



eLIFE – news on life at LIFE

Thursday 14 February 2008

Email to the editors: elife@life.ku.dk

Final deadline for editorial changes is Wednesday before publication of eLIFE on Thursday.

Editorial changes may occur in relation to the online newsletter.

As regards links in the newsletter, please refer to the Danish online version at the faculty's website http://www.life.ku.dk/Maalgruppe/medarbejdere/life_internt/nyhedsbrev.aspx

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, Editor, Communications, glb@life.ku.dk

Life at LIFE

The Silk Road throughout history – Kim Greiner tells more

There is a white mulberry tree in the LIFE Gardens, and as the leaves from the white mulberry tree produce the best silk, it is relevant to talk about the role silk has played throughout world history after the silk has left the intestine of the silk moth.

It is said that, 4,500 years ago, the Chinese empress Li Ling-Shi was sitting under a mulberry tree when a silk moth's cocoon fell down into her scorching hot tea. When the empress, who later became known as the Lady of the Silk Larva, fished up the cocoon, a thin thread wound itself around her finger, marking the start of Chinese keeping silk larvae as domestic animals.

Silk fabrics were commanding extremely high prices, and the Chinese emperors had a monopoly on all trade with silk moth eggs, larvae and pupae as well as the finished silks, and if the monopoly was violated, the culprit was quickly knocked down to size and beheaded.

Outside the Chinese empire, there was a huge demand for the finished silk fabrics, and they were transported by camel along the Silk Road which went from the city of Xian where the imperial silk factories were located. The Silk Road then passed through Central Asia by several different routes, the most famous being through Persia and on to Turkey to Constantinople and from there to the Roman Empire. Towns grew up along the Silk Road where traders and camels could rest and replenish their supplies before continuing on their 8,000-kilometre-long journey. Together with the silk, jade, lacquer, porcelain and spices were sent from China, and gold and silver were sent in the opposite direction from Europe. It certainly wasn't a bed of roses for the caravans to pass through the some of the world's most inhospitable terrain with unbearable heat during the summer, extreme cold in the winter and thieving bands of robbers everywhere, but if they succeeded, there were huge profits to be made for the traders.

However, it was not only precious items that were transported along the Silk Road, but also new ideas and, in particular, religions such as Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, which attracted ready audiences when a good preacher was accompanying the caravans.

In ancient Rome, silks were so costly that silk and gold were weighed equally against one another, and Emperor Gaius Julius Caesar (102-44 BC) banned anyone apart from himself and his officials from wearing the expensive silk fabrics. Later, when the Roman upper classes were able to buy all the silk they desired, the Roman Empire's balance of payments suffered heavily, and the almost see-through robes for women also contributed to the Empire's fall.

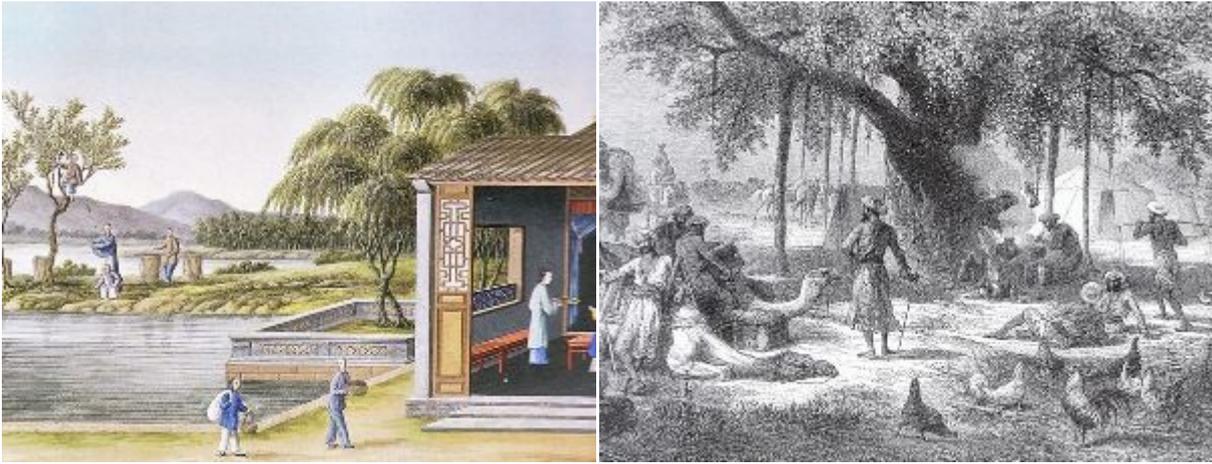
For more than 3,000 years, the method in which silk was produced was a secret well kept by the Chinese but which, like all secrets, was finally divulged. Of course, it is hard to say whether it was monks smuggling butterfly eggs out of the Chinese Empire in their hollow staffs or the Princess of Khotan hiding them in her large hairdo, but we know that in about 200 AD the Koreans were the first to discover the art of producing silk, followed soon after by the Japanese. Later the technique reached the Mediterranean area, where silk was of considerable importance to the Byzantine Empire and the Ottoman Empire.

Almost all European countries have their own silk history with the planting of mulberry trees and the production of cocoons and the weaving of silk fabrics. In many instances it went well and produced tremendous riches, while other times illnesses decimated the silk larvae, or the wrong species of mulberry trees were planted.

Denmark too has its own silk history, which we will tell at a later date, but readers must already be longing to know the answer to the question: "Where is the white mulberry in the LIFE Gardens?" However, that remains a secret, but I promise that it will be revealed before 3,000 years are up.

Source: Ole Zethner & Rie Koustrup. 'Silkens veje'. Koustrup & Co.

Kim Greiner, Senior Gardener



Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@life.ku.dk – latest update 07.02.08

LIFE working to develop anti-obesity pills – see DR2 on Tuesday 19 February at 8 pm

It's now time to discover what causes obesity. The answer is found on Greenland in a trial involving people confined to Danish laboratories. A new solution to the problem is in the pipeline. The final testing of an anti-obesity pill is about to commence. The pills can achieve weight losses of up to 25 kg in just six months. And perhaps we will have to regulate people's appetite with medicine. Because for many, exercise is not enough. Our bodies cannot burn all the fats, and our intestines are desperate for too much food.

See DR2 on Tuesday 19 February at 8 pm. See LIFE's respiration chambers, and meet Associate Professor Anders Sjödin, Laboratory Technician John Lind Gargul and Professor Arne Astrup – all from LIFE.

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@life.ku.dk – latest update 07.02.08

Announcements

Symposium: Diversity and more women in research at CU - Friday 22 February at 2-4 pm

All members of staff and other interested parties at the University of Copenhagen are welcome. There are still a few seats available. You can register here.

The task force's report on women in research can now also be read at <http://rektorat.ku.dk/mangfoldighed/>

Time: Friday, 22 February, 2-4 pm

Venue: The Ceremonial Hall at Frue Plads, Copenhagen K

This event is a debate about the coming strategy on increasing the number of women in faculty at the University of Copenhagen. It will be held in Danish. For questions please write to Jacob Sølling:

jacs@adm.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@life.ku.dk – latest update 14.02.08

Lecture: Invasive plant species – Thursday 28 February at 7.30 pm, Rolighedsvej 23, 2nd floor

Hans Wernberg, who works for Biomedica and who, among other things, is responsible for combatting invasive species, will talk about some of the plants which are today regarded as invasive species, and how they can be combatted. They include the following plant species: Giant Hogweed, Rugosa Rose, Canadian and Giant Goldenrod, Common Butterbur as well as Japanese and Giant Knotweed.

After the talk, there will be an opportunity to discuss the problem with the speaker.

Organiser: Havebrugshistorisk Selskab.

Finn T. Sørensen, BVFB, fts@life.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gjb@life.ku.dk – latest update 12.02.08

Course for researchers in patenting and commercialisation on Tuesday 26 February at 8.30 am - 5.00 pm at Rigshospitalet

Rigshospitalet's tech transfer unit, Tectra, and the University of Copenhagen's Tech Trans Unit are holding a course for researchers in patenting and commercialisation.

The course is taking place on 26 February at 8.30 am - 5 pm at Rigshospitalet. The course is free of charge, and there is space for max. 75 participants.

See [attached programme](#)

Karen Laigaard, Technology Transfer, kala@adm.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gjb@life.ku.dk – latest update 08.02.08

Fogh talks about climate policy and his expectations for the climate conference on Friday 22 February at 10.30 - 11.30 am in the Ceremonial Hall at Frue Plads

The prime minister's talk is one of a series as part of the Copenhagen Climate Lectures which the University of Copenhagen is holding in the run-up to the UN's Climate Change Conference. After the talk, questions will be invited from the floor. It will also be possible to ask video questions via YouTube (see www.virtuel.ku.dk).

"The countdown to the climate summit in Copenhagen has now begun. With the Copenhagen Climate Lectures we hope to be able to help this countdown along by contributing knowledge and debate about key climate issues from now and right up until the summit," says Pro-rector Lykke Friis.

In parallel with the lecture series in the Ceremonial Hall, the University of Copenhagen has also launched an extensive climate initiative, the main element of which is a world research congress that is being arranged together with the universities of Yale, Berkeley and Beijing in March 2009.

Read more about the University of Copenhagen's climate efforts at www.klima.ku.dk.

Time and venue: 22 February 2008 at 10.30-11.30 am in the Ceremonial Hall at the University of Copenhagen, Frue Plads, 1017 Copenhagen K

To register, visit www.virtuel.ku.dk.

Contact: Jacob Sølling tel. 28 75 26 30 or Astrid Gufler tel. 28 75 47 84

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@life.ku.dk – latest update 08.02.08

Danish Garden Society (Haveselskabets Have): Two talks in English about Scots roses, peonies and irises – Sunday 24 February at 10.30 am - 4 pm in lecture hall 3-14

Museum director Peter Boyd talks about the big interest in his life: Scots roses (*rosa pimpinellifolia*), of which his own collection has been awarded National Collection status. Peter Boyd has worked as a consultant for several large rose gardens, for example Sangerhausen and L'Hay les Roses. He has also written articles on Scots roses in English, French, German and Finnish journals. In Denmark we call these roses 'sand dune roses'. Visit: www.peterboyd.com

12.30 - 1.30 pm Lunch

After lunch, Claire Austin will talk about peonies and irises. Claire has for many years worked with perennials at her father's firm David Austin Roses, before setting up her own nursery in 2001. She has written several books and in 2005 published a major work "Irises – A gardener's encyclopedia". Claire has won countless prizes and her collection of bearded irises has also been awarded National Collection status. See www.claireaustin-hardyplants.co.uk

Price: DKK 125 per talk. DKK 220 for both talks, lunch DKK 45 / Danish Garden Society (Haveselskabet) members: DKK 95 per talk. Both talks DKK 190.

Students at LIFE can attend the talks free of charge. Remember your student card.

For further information see: <http://www.haveselskabet.dk/kalenderdetalje.t?kid=4828>.

Registration: Lita Johansen: jornjo@gmail.com or tel.: 4444 1491 before 6 pm, or Hanna Askholm: h.askholm@gmail.com or tel.: 3670 6944. Payment to bank sort code 2253, account no. 6263 737 073.

Date: Sunday 24 February 2008

Time: 10.30 am - 4 pm

Place: Faculty of Life Sciences, lecture room 3-14, Thorvaldsensvej 40, Frederiksberg

Finn T. Sørensen, BVFB, fts@life.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@life.ku.dk – latest update 08.02.08

Education

Play a trump in your education – and break new ground – Friday 22 February at 12.45 - 3 pm

Student Services is now organising a new event that gives you the opportunity to get an overview of the countless study activities outside LIFE. For example, hear about project work with businesses, traineeships, courses at other educational institutions and studies abroad.

The event emphasizes taking a more open approach to your study plan, and which competences external study activities can give you as a qualified graduate.

The day's programme:

- 12:45 - 12:55 pm – Joint introduction
- 1 - 1.40 pm – First round
- 1.30 - 1.40 pm – Break
- 1.50 - 1.30 pm – Second round

During each round, the following four presentations are given:

- Studies and traineeships abroad - six months at a university in the Netherlands or perhaps even the US? Hear about the procedure involved for travelling abroad during your studies. Both with regard to studies and traineeships – with Michael Guldager, SIU
- Volunteers and projects in businesses. If you want a network, business insight and seeing your study programme in perspective, collaborating with a company is maybe a possibility. Hear about "Projectøren", possibilities and rules with Alexander Lindskov, Student adviser
- Optional subjects outside LIFE – are there any subjects at any of the University of Copenhagen's other faculties which are relevant for you? How about subjects at DTU (Technical University of Denmark), RUC (Roskilde University), Aarhus School of Architecture, IT University, SDU (University of Southern Denmark) or AU (University of Aarhus? Hear about the possibilities and rules with Mette Nisbeth Hansen, Student adviser
- Why study abroad and collaborate with businesses? Would you like to hear what employers and labour market consultants are looking for when assessing job applications? What does it mean having spent six months abroad? What competences do you get out of collaborating with a company during your theses or as a volunteer - with JA and a small company.

If you are interested in hearing more about the event, you can contact Alexander Lindskov, student adviser, [Student Services](#), Thorvaldsensvej 40, tel. 35 33 35 33 or by email at studenterservice@life.ku.dk

Read more at http://www.life.ku.dk/Aktiviteter/2008/989_saet_trumf_paa_din_uddannelse.aspx

We look forward to seeing you!

Student Services

Søren Hedegaard Sørensen, Student Services, shs@life.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@life.ku.dk – latest update 12.02.08

FN's Newsletter February 2008 – read about the FN on road trip, seminar about the Green Path and much more

Exciting news is now available from your academic association.

As previously, you can see the news mail in the [smart version by clicking here](#). Here, you will also find the colourful calendar full of future activities for you as an FN member.

Read about:

- News from the union chair

- Open office
- Suffer free – marathon running with LIFE
- FN on the road
- Lunchbox seminars
- Galla 2008
- The green path for the university of tomorrow

Enjoy: -)

Frederik Clauson-Kaas

On behalf of the FN board

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk – latest update 12.02.08

Staff news

Biology-biotechnology student Morten Emil Moldrup has received a research scholarship from Novo Nordisk/Novozymes

The scholarship gives Morten Emil Moldrup the opportunity to research sustainable potato production. He will test a new method of protecting potatoes against attack with so-called glucosinolates, natural compounds, which we will recognise as the sharp taste in mustard.

“The project offers very interesting perspectives for world food production. In future, we can, through plant biology, contribute to sustainable potato production with greater yields and the reduced use of insecticides,” says project supervisor Barbara Ann Halkier, an Associate Professor in plant biology at the Faculty of Life Sciences. “At the same time, at the Faculty of Life Sciences we are both proud and delighted that Morten Emil Moldrup can, thanks to this scholarship, now fully concentrate on the project,” she adds.

Katherina Ludvigsen

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk – latest update 08.02.08

Research

The Tech Trans Unit takes over all patenting and commercialisation activities at CU

From 1 January 2008, the Tech Trans Unit at the University of Copenhagen is handling all the university's patenting and commercialisation activities. In other words, all LIFE projects will now be handled in the Unit, which is part of the new department for Innovation & Research Service (which is currently at Panum).

If, as a researcher, you think you have made a discovery, you should use [this reporting form](#) in future. The procedure is the same as previously, but the address and form have changed. At the Tech Trans Unit's website (www.tt.ku.dk), you can, among other things, find information about the patenting and commercialisation process.

Collaboration agreements which do not relate to discoveries are still handled by the Research & Innovation Office (FIK).

We look forward to working with you. If you have any questions, you are very welcome to call or mail us.

Kind regards,
Tech Trans Unit
Panum Institute, Building 40
Address: Blegdamsvej 3B,
2200 Copenhagen N

Telephone: 353-26336
Fax: 353-26331

Email: techtrans@adm.ku.dk
Website: www.tt.ku.dk

Henriette Fenger Grønfeldt, FIK, hgro@life.ku.dk
Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk – latest update 13.02.08

Grants

Grant awarded

Henrik Tofte Jacobsens foundation awarded grants in week 7, and the recipients have been informed directly. Letters of rejection will not be sent.

Annette Guildal, Study and Students' Affairs, ag@life.ku.dk
Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk – latest update 13.02.08

Research funds etc.

See the online version at
http://www.life.ku.dk/Maalgruppe/medarbejdere/life_internt/nyhedsbrev/forskningsmidler.aspx
Here you will find all calls with active links.