

Report from Leonardo da Vinci-project Paintwork@Europe

3-7 May 2010 Falun, Sweden

- Themes:
- Health & Safety
- Work Environment
- Historical Mine work
- Modern workshop
- Air brush technique
- Teamwork
- Swedish culture



Weekend May 1-2

Some participants arrived already during the weekend and we used this time to socialize and visited the Swedish teachers' homes in historical areas outside Falun. For some, it was the first time they tasted moose meat! All the guests stayed at a youth hostel right beside the school and there were cars and bikes available for easy transportation.

Monday May 3: Introduction

We had an introductory gathering with presentations of the region of Dalarna, which is considered "typically Swedish" and attracts many tourists both summer and winter, and the school, Haraldsbogymnasiet, which has around 1100 students in both theoretical and vocational studies.



The vocational program for Vehicle Engineering, educates in Car Mechanics, Body Repair as well as Car Painting, our hosts. Our main theme for the week was Health and Safety in our work environment and we also had an introduction to the vocabulary around this. Car Painting teacher Björn looked back at earlier meetings and summarized what we had learned so far. One thing we have learned is how different the school systems are, all with their pros and cons. In Sweden the students get a more general education and spend more time in school, with only some weeks every year in car painting businesses. Björn also said that he hoped the teachers and students would go home after this week with an good attitude to Health & Safety measures. The students were later introduced to this week's main assignment: painting the flags of the participating countries as well as discussing their work environment.

16 students from five countries, Sweden, Germany, Denmark, Austria and the Basque country in Spain, presented issues from their work environment in powerpoint presentations. The teachers and Klaus Plum, from our silent partner FAI in Denmark, commented.



Monday evening

The students got to meet our guest teacher, Camille Cederlund, who has competed in World Skills and now works as a car painter. She spent 2*5 hours this week with the students and taught them air brush techniques. She had much help from the Swedish students Elias, Emelie, Sofie and Johan who hosted one group each of students with different languages. The four groups worked together the whole week, using English as their common language. Dinner at the local pizza place, to get as much time as possible in the paintshop.



Tuesday May 4: Historical work environment

We met at the mini vans to go to the old Copper Mine, around which Falun is built. The mine produced 2/3 of the world's copper in the 1600's, but today the mine is closed except for tourists and it is a UNESCO World Heritage. There were guided tours both in English and German so we divided into two groups. Very interesting and exciting and it was not hard to realize what a tough work environment this was!



After a lunch at the mine restaurant we had guided tours in English and German at the Red Paint factory. The traditional red paint that most of the houses in the Swedish countryside are painted with, gets its pigment from mineralization of byproducts from the mine. The paint with linseed oil preserves the wood.



Visit at the Automobile Club in Falun. Björn discussing old cars with teachers from Austria and Denmark. Later we went to see some classic cars in a private garage. Here the first T-ford in Dalarna.



Tuesday afternoon and evening

We taught our visitors the very popular sport of floor ball, which is played with a plastic stick and a light ball. The female teachers Gunilla and Dorte, not known for their sports talents, were goalkeepers in this exciting game. Later, the students got a well-deserved free evening with their Swedish hosts, where they visited a Chinese Restaurant.

The teachers and headmasters, along with guest lecturer Kevin McDermott from BASF, got a private guided tour of the home of Sweden's most famous artist, Carl Larsson. The painter and his wife are considered to be very important for the image of Swedish interior design with their way of using colours and textile design. A good dinner with deer meat at nearby restaurant. We discussed many interesting things such as car painting education in an international perspective and how we can cooperate in the future within and after the project.



Wednesday May 5: Paintshop work

We started in the morning with a lecture on Health & Safety from our guest Kevin McDermott, BASF Academy Manager. BASF, Glasurit, is one of the silent partners in our project. He had named his presentation: “Surviving the Paint and Body Industry - a Survivors Guide”. And this is exactly what it was – a survival kit complete with facts, rules, warnings and personal reflections about the work environment as a car painter. We also had the opportunity to ask him questions and discuss for example the possible dangers of water based paints and the future of the business.

The students later started with this week’s work, painting flags in groups while also thinking about their personal safety and health in the long run.



Evening activities

In the evening the students continued and finished their special course in air brush technique with good results. Camille instructed and gave much good advice. Most students had not tried air brush technique and now they got a chance to try something they might want to continue with at home.

Thank you to guest teacher Camille!



Teachers were invited to Björn’s house for dinner and, for those who dared, a traditional sauna bath and swimming in the ice cold lake! An evening they will never forget... The teachers finished the evening with taking a look at the work in the paintshop.

Thursday May 6: Finishing up the work

In the morning the students started right away with finishing their painted flags and at the same time discussing topics such as PPE (personal protective equipment), attitudes to safety measures, how to stay healthy etc. While the paint dried the students presented powerpoint presentations of their topics and we got a good discussion going. Later all were photographed outside the paintshop, which was fun.



The final theoretical test was a healthy walk around the school with questions to show what the students had learnt – the tests were made and corrected by Björn and everyone passed the exam.



Taking a shower and changing clothes for the ultimate teamwork – cooking a delicious dinner in the school restaurant kitchen with supervising teachers Tetta and Anki and their assistant Louise. The four groups made appetizers, main course with “Falukorv”, dessert and the last group laid the tables and decorated nicely. Turned out that some students were familiar with restaurant work!



Thursday Evening: Diploma Dinner

The dinner was a success – everything tastes better when you have helped to cook! Björn and Camille handed out the diplomas and our Body repair teacher played folk music on an instrument most people have never heard of – “nyckelharpa”. He ended with “Rock around the Clock” which was the music of the Rockabilly band that took over the show. Rockabilly music is popular in this region and along with that a great interest in old American cars. People talked, danced and laughed!



Friday May 7: Trip to Stockholm

We left Falun early Friday morning in a rented bus to Stockholm, where we visited a very modern workshop with a good work environment and an efficient flow of vehicles through the body repair and paintshop. Manager Urban Magnusson of RM Bilservice showed us around.



We had lunch in a restaurant in a tower with a view of the northern suburbs of Stockholm. Safety Engineer Alf Berglund from the Motor Business Association had a lecture on Health & Safety, which quite well summarized what we had learned this week:

- **Car painting is a high risk job, but if you are careful you can do quite well.**
- **PPE, personal protective equipment, is always important!**
- **The right equipment for the right occasion: gloves, goggles, air-fed masks, coveralls etc.**
- **A good work environment has enough ventilation and modern spray booths.**
- **Car painting also affects the nature and environment around us.**
- **Healthy spare time activities can help you a lot, such as being outdoors.**
- **Your attitude towards health & safety is what counts!**
- **Air brush painting is fun!**
- **We have learned a lot of English through this project, which can help keep us updated in the future.**



**After a guided tour of the central parts of Stockholm, some people stayed longer in the Swedish capital and to the others we said good-bye at the Central station. Tired hosts went home after an interesting week!
See you in September!**

**Björn Wilhelmsson, Car painting teacher
Gunilla Bohlin, English teacher
Emelie, Sofie, Elias and Johan, Swedish students
Haraldsbogymnasiet, Falun, Sweden**