

Obituary Hans Peder Pedersen (1931-2011)

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Hans Peder Pedersen, better known as HP, is dead. A text message on my phone brought me the sad news.

HP had a varied life. As a baby he was placed in an orphanage, he trained as a manor gardener at Gissselfeld, served in the military and ended his working life as rector of the School of Conservation in Copenhagen. Through the army HP came into contact with what would be his career. Employed in the Army Archives he learned the preservation skills of handwriting and paper conservation at the National Archives, of which the Army Archives were a part. In 1969 HP became head conservator at the National Archives and Provincial Archives.

As head conservator at the National Archives, it was natural that HP was involved in rescue operations during the flood in Florence in 1966. He was part of the Nordic team, who worked in Florence to rescue the valuable

three department heads, it was natural that HP was rector of the School of Conservation several times. His interest in what went on at the school was reflected by the fact that he was often on tour around the school to see and hear what was going on – you could hear him rattling his key ring. His door was always open and he always had time to talk with and listen to you when you had something on your mind.

HP's special diplomacy served him several times. He became head of the old 'Royal Academy Schools Joint Committee', something that had always been reserved

cultural heritage objects which were damaged during the flood. Here, HP's deep respect for and enjoyment of Italian cuisine was founded and developed.

When the School of Conservation was founded, HP was an obvious representative of the archival world. He sat on the first selection committee and was thus instrument in shaping the school right from its foundation. HP's human knowledge, his gardener's care-gene' and his down to earth attitude in caring for both students and staff made for a very fertile environment in his department, which resulted in the first conservator and the first three PhD's of the School of Conservation all being students from the Graphic Department. HP was proud of his students and his staff, and they did not let him down.

His visionary ideas helped to change paper conservation from a craft into modern conservation tradition resting on scientific research and modern methods. In a way HP was the driving force behind the visionary development of conservation science in Denmark, and through the network in International Association of Book and Paper Conservators (IADA) could contribute to an attitude change which extended much further. As one of the

for 'big brother', the School of Architecture. We are many who remember with pleasure the study field trips, where teachers and students were on study tour to learn from the various museum institutions and conservation workshops, which were visited on these trips. A nice touch on these trips was that HP's wife Inger (also called Mother Inger) participated in several of these study tours.

HP will be missed by many. Our thoughts are with Inger and their children.