



A DANISH CHRISTMAS

When in May my Danish daughter-in-law invited us for Christmas, little did she know she'd be six months pregnant, with twins! However, she and my son duly honoured the invitation and we arrived at their one-bedroomed flat in Copenhagen on Friday 21st December. The weather was definitely cooler than in Bosham but suitably attired, the following day we ventured to a Christmas market in the city. The afternoon was a trip to the crowded Tivoli gardens where we had Christmas lunch (*Julefrokost*) in a restaurant overlooking the lake. This consisted of a platter of three types of fish, two of meat and a portion of cheese. We wandered around the beautifully lit gardens with their 'dare devil' rides and finally attended



'Crazy Christmas Cabaret'. This was a type of pantomime presented mainly in English by Vivienne McKee—as she had done for the last 30 years! The following day we had our first taste of Danish snow as we went to a concert in Vor Frelsers Kirke. We entered the darkened church lit only by candles and spent an hour listening to an organ recital of Olivier Messiaen's music with computerised lighting



linked to the music—something a bit different and very soporific!

Christmas Eve we made our way (three trains) to my daughter-in-law's family for their main Christmas celebration—a splendidly decorated table (lots of candles and red clad gnomes etc) for dinner—caviar followed by turkey and duck (cooked on barbecue outside) followed by the traditional almond rice pudding—the person who finds the whole almond claims the prize! Upstairs then to the large Christmas tree with electric and real candles on it, dancing round it holding hands and singing Danish carols! Presents from under the tree were exchanged and games played until late.

Christmas Day we returned to the flat and prepared an English Christmas meal for the rest of the family—roast leg of lamb (as we'd had turkey the previous day). We served roast vegetables and of course sprouts, followed by Christmas pudding and mince pies. Then we exchanged presents and played games including hunt the thimble! Definitely a different and quite prolonged Christmas celebration.

Diana Baker