



1_Krokstrand_Folkets-hus-på-Krokstrand-er-Bohusläns-eldste-innviet-i-1902.-Foto_Svein-Norheim_DSC_2294.jpg

growing.

At first the stonecutters were a very mobile work force. When one order was complete, they were usually laid off and had to look somewhere else. After a while they began to form unions and organize the community. At its height Branch 41 of the Swedish Stoneworkers' Union had 400 members. The stonecutters were known as free and proud; they were very independent. In the 1940s keener competition led to rationalization and the stonecutters were formed in teams under foremen.

The stone industry employed 8 000 people in Bohuslän. A sharp decline in demand brought new recruitment to a halt. When Krokstrand received large orders in the 1960s they had to import labours from Portugal. A colony of 90 Portuguese brought welcome custom to the shops and the local people were able to enjoy olive oil and sardines. But it was short-lived. "On the last day of December 1977, I handed in my tools," recalls Rollo, the last Portuguese.

THE MUNICIPALITY

In the 1870s, granite was discovered at Krokstrand. Quarrying companies moved in. The place expanded and even outgrew Strömstad. In 1900 there was a population of two thousand. Krokstrand became a municipality, but with its own council.

From Krokstrand, dressed paving stones were shipped out for laying on the roads of Europe. But war and export restrictions hit the business and the community hard. And new materials such as asphalt caused a slump in demand. By the late 1970s, Krokstrand was a sleeping village, with quarrymen's barracks, chapel, schools and shops empty. A young generation of town dwellers saw the opportunities and moved in and the "green wave" was a reality. Many locals were doubtful. Could they survive here?

THE PEOPLE'S HALL

The People's Hall here was erected in 1902 and is the oldest in Bohuslän. It was built by the quarrymen. Today the hall is the center of the new community. Children play here, cultural activities are blooming, and business ideas are hatched.

KROKSTRAND – THE STONECUTTERS

The rock at Krokstrand is nearly a thousand million years old. It is fine-grained grey granite which can be worked very well. The 1870s saw immigration from other parts of Sweden and Norway. Stonecutters and others came looking for work at the urging of Norwegian quarrying companies. On the Continent the demand for paving stone was