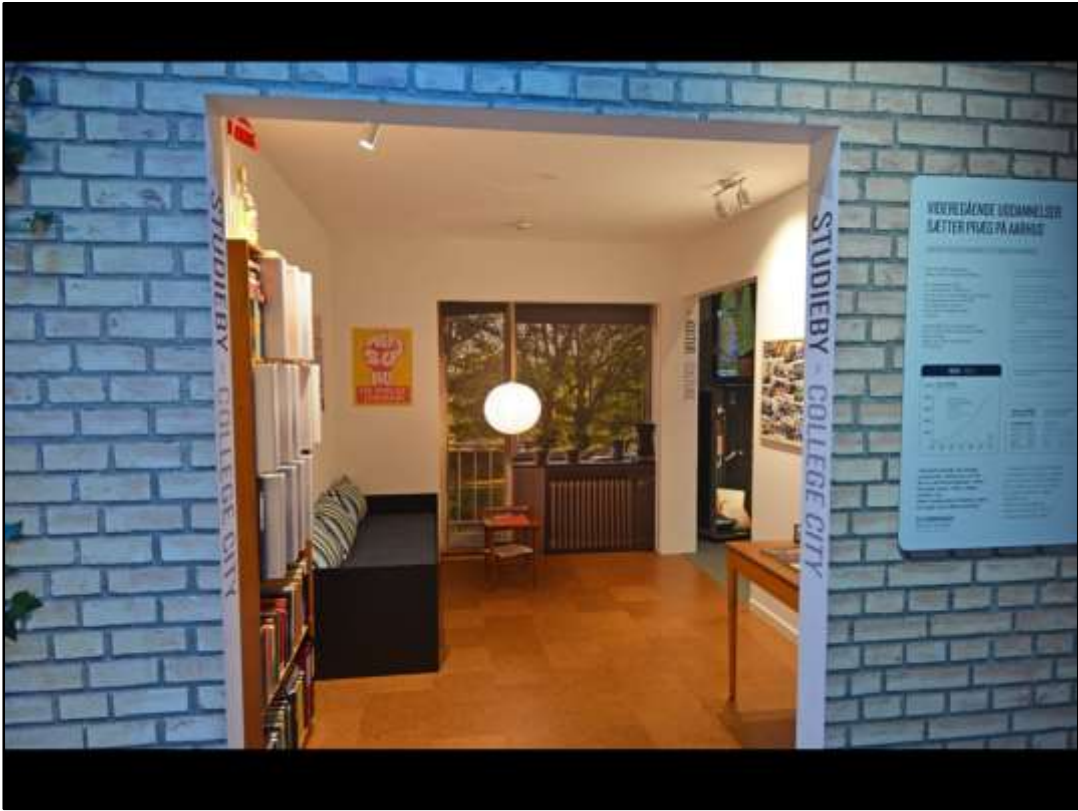


## The Occupation 1940-45



## Big City?















At the end of the storyline you  
can take your picture and you will  
become a part of the Aarhus Story



Until now the Aarhus Story Experience has been visited by more than 150.000 visitors.

The response has been overwhelmingly positive.

And we have learned a lot.

I will sum up the main principles.

## Capsule 1

The Aarhus Story is meant to be a *chronological* time travel in Aarhus' history from the founding of the city until to-day.

## Capsule 2

As it is the case with Den Gamle By the Aarhus Story is meant to be a fruitful combination of a *good day out* and some *substance and content*.

### Capsule 3

As with Den Gamle By the Aarhus Story is a combination of local and national history. So you can consider Aarhus Story as the *history of a typical Danish Town* – and the *example is Aarhus*. And of course also the other way round.

## Capsule 4

The Aarhus Story is meant to be a combination of *easy understandable* exhibitions and the possibility of *digging deeper* into the matter.

## Capsule 5

The Aarhus Story is designed as a combination of *immersive experiences* and areas with more *detailed information*.



## Capsule 6

In Aarhus Story we *focus on people and their stories* more than on things and objects.

## Capsule 7

As with Den Gamle By in general the Aarhus Story create *shared experiences* and try to avoid introvert and individualized storytelling.

## Capsule 8

In Aarhus Story we try  
to produce *backgrounds for*  
*discussions* between our  
visitors.

The Aarhus Story is a permanent exhibition and experience.

The contemporary part will be continuously updated in order to keep its relevance.

At Den Gamle By we believe  
that museums are important.

It is therefore our aim to  
reach out to as many people  
as possible. Even to people  
who believe that museums  
are boring and elitist.

To us the starting point shall  
always be **the visitors.**  
Of course, we recognize that  
museums also are about  
research, collections and  
preservation, but the focus  
must be on the visitors.

How do we hook them, how do we catch their fascination, how do we trigger their imagination, how do we touch their hearts – so that they will be open to the insight and experience that is the basic purpose of our museums.



This is basically  
what this conference  
is about.

Thank you  
for your attention  
and welcome to the conference

