

ANNUAL MAGAZINE

PUBLISHED BY MELLBY GÅRD AB

2021

“We are well prepared for new investments and acquisitions”

2021 was undeniably a turbulent year, where the pandemic continued to affect us. But despite the volatility caused by restrictions, recommendations and rapid fluctuations in consumer attitudes, Mellby Gård managed to achieve its best result ever thanks to the hard work and commitment of staff at our group of companies.



Vattenresurs restores balance in our lakes

Nature itself can take centuries to eliminate eutrophication – while Vattenresurs can see a difference in just a few days.



Kappahl is ready for growth

Growth and sustainability can be combined. To achieve this, we have to take responsibility for the whole value chain, from design to production and, eventually, the user phase.



MELLBY GÅRD



“Welcome to our new magazine”

This year, we are trying out something new – an Annual Magazine rather than a Yearbook. Honestly, this should be regarded not as a revolution, but as an evolution in how we choose to present the various businesses and engagements at Mellby Gård. I hope you will find it interesting and worth a read, as we have chosen to alternate our traditional company presentations with in-depth information and interviews with people who are important to us and what we do.

These are troubled times, and in the last two years we have endured a pandemic resulting in restrictions and changes in consumer attitudes, unprecedented inflation, and now a tragic invasion taking place not far from our borders. Everything else is overshadowed by the invasion and our thoughts and prayers are with the people of Ukraine and everyone directly and indirectly affected by what is happening. In the meantime, we are longing and hope for a peaceful solution.

Thanks to a strong balance sheet resulting from a successful 2021, interesting opportunities will be created in 2022. We will go on being forward-thinking when it comes to new investments and acquisitions. That said, our balance sheet also gives us a sense of security in these troubled times, where people are seeing inflation, high energy costs and general uncertainty.

Despite these troubled times, I hope you find this new format interesting. I also hope you enjoy reading the magazine, which presents new insights and perspectives from our operations.



Johan Andersson

ABOUT US

Mellby Gård is a family-owned, long-term investor that endeavours to preserve the entrepreneurial spirit of its companies. Being the biggest shareholder in each company is a fundamental part of the business model. Being this shareholder provides the right opportunities to set the strategic agenda and assume overall responsibility for the development of the company.

Mellby Gård currently has a presence in four verticals: industry, consumer goods, agriculture and services. From an overall portfolio perspective, a balance between these is important in order to spread the risks. There are currently no plans to invest in new verticals, although this is not ruled out for the future.

FOUNDED IN 1986

Mellby Gård was founded in 1986 when Rune Andersson acquired the Mellby Gård farm in Sösdala. Initially, the company only conducted agricultural operations and, for a few years, expansion was achieved within Andersson & Bennet. In 1995, a 50 percent holding in Älvsbyhus and a 100 percent holding in Söderberg & Haak was acquired. The two companies remain in the Group today.

FROM PROMISING TO LEADING

The three cornerstones of our business model, the Mellby model, are a long-term view, active corporate governance and partnership. Our objective is to take our companies from promising to leading. For us, it is fundamental to gradually develop the full potential of our holdings. We achieve this by being active owners, maintaining a close dialogue with the management of the companies and, through shareholder partnership with them, generating opportunities for them to share in the value they build.

Mellby Gård's objective – to help companies make the transition from promising to leading – describes the direction in which companies should develop, while also confirming the value of all portfolio companies.

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WICTOR IS HEADING FOR THE OLYMPICS

The World Championships are to be held in the US this summer, and Wictor hopes to reach the final. But his dream is to compete at the 2024 Olympics in Paris. There, the aim is to win a medal.

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DUNI GROUP ON THEIR TRANSITION TO CIRCULARITY

Duni will have achieved full circularity by 2030 and is leading the industry towards a world where we give more than we take.

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FC ROSENGÅRD HELPS PEOPLE TO DREAM BIG

The ambition: to create an equal Malmö where all districts and people are included, where all children and families dare to dream and have goals for their future.

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VATTENRESURS CREATES CLEAN LAKES AND A HEALTHY NATURE

The company has been using a patented technology since the 1990s to clean lakes and ponds. The results of their process can be seen after just a few days!

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TEACH FOR SWEDEN: KNOWLEDGE IS POWER!

Every child should be able to be the best version of themselves and choose their own futures. This is the starting point for Teach for Sweden Foundation, an organisation that help talented academics take the leap and become valued teachers.

36



KAPPAHL AIMS TO CELEBRATE DIVERSITY IN EVERYDAY LIFE

If 2020 involved dealing with the challenges presented by the pandemic and planning for increased growth, 2021 was the year in which Kappahl made the successful transition from talk to action!

”Great commitment and effort have gone into Mellby Gård’s best year ever”

2021 was undeniably a turbulent year, where the pandemic continued to affect us. But despite the volatility caused by restrictions, recommendations and rapid fluctuations in consumer attitudes, we managed to achieve our best result ever in the 36 years since Mellby Gård was founded. I am extremely impressed by the commitment and effort shown by all staff within our group of companies during these uncertain times.

We completed one successful sales during the year. After almost 25 years in the parking industry, initially as the sole owner of Cale and then as the second biggest owner of Flowbird, the company formed in 2018 by the merger of Cale and its competitor Parkeon, we have now left the sector.

WELL PREPARED FOR NEW ACQUISITIONS

The sale is firmly in line with our values and the strategic direction we have decided to take over the last few years. It is important to us to ensure that industrial logic always leads the way. This is why we created Flowbird four years ago, secure in the knowledge that the synergies were great and that by joining forces, Cale and Parkeon would be even stronger when it came to driving development in an ever-changing industry.

This event is also part of our forthcoming strategy, which will involve digging where we stand, freeing up time and resources so that we can invest in areas where we believe our ownership model and expertise can be applied to the greatest effect. For instance, we know – after almost 15 and 22 years respectively as owners of international businesses such as Roxtec and Feralco – we are well prepared to make further investments and acquisitions within the scope of different industrial applications and water treatment technologies. We are also well prepared to make some value-adding acquisitions alongside some of our other major holdings.

STANDING FIRM IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

At the time of writing, an event is unfolding that is overshadowing everything else: Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. Our thoughts are with the people of Ukraine and everyone directly and indirectly affected by what is happening. We hope that a peaceful solution will be found; but in the meantime, we will carry on with the outstanding humanitarian initiatives already taking place at the instigation of most of our companies. We stand firm and have the ability to help others in difficult times.

Yet despite everything, interesting opportunities are being created for 2022 thanks to our strong balance sheet. This gives us a sense of security in these troubled times, where people are seeing looming inflation, high energy costs and general uncertainty.



Johan Andersson,
CEO, Mellby Gård AB



FACTS

The Mellby Gård year in brief

2021 was another turbulent year for Mellby Gård, but successful nonetheless. The Group results for the year and a few highlights from our companies are presented below.

HOLDINGS IN

16
COMPANIES

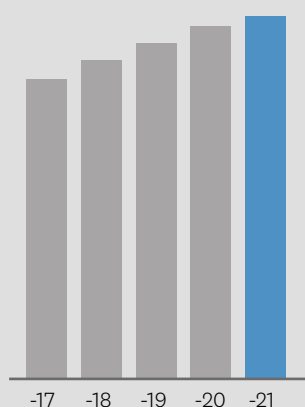


INCREASED PACE OF

sustainability work for Duni Group, Oscar Jacobson and Kappahl, with emphasis on circular solutions and recycling.

SALES 2021

10,433
SEK MILLIONS



MELLBY GÅRD has recorded its best year ever in the company's 36-year history in terms of profit.

EBITDA 2021

2,066
SEK MILLIONS

MELLBY GÅRD

sells its shares in Flowbird.



FINANCIAL KEY RATIOS

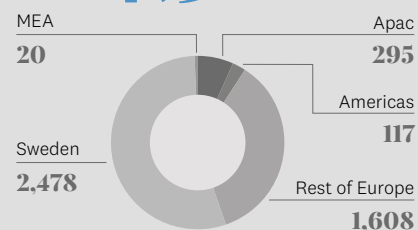
SEK millions	2017/2018	2018/2019	2020	2019/2020*	2021
Sales	6,009	6,147	9,449	13,983	10,433
EBITDA (ex. IFRS16)**	1,141	1,005	1,548	2,354	2,066
EBITDA %	19%	16%	16%	17%	20%
Equity	7,619	7,385		7,714	9,708
Net debt (ex. IFRS16)	-1,249	-1,277		-1,268	53
Total assets	11,070	11,042		13,813	15,646
Equity ratio	69%	67%		56%	62%

* Preliminary financial statements 2019/2020. Financial year changed to calendar year, hence 18 months in the transition year.

** EBITDA corresponds to earnings before net financial items, tax and amortisation of tangible and intangible fixed assets and excludes non-recurring costs and income. EBITDA includes the Group's share of associated companies' EBT.

FULL-TIME EQUIVALENTS

4,518



DUNI GROUP p18

- The pandemic has continued to affect operations, with a number of countries seeing extensive restrictions and rapid changes. Price increases on supplies have also created pressure in respect of costs and inflation.
- Duni Group made a decision to apply an updated strategy with the aim of being the industry leader in sustainability by 2030.
- A number of sustainability initiatives such as fossil-free Airlaid and Dunicel products, a biogas plant for production in Skåpafors and investments in European companies with re-use products. Duni Group have also joined the UN Global Compact.

FERALCO..... p20

- Acquisition of Venator Wasserchemie in Germany and the remaining 50 per cent of Feracid in France.
- Difficult challenges as the price of transport and commodities rises.
- Mellby Gård representative Mikael Helmersson took over as chairman.

VATTENRESURSp22

- The Ullnasjön 2021-2022 research partnership on the functioning of the methodology in shallow lakes.
- New wharf in November 2021. More functional work spaces in Kungsängen for off-season maintenance and service.
- Cooperation with Race For The Baltic for a healthier Baltic Sea, UnderWater Restoration subproject, from February 2021 to December 2022.

HEDSON TECHNOLOGIES*.... p26

- Built a robust comprehensive business plan for 2022-2024, based on the company's strong position, leadership in technology and strong brands. Focus on the technology shift in the industry, including implementation of an new digital business system.
- Record year for the curing part of the industrial segment.
- Restructuring of operations in France.

ROXTECp28

- Magnus Holmberg takes over as new CEO of Roxtec.
- Roxtec sets a new sales target of SEK 3 billion for 2025.
- Purchase of a new property in Tulsa, Oklahoma in the US, relocation planned for 2022 and inauguration of a new office building in Karlskrona.

ÄLVSBYHUS..... p30

- Largest in Sweden for the twenty-second year in a row.
- Greater sales stability in Norway. The market in Finland stepped up its pace.
- Production targets were met despite high numbers of staff on sick leave.

KAPPAHL p36

- Strong sales and earnings growth.
- Embarked upon a Group-wide journey of digitalisation.
- New visual identity, including an updated logo.

OPEN AIR GROUP p40

- Acquisition of WeHunt.
- Acquisition of Aclima.
- A contract was signed for a bigger new warehouse.

OSCAR JACOBSONp42

- Opening of the store at NK Stockholm, with 50 per cent more space.
- A fourth outlet store opens at the Stockholm Quality Outlet in Barkarby, and the second-hand store Sustain by Oscar Jacobson opens in Vasastan in Stockholm.
- New geographical markets thanks to retailers in the Netherlands (De Bijenkorf) and Ukraine (Tsum).

SMARTEYESp44

- Record earnings for 2021.
- Smarteyes is Sweden's most widely recommended optician.
- Opened seven new stores in total – 3 in Sweden, 3 in Denmark and 1 in Germany – and launched 12 new collections, including the new, eco-friendly Elements.

ACADEMEDIA p50

- A number of new education profiles in compulsory education.
- Acquisition of Swedish Education Group, which runs primary schools, secondary schools and adult education under the brands Enskede Byskola, Snitz, Cybergymnasiet, Donnergymnasiet and KYH.
- AcadeMedia staff made impressive efforts throughout the pandemic, which required rapid adjustments on a number of occasions.

AROS KAPITALp52

- Strong growth in sales by 35 per cent to SEK 566 million, and profitability doubled to SEK 200 million.
- Strong development in London, with an extended team and establishment in Ireland and Norway.
- Management team reinforced by a new credit manager, chief legal officer and business area managers.

EXCALIBURp54

- Excalibur celebrated its twentieth birthday.
- Excalibur was nominated as one of Europe's top three fixed income hedge funds.
- The fund's managed assets grew by 20 per cent in 2021.

KLARAHILLp56

- Acquisition of three funeral homes (ten offices).
- New partnerships for pensions, insurance, banking, accounting, brokerage and legal services.
- Launch of "The Process Challenge", Sweden's first national case competition for law students studying family law.

PERITUSKLINIKENp58

- Increased visibility towards the Swedish regions in order to complement Swedish healthcare.
- Contract with Region Skåne to ease the burden of the regional healthcare services, and also with all insurance companies offering health insurance in Sweden.
- Cooperation with private healthcare providers to reduce public healthcare queues, offering knee and hip replacement surgery, for example.

STUDENTCONSULTINGp60

- Turnover broke the billion krona mark, increasing by SEK 300 million to SEK 1.2 billion with doubling of profits.
- The industry's most satisfied customers for the seventh consecutive year.
- 15,878 jobs were filled in 2021.

BMAGRI p68

- Three-year agreement focusing on enhanced sustainability signed with The Absolut Company.
- The price of stored oats per kg (SEK 1 per kg) rose by 50 per cent in six months.
- Positive and friendly development at the new head office in Lidköping.

SÖDERBERG & HAAKp70

- Market share doubled for Deutz-Fahr.
- Resale agreement with Traktor Nord for Mälardalen and Maskin Väst for Värmland and Närke.
- Joined forces with Bomag to supply to key rental companies and major asphalt companies.

ERIKSBERG HOTEL & NATURE RESERVEp74

- Participation in the Archipelago Walk for linking up the Blekinge archipelago with bridges, footbridges and walking experiences.
- The first Caucasian wisent was born and a record 14 Père David's deer were born.
- Breakthrough for the evening safari with a thermal camera and a live camera broadcasting from the day-to-day life of the countryside, 24 hours a day.

AGRICULTURE AND HARNESS RACING ACTIVITIES.....p78

- Restructuring of livestock production on account of high operating costs.
- Expansion of the forest area by around 130 hectares in accordance with the long-term growth strategy.
- Establishment of renewable energy with a solar panel system.

*Hedson Technologies was sold to Storskogen in March 2022.



WICTOR PETERSSON, SHOT-PUTTER, MALMÖ AI

**“I’ve been dreaming
of the Paris Olympics
since I was a kid”**

Victor Petersson, born on 1 May 1998, is a shot-putter from Hässleholm who currently competes for Malmö AI. Petersson won bronze in the shot put at the European U23 Championships held in Gävle in July 2019, with a throw of 19.53 metres. Now he aims to win gold at the 2024 Paris Olympics.

Talented shot-putter going for gold in the 2024 Olympics

Wictor Petersson is a shot-putter with big dreams. At 23 years young, he is already the Swedish champion and has competed at the biggest arenas.

Petersson is now aiming to represent Sweden at the World Athletics Championships, to be held in the US in July. A milestone on his way to winning a medal at the 2024 Olympics.

Petersson has been planning to achieve great things in athletics for a very long time. When he was 9, he was allowed to go to Göingevallen in Hässleholm with his sister to try out a number of different sports. He quickly developed an affinity for all sports involving strength, and after a few years he decided to focus entirely on shot-putting.

“I think both I and the people around me discovered early on that I had a talent for throwing. The combination of strength and technique is something I’ve always liked, and want to develop further. I decided to go all-in on shot-putting during the 2015 World Youth Championships in Colombia. I’ll never forget what it felt like to compete in short put in front of 50,000 spectators.”

TRAINING FIVE DAYS A WEEK

It’s been seven years since the World Youth Championships in Colombia. Now he’s 23 years old and competes as a senior for Malmö AI on a national level, and for Sweden on the international stage. He’s won gold in national championships, as well as competed at the 2019 World Championships in Doha and the 2021 Olympic Games in Tokyo. Although many people view these events as fantastic achievements, Petersson entirely focused on the future. His training schedule is packed – two sessions a day, five days a week.

“The Doha World Championships and the Tokyo Olympics were two brilliant experiences. Back then, I was competing mainly to gain experience and learn as much as I could. Now my sights are set on becoming even stronger and continuing to break new personal records. It takes a lot of time and patience to succeed in a sport like shot-putting, and I’m ready to put in the hours.”

AIMING FOR THE PARIS OLYMPICS

The World Championships are to be held in the US this summer, and his hopes are pinned on reaching the final. But Petersson dreams of competing at the 2024 Olympics in Paris. By then he’ll have turned 26, which according to sporting history is the perfect age for shot-putters. Petersson is aiming is to win a medal for Sweden. He has a whole team of people behind him who are encouraging and supporting him as he chases his dream.

“I’ve been dreaming of the Paris Olympics since I was a kid. And now it’s on the horizon. I’m so grateful I’m surrounded by people who can see my potential and want me to go all-in. It’s thanks to people like Staffan Jönsson, my coach, and the sponsorship provided by Mellby Gård that I can make my dream come true.”



JENNY DAMGAARD, CLUB MANAGER, FC ROSENGÅRD

“Football becomes a tool that helps you learn to fight for the things you’re passionate about”

The ambition at FC Rosengård is to create an equal Malmö where all districts and people are included. Where all children and families dare to dream and have goals for the future – both on and off the pitch. The association includes women’s teams (with an A team in Damallsvenskan), men’s teams, futsal activities and more than 700 boys and girls who are active in youth football.

FC Rosengård makes people think and dream big

At FC Rosengård, both football and a socially sustainable society is worth investing in. The club is aiming to give everyone the opportunity to believe in their dreams through a range of activities both on and off the pitch. And these efforts are paying off – twelve Swedish championship gold medals and over 3,000 self-sufficient young people bear witness to that.

FC Rosengård has had a major impact on both football and Malmö ever since it was founded. Today, FC Rosengård's sporting activities are extensive and include the women's A and B teams, a men's team, futsal activities and more than 700 active boys and girls who train regularly at Malmö IP and Rosengårds IP.

Year after year, FC Rosengård continues to demonstrate how football brings people together and helps them to achieve success. The women's A team won Damallsvenskan in 2021 and has a total of twelve Damallsvenskan titles, has won Svenska Cupen five times and Supercupen four times as well. This is a very ambitious affiliation, and its objective is to give every player the opportunity to develop.

"We have a strong winning culture at FC Rosengård – that's no secret. But that said, we know that you can only achieve success by making mistakes and learning from them. We use football as a tool to teach our boys and girls to fight for the things they're passionate about, and not let setbacks in life stop them."

STRONG COMMITMENT OFF THE PITCH AS WELL

The club's efforts to bring about a sustainable society are just as much a part of its DNA as winning matches. FC Rosengård is involved in social outreach activities on a local level as well as abroad, and they tackle challenges efficiently and reliably.


The very first social outreach activity began back in 2008 and is called Football for Life. This is a community project in South Africa where football is used to encourage young girls to become independent and dare to break patriarchal social structures. Football for Life is now available in Sweden as well.

"Football for Life was the start of our efforts to develop other successful activities as well. We now run Hattrick by FC Rosengård, a knowledge project that aims to inspire teenage girls to go on playing football and helping them to learn more about important topics such as LGBTQIA+ inclusion, mental health, menstruation and nutrition. Boost by FC Rosengård, which has been working for eleven years to get young people into self-sufficient work or study, is another successful programme. A total of 3,150 young people have become self-sufficient, which proves that persistence and the determination to make a difference do pay off."

FOCUS ON MENTAL HEALTH IN YOUNG PEOPLE

FC Rosengård also works in partnership with a number of different organisations. The club became the primary partner of World Pride in 2021 and arranged both internal and external training courses on LGBTQIA+ issues. FC Rosengård and Tim Bergling Foundation will be working together this year on matters linked with mental health among young people.

"We're really proud of all our partnerships. More young people will be given the opportunity to discuss significant and serious topics thanks to our partnership with Tim Bergling Foundation. And we're really grateful to our partners for making it possible for us to pursue these important issues and activities. We hope that Mellby Gård and everyone else who has chosen to work with us feels as much pride as we do."



IDA KARLBERG GIDLUND, CEO, TEACH FOR SWEDEN

**“We want Sweden to
continue being a leading
knowledge nation”**

Teach for Sweden wants all children to be able to choose their own futures. They believe in a world where everyone has access to equal education, regardless of their background. Giving every child equal opportunities for success in the classroom will allow for a strong, democratic society going forward, driving Sweden forward with diversity, knowledge and creativity, all marked by strong leadership.

Knowledge is power and provides the right opportunities for the future

It should be possible for every child to be their best self and choose their own future. This provides the starting point for the work of the Teach for Sweden Foundation, which helps talented graduates to become teachers. Hundreds of graduates have completed Teach for Sweden's leadership programme to date and are now qualified senior-level teachers.

Students need talented and qualified teachers if they're to achieve and enjoy positive future prospects. But even so, the number of qualified teachers has been steadily declining over the last few years, which means fewer students are leaving school with upper secondary-level qualifications. Teach for Sweden is recruiting graduates for a two-year leadership programme, culminating in a teaching degree, with the aim to reverse this trend.

"Teach for Sweden is aware that having motivated and qualified teachers in the classroom is a must for all children, no matter what their background, so that they all have the same opportunities for an equal education. That said, many teachers will be retiring in a near future. The Swedish National Agency for Education estimates that the country will see a shortage of about 12,000 qualified teachers by 2035. We want our leadership programme to be part of the solution and help Sweden to go on being a leading knowledge nation."

MORE THAN 400 TEACHERS APPOINTED

This training course combines theoretical and practical elements so as to provide graduates with the very best conditions and enable them to develop. For the most part, the theoretical element focuses on tools and methods for personal and effective leadership. Graduates will combine their studies with working as teachers at secondary schools in dire need of talented teachers, including schools in districts that are defined as particularly vulnerable.

Teach for Sweden works in partnership with more than 30 local authorities at present, and there is a great deal of interest in the education offer. A total of 400 graduates have completed the

programme or are currently enrolled, and every one of them is a major asset to the school system. The programme attracts a broad selection of talented people with a variety of experience and expertise.

"The people who apply to join our leadership programme have held a variety of positions previously. We have someone who was a development engineer in the food industry, a deputy chief of staff at the Government Offices and a synthetic chemist who worked on pharmaceutical research. They all have one thing in common: an excellent academic qualifications, a passion for leadership and a desire to help out with the school system."

MORE SCOPE FOR MATHS AND SCIENCE

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2021 and the resulting restrictions had a major impact on schooling among students. Nevertheless, Teach for Sweden was able to maintain and run all elements of its operations. Students who completed the leadership programme continued with their work experience at schools, both online and in the classroom. This year, Teach for Sweden will be focusing on providing more of an understanding of the role played by maths and science in the future of Sweden.

"We've always aimed high here at Teach for Sweden. In 2021, our organisation produced one in four of all graduate senior-level teachers teaching technology and one in five teachers teaching physics or chemistry. We're aiming to go on recruiting maths and science teachers for the future, but we're also planning to raise awareness of their significant position in society."

Our holdings should be a bit better tomorrow than they are today

Mellby Gård has three deputy CEOs: Thomas Gustafsson, Sven Knutsson and Mikael Helmerson. Their primary job is to work as representatives of Mellby Gård and manage the Group's holdings so as to allow them to develop as effectively as possible.

Thomas Gustafsson's relationship with Mellby Gård goes back a long way. It all began in 2001, when Mellby Gård took over Brämhults Juice where he was appointed CEO by Mellby Gård. He then became President and CEO of Duni, where Mellby Gård is a major shareholder, and Thomas has worked at the Mellby Gård head office since 2018.

Sven Knutsson was appointed CEO of Mellby Gård Innovation och Tillväxt AB in 2015 and was subsequently appointed Deputy CEO in 2021.

Mikael Helmerson was appointed Deputy CEO in March 2021 after eight years working as the CEO of Roxtec, another company owned by Mellby Gård.

TWO REPRESENTATIVES ON THE BOARDS OF THE HOLDINGS

Mellby Gård's corporate governance includes aiming to include two representatives on the boards of its major holdings, preferably the chairmanship and one other position. Thomas is currently chairman of Duni, a listed company, as well as Kappahl and Oscar Jacobsson, and he's also a member of the Aros Kapital board. Sven is the chairman of Klarahill and Söderberg & Haak and a board member for Hedson, Duni, Kappahl and Open Air Group. Mikael is the chairman of Feralco and sits on the boards of Roxtec, Hedson and StudentConsulting.

"All in all, you could say we have four parts to play," says Thomas. "We're primarily responsible for the owner's management of the holdings, and we also manage the companies' boards and management teams.

"Representing the owners at the various holdings means we have to make sure the companies develop as effectively as possible and are driven forward," says Sven. "This is something we achieve by means of regular, sometimes daily, discussions with the companies and representing the owners on the boards.

"The other two roles involve assessing the proposals for acquisition that we receive. We receive ten or so proposals every month on average," continues Thomas. "We have to ensure the organic growth of the companies in the first instance, but we also have to make sure that any acquisition opportunities are dealt with. This includes ensuring that the companies have an updated acquisition agenda, which we reconcile regularly with the owners."

"When we're considering or receive proposals for acquisitions in order to start a new vertical at Mellby Gård, this is a much bigger, strategic decision that we discuss with the entire management team and the owners as well," says Mikael. "This means an additional commitment for us on a central level, and as we decide to embark upon something that's new for us where we need to build up new expertise."

MAKING UP THE MELLBY GÅRD MANAGEMENT TEAM

Thomas, Sven and Mikael are all members of the Mellby Gård management team, together with CEO Johan Andersson.

"We meet once a month and take a general look through the development of the holdings. We might look at a few of them in greater detail if we have anything in particular we'd like to discuss," says Mikael. "We also discuss general matters that affect multiple subsidiaries and that we could all benefit from. We've done a lot of talking about the pandemic over the last two years, and about its repercussions for markets and companies.

"Sustainability is something we often include on our agenda, and it's an issue that's gone on becoming more and more important," says Thomas. "Sustainability was 'nice to have' a decade ago, then five years ago it was a 'need to have'. Now it's an existential issue. If a company has no idea how to withstand the transition, its very existence is at risk.

"Our job is to define targets that help companies to focus more accurately and enhance their expertise on a shared issue of this kind, and to ensure that the companies have the right skills in place to deal with it. As regards sustainability, a number of subsidiaries have recently recruited new sustainability managers who are well trained so as to place additional emphasis on the matter.

"It's important to maintain a balance between formal and informal aspects," says Sven. "Board meetings are formal, but the internal meetings attended by the four of us are more creative and less formal. We have an agenda, but we like to focus on coming up with new concepts and solutions. It's not often we discuss details, or get bogged down in our old mistakes. We just get on with remedying them as quickly as we can. There's a very small rear view mirror, but a very big windscreen!"



The Deputy CEOs at Mellby Gård, from left: Thomas Gustafsson, Sven Knutsson and Mikael Helmerson

GROWTH THROUGH ACQUISITION

“It goes without saying that we regularly discuss what we want to invest in going forward, and then it all boils down into a variety of different projects,” says Mikael. “I’m currently working on specific acquisition projects that are linked to Roxtec and Feralco, two of the holdings I work with.”

“We’ve invested a lot of time and energy into identifying what kind of companies we want to acquire. A lot of stakeholders are looking to buy companies, so there’s fierce competition. We need to be clear on the kind of companies we want, and why the owners of these companies should sell to us.”

“For instance, we’re actively looking for companies offering safety solutions for industrial environments, and are therefore similar to Roxtec when it comes to stringent demands from customers and the need for proactive sales work. These may include fire safety products, flood protection products, fasteners and other items. The products must be used for protection in demanding environments such as aboard large ships, at nuclear power plants, at wind farms or on trains. These are demanding environments where everything must work at all times, and so there are rules on what products are permitted for use. Roxtec has had the same slogan for a long time: “Protecting life and assets”. To put it simply, we’re on the lookout for other companies with the same mission and focus as ourselves.”

“Mellby Gård’s cash flow in 2021 was good, which has placed us in a good financial position for new investments,” says Thomas. “Our valuations are still high, so it’s really important for us to analyse things correctly and bring the right companies on board. We have to decline if

the time isn’t right, if the price is wrong or if there are any doubts about the long-term viability of the company.”

NO STRICT DIVISION OF HOLDINGS

“We don’t have a strict division of companies between the three of us, although I tend to focus on retail and consumer companies because that’s my background,” says Thomas. “In general, all of us working for Mellby Gård have to be able to manage holdings and sit on the boards of all kinds of companies and contribute our skills and experience.”

“I joined Mellby Gård as the CEO of Mellby Gård Innovation och Tillväxt, and at that time the plan was for us to work with smaller companies,” says Sven. “But then we thought again. Our business model means we’re active owners, and smaller companies take just as much time as medium-sized or large companies to work with.”

“That’s why we want to aim for fewer companies, but bigger ones, and that’s why I now maintain a broad approach regardless of size or sector. The company I’m focusing on most at the moment is Klarahill, which Mellby Gård has built from the ground up. This is where we’re consolidating the Swedish funeral industry. Our plan is to turn over half a billion within three years, and that’s about the size we want our companies to be.”

“I’ve been a Deputy CEO since March 2021 and joined Mellby Gård in May 2013, when I took over as CEO of Roxtec,” says Mikael. “I focus on Roxtec and Feralco, two major industrial companies. I’m a board member at Roxtec, and Hans Stråberg is its external chairman. I’ve been chairman of the board at Feralco since November.”



From left: Sven Knutsson, Thomas Gustafsson, Mikael Helmerson

THE BOARD'S MOST IMPORTANT JOB

"In my view, the board has two primary jobs: to make sure the company has a relevant and updated strategy, and to appoint a CEO and ensure they work in accordance with the strategy decided upon," says Sven.

"When you see that a company's management team isn't getting the job done, the board's most important task is to resolve the situation as soon as possible," says Thomas. "Management teams don't always develop in the direction we'd prefer, and that's when we have to take over and replace the management team."

"There's no good response as to when confidence in a CEO begins to sway. You have confidence in them until one day, that confidence is gone. In general, we have some really good management teams that get the job done. This has been put to the test at a number of companies during the pandemic.

"It's important for the CEO to be able to make decisions and stand by them," says Sven. "Some CEOs are data-driven and want their decisions to be well informed, but working to the 80/20 rule

will usually suffice. You simply can't wait until you have a full set of information, because there's new information coming at you all the time. It's better to get things almost right than to definitely get them wrong, and the worst thing you can do is wait too long and miss the opportunities available to you."

"Having the right CEO for a company is absolutely crucial, and as owner representatives and board members it's our job to make sure that's what happens," says Mikael. "In turn, the CEO selects their management team and sets the agenda for the development of the company, and we can provide them with a sounding board for that. It's no more complicated than that, although in practice things might not always be quite that simple."

"We don't have a template for what we do, there's no one way of getting the job done. You have to be independent and have integrity, and you have to be flexible and not guard your turf jealously. We all have the same objective, after all: to make sure our companies go on developing positively."

“Company valuations are still high at the moment, so it’s really important for us to analyse things correctly and bring the right companies on board. We have to decline if the time isn’t right, if the price is wrong or if there are any doubts about the long-term viability of the company”

Duni Group

The Duni Group is a leading supplier of attractive and functional table setting and takeaway products. The Group markets and sells two brands, Duni and BioPak, which are represented in more than 40 markets. The Duni Group employs around 2,300 people in 24 countries, and it has its own production facilities, mainly at the wholly owned Rexcell paper mill in Dalsland. Production also takes place in Germany, Poland, Thailand and New Zealand.



Facts

SALES

SEK 5,061 million

EMPLOYEES

around 2,300

HEAD OFFICE

Malmö

CHAIRMAN

Thomas Gustafsson

PART OF THE MELLBY GÅRD**PORTFOLIO SINCE**

2007

“We should be the industry’s sustainability leader by 2030”

The Duni Group has a presence anywhere where people meet and enjoy life, and selling products for that purpose has presented a challenge over the past couple of years. The pandemic has gone on for longer and been more widespread than either Duni or anyone else imagined at the start of 2021.

“The restrictions in 2021 came and went, and it’s been a double-edged sword for us. The BioPak business area with its eco-friendly takeaway packaging has benefited from the pandemic as the market chose other ways to offer and consume food and drink. But the Duni business area has been affected badly and directly by the restrictions, which generally targeted what’s known as the HoReCa segment (hotels, restaurants, cafés). We have seen an immediate link between restrictions and our sales.”

FINDING NEW WAYS TO ADOPT CIRCULARITY

The longer-term question for the Duni Group is how the market as a whole views the Group’s products; disposable items. Discussions on regulations are ongoing in a number of countries, and within the EU. In France, for example, the amount of waste, including food waste permissible at restaurants will be capped as early as 2024.

“Our business faces challenges, and we need to find new ways to adopt a circular approach with regard to our products, something we have been and are working hard on. Our aim is to be able to offer all our customers the most sustainable solutions based on their own circumstances – disposable products, reusable products, or something else entirely.”

Inspired by the UN Decade of Action and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, the Duni Group updated its strategy during the year under the slogan “Our Decade of Action”, its overall goal being to be the industry leader in sustainability by 2030.

“This is going to be a tough challenge, but we believe setting ourselves this kind of ambitious goal is what we need for our long-term success. This is something I’m very passionate about on a personal level, and it’s very important for our employees to know what the Group stands for, what we want to achieve and where we’re heading.”

DUNI TO ACHIEVE FULL CIRCULARITY BY 2030

“We’ve updated our purpose to say we should ‘Inspire the world to give more than we take so that everyone can enjoy good food, well-being and a sense of community, both now and in the future’. We should have achieved full circularity by 2030, leading our industry towards a world in which we give more than we take and where we create safe, easy-to-use solutions for everyone while caring for our planet and nurturing our well-being.

“We’re already doing lots of positive things within the Group. Our Skåpafors production plant became the world’s first paper mill to start using biogas as fuel during the year, and Skåpafors will have zero emissions from 2027 onwards. We’ve also worked intensively on developing our important Airlaid and Dunicel materials for premium napkins and tablecloths. These are now being produced using wholly fossil-free binding agents, made from food waste and plant-based raw materials – without compromising on quality.

“In fact, two employees at our production facility in Bramsche in Germany developed the binding agent for the Dunicel range. They started off testing in the kitchen at home, and when that turned out to work, they carried on with development at the production facility. All in all, this has been an exciting and successful innovation process.”

OTHER CIRCULAR BUSINESS MODELS

Other circular business models have emerged in the industry lately, and there’s a lot of talk about reuse. New companies in this market have been formed in Europe – and the Duni Group has become committed to the cause.

“We’ve invested in two companies and also entered into a partnership with a third in line with our strategy to be fully circular by 2030. That’s because we want to be part of the rapid evolution and lead the way for the industry towards more sustainable and functional solutions.

“The companies we’ve invested in are working on innovative digital solutions for the creation of circular, reusable systems for takeaway products. Different applications require either disposable or multiple-use options or a combination of both, so that’s why it’s important to offer a varied range that meets the future needs of our customers.

“All in all, we’re looking forward to next year with restrictions lifted, so we’re planning for normalised demand. We’re expecting to see our takeaway packaging, napkins, tablecloths and candles become an obvious and natural part of things.”



CEO Robert Dackeskog

Feralco

Clean drinking water is such an obvious part of life we barely think about it at all. Clean water emerges out of the taps in most countries in Europe. Wastewater treatment plants around the world rely on chemicals for the treatment process. Feralco is one of the companies producing the additives that make water potable.

Facts

SALES

SEK 1,445 million

EMPLOYEES

around 250

HEAD OFFICE

Helsingborg

CHAIRMAN

Mikael Helmersson

PART OF THE MELLBY GÅRD

PORTFOLIO SINCE

2001

Treating water all over Europe

Feralco manufactures inorganic coagulants. These are chemical compounds, mainly of aluminium and iron. These are added when treating water and, to put it simply, they bind contaminants so that they can be separated. Water treatment plants are the company's main customers, but Feralco also deliver to paper, pulp and other industries. The company is a leader in its sector in Europe and also sells to a number of other countries, particularly in Africa.

The water treatment market in Europe is mature and not growing to any significant extent. That said, it's fragmented in a number of countries, with lots of smaller stakeholders.

Feralco is one of the leading companies in Europe and has the opportunity to consolidate the market by means of acquisitions, thus strengthening its position further.

GROWING IN GERMANY AND FRANCE

Two acquisitions were made in 2021. Feralco acquired German company Venator Wasserchemie in June, which has production facilities in three German cities and a combined turnover of around SEK 200 million. Germany is the biggest market in Europe, and this acquisition more than doubles the size of Feralco in this country and expands its product portfolio as well.

"Transporting our products over long distances isn't profitable, because they're dissolved in water. That's why local production is important, and Wasserchemie's three factories are a very welcome addition to the Group. This acquisition also means we expand our product portfolio, primarily in the field of chloride-based products," says Stephen Childs.

The second acquisition of the year was a transaction that involved buying out the French company Feracid from a previous joint venture. This means that Feracid is now wholly owned and integrated with Feralco's French subsidiary.

"The company focuses on iron chloride, a common feature of wastewater treatment. This transaction reinforces our position in the south of France," says Ludovic Huitorel.

Operating activities in 2021 went well, although the year presented a number of challenges. Firstly, commodity prices rose sharply at the end of 2021. Secondly, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to cause problems in the supply chain, leading to a major rise in transport prices. The task of adjusting prices to customers in this regard remains largely to be done in 2022.

Despite these challenges, profits were on a par with the previous year, a record year. Sales also rose by around 20 per cent, mainly thanks to the new acquisitions.

LOCAL PRODUCTION REDUCES TRANSPORT COSTS

"Changes in transport prices demonstrate the importance of local production, and hence short transport distances. The more local our production facilities are, the more competitive we can be. Last year's acquisition means we now have 18 production facilities in Europe," says Stephen Childs.

"We're continuing to have an interest in consolidation in our industry," continues Ludovic Huitorel. "This may involve acquisitions of family businesses where the owner is looking for an exit, or related businesses in the chemical industry. Feralco is able to offer a long-term commitment in such cases, within a growing industrial platform."

Feralco is also looking beyond treatment plants and industries. Treatment of water directly in nature is one example thanks to the purchase of Vattenresurs of Sweden (see page 22). Feralco and Mellby Gård are also launching an investment initiative – the Circular Water Initiative. The purpose of this initiative is to invest in and contribute to more sustainable water management on a commercial basis and ensure that more people have access to clean water.

"Clean drinking water is in short supply on a global level, and things will get worse unless we do something. That said, a lot of exciting innovation is in progress with regard to circular water management, and start-up companies are often involved. Feralco is able to contribute its expertise in chemistry, markets and regulations, while Mellby Gård has venture capital for long-term ownership," says Ludovic Huitorel.

**CEOs Stephen Childs
and Ludovic Huitorel**





Vattenresurs

It should go without saying that both nature and lakes should be healthy and clean. But things are rather different in real life. Eutrophication, algal blooms and disrupted ecosystems continue to present a problem in lakes and ponds in Sweden. But it takes time for nature to recover. This process can proceed much more quickly with a little help.

Facts

SALES

SEK 15 million

EMPLOYEES

4

HEAD OFFICE

Stockholm


CHAIRMAN

Stephen Childs

PART OF THE MELLBY GÅRD**PORTFOLIO SINCE**

2020

Vattenresurs is wholly owned by Mellby Gård company Feralco



“Nature itself takes centuries to achieve results, whereas we can see the difference in a few days”

Vattenresurs uses a patented technology to restore the balance of nature quickly. This is achieved by binding phosphorus, the most common cause of dead lakes. More and more local authorities are becoming aware of the unique technology deployed by Vattenresurs.

“We’re restoring lakes that have been eutrophicated by phosphorus. Phosphorus is the most common pollutant and comes from sewage, manure and general runoff from households and urban areas. As a society, we’ve become good at stopping new phosphorus escaping into nature, but lakes that are already eutrophicated are unable to clean themselves. And there’s an awful lot out there that needs to be done,” says Göran Andersson, Marketing Manager at Vattenresurs.

Many of the lakes that were eutrophicated in the first half of the 20th century still have algal blooms today, even though discharges have decreased or stopped altogether. Eutrophicated lakes can suffer from something known as internal loading. This means that phosphorus is released from the bottom sediment into the water and

provides fertiliser for algae, causing algal blooms which in turn remove oxygen from the lake and block sunlight. This means that no other vegetation can assert itself. Eutrophicated lakes can take centuries to recover naturally. Vattenresurs technique of binding phosphorus in the bottom sediment increases visibility in the water that can be observed within a few days; and the results last, with long-term recovery of fish populations and healthy vegetation.

PATENTED TECHNOLOGY

Vattenresurs is wholly owned by Mellby Gård subsidiary Feralco, which in turn produces the chemicals used by Vattenresurs to clean lakes. This involves polyaluminium chloride, which is the same additive used at regular water treatment plants. Aluminium binds to phosphorus and causes the phosphorus to clump together, or flocculate, to form something that looks like snowflakes. These settle on the bottom and eventually mineralise to form bauxite, which is a naturally occurring soil that contains aluminium.



The clever thing about Vattenresurs technology is that it doesn't just pour polyaluminium chloride into the water, but adds it to the bottom sediment in lakes using hoses towed behind a boat. Most of the phosphorus is found in the bottom sediment, and that's where the treatment is most beneficial. Vattenresurs is the only company in Sweden doing this, and the technology is patented.

"Vattenresurs was founded back in the 1990s by two private individuals who discovered the technology in the US. The company has been cleaning Swedish lakes successfully ever since, albeit on a relatively small scale as a small business. Now that Feralco has taken over the company, we have the resources and the backing we need in order to expand. We're now building two more boats and will have four boats operating by summer 2022," says Göran Andersson.

IMMEDIATE RESULTS

Although the results of the treatment can be seen immediately, it can take a year or more to clean an entire lake. And there are hundreds of lakes in need of this treatment in Sweden. Most Vattenresurs customers are local authorities, and the business is heavily dependent on how local authorities prioritise nature conservation. However, an

EU directive adopted in Swedish law has stipulated that all lakes more than half a square kilometre in size must have good water quality by 2027, and this has boosted priorities.


"The administrative process can be lengthy even though there is increasing desire to prioritise the cleaning of lakes. Temporary building permits, exemptions from shore protection and the like may be needed, and it takes time to obtain these. We may sometimes be unable to get started the same season even if a local authority has earmarked a budget for water treatment for a year," says Göran Andersson.

This is what happened to Vattenresurs in 2020. Not all projects scheduled could take place in 2021 as a result. The company's turnover of SEK 25 million in 2020 dropped to SEK 15 million in 2021, and the profit was zero.

Lead times are now longer, and the company is expecting to have a full workload in 2022. A turnover of SEK 30 million is budgeted. Discussions are in progress with local authorities for 2023, and there are assignments worth up to SEK 70 million in the pipeline. One major upcoming project is the treatment of Drevviken, a 5.4 square kilometre lake just south of Stockholm.



**Marketing Manager
Göran Andersson**



“As a society, we’ve become good at stopping new phosphorus escaping into nature, but lakes that are already eutrophicated are unable to clean themselves”

To date, Vattenresurs has worked mainly with local authorities in the County of Stockholm, partly because there is a major need for treatment near urban areas, and partly because despite its outstanding efficiency, the company’s technology hasn’t been recognised on merit throughout the rest of Sweden.

But change is underway. The Swedish Marine and Water Management Agency and regional water authorities are now recommending the Vattenresurs approach. Sponsorship is also being received from Race for the Baltic, founded by Skype founder Nicklas Zennström.

“The Baltic Sea needs treatment, but it’s too big to deal with as an inland lake. That said, it is possible to treat Baltic Sea bays, and most lakes are connected by a water system that ultimately flows into the Baltic,” says Göran Andersson.

Johan Modén is the CEO of Vattenresurs. He’s also the CEO of the owner company Feralco Nordic, which highlights the fact that Vattenresurs is an application of Feralco’s chemical expertise in what’s known as a vertical integration.

“The fact that the two companies can work so closely is a major advantage. Feralco can customise the product that Vattenresurs uses to suit their own particular application,” concludes Johan Modén.



IRT
SYSTEM | HEDSON

Hedson Technologies

Hedson Technologies is a leading supplier of high-quality equipment for paint shops, tyre centres and car workshops, as well as other industries. The company offers solutions in curing, lifting and washing in 80 countries. Hedson's portfolio includes brands such as Drester, Herkules and IRT.

18V 2.0Ah
Li-ion

Facts

SALES
SEK 256 million

EMPLOYEES
around 110

HEAD OFFICE
Arlöv

CHAIRMAN
Fredrik Hansson

**PART OF THE MELLBY GÅRD
PORTFOLIO SINCE**
2014

Hedson Technologies was sold in March 2022

Aiming for sales in excess of SEK 300 million

Hedson has seen strong recovery in 2021. Sales increased by six per cent to around SEK 256 million, and in 2022 the company is aiming to achieve sales in excess of SEK 300 million for the first time.

Just as in 2020, 2021 was a unique year. Sales picked up significantly in the second half of 2021, increasing by 14 per cent compared with the second half of 2020. Overall recovery was strong during the year, with sales of around SEK 256 million, representing an increase of six per cent compared with 2020.

But it's too early to talk about general growth. Hedson failed to reach 2019 levels overall this year, although some product segments grew beyond 2019 levels and showed strong growth. The company is aiming to achieve sales in excess of SEK 300 million by 2022 through various growth initiatives, primarily a comprehensive launch of new products.

WORKING TOWARDS THREE CUSTOMER SEGMENTS

Hedson operates in three end-customer segments; tyre centres, sheet metal and paint shops and industry, where the company works directly with industries as an end-customer.

"We're seeing strong recovery in tyre centres, which is already on par with 2019. Smaller equipment, which is less capital-intensive and driven by investment decisions, is also looking strong in sheet metal and paint shops. Major installations, often based on new construction or refurbishment, have been postponed to an extent, but – it's important to note this – they haven't been cancelled. In turn, this has meant we saw very high levels of activity in respect of quotations towards the end of the year.

"In the industrial part, our curing business, we work with OEM customers in the automotive industry or directly with the process industry, and that segment saw a record year in 2021, with an increase of five per cent in sales compared with 2020, which in itself was a record year."

There are also a number of transformations in progress in the market in general that will benefit Hedson in the long term, including major consolidation of the market in tyre centres and paint shops.

"This means there'll be fewer workshops to work with, but they'll be bigger. This is being driven by what are known as MSOs, multi-store owners, who are buying up the smaller, independent workshops."

RAPID PACE FOR NEW PRODUCT LAUNCHES

Hedson worked hard in 2020 to transform the business into a product company, and it continued to build on this in 2021. One important element of this is to go on regularly launching new products. This creates organic growth and provides opportunities for better underlying profitability.

"2022 will certainly be a year of product launches in more or less all our product groups, and we're currently seeing our fastest rate of product launches to date. We'll also be making strategic investments in digitalisation in order to market and sell our products even more efficiently. One initiative will involve launching a new website focusing on online sales."

"We'll also be making strategic investments in line with the trends we're seeing in the market. We're establishing a new office in North America so that we can maintain a presence close to the paint companies as they're driving the ongoing technology shift in the curing industry, i.e. the conversion of UV materials."

One important element in 2021 has been to ensure the company's potential for profitability, which has resulted in higher profitability in 2021 compared with 2020.

SUSTAINABILITY A COMMON THEME

Sustainability is a common theme throughout Hedson's operations. Total greenhouse gas emissions are very low as today's production primarily involves assembling products rather than producing them. The products are of high quality, with a long shelf life; they last significantly longer than competing products in the segment.

"Our products are renowned for their outstanding environmental performance, and many customers cite this as an important reason for deciding to buy from us. Moreover, our products are good for our customers on an ergonomic level. For us, sustainability also involves demonstrating persistent profitability so that we can reinvest in the business and develop new products even more effectively."

BEING PART OF MELLBY GÅRD OFFERS MANY ADVANTAGES

Lennart Eriksson believes there are many advantages to being part of Mellby Gård.

"Mellby Gård is a professional owner with enormous expertise and experience, as well as financial clout. This has been particularly evident during the pandemic, when we've been able to draw on much of the Group's expertise, not least from our board. We have access to expertise that we wouldn't have been able to achieve ourselves, both within Mellby Gård and in the network around legal, financial and commercial issues. Although there's no close communication between the companies on a day-to-day basis, the fact that this is possible gives us a sense of strength and reassurance – belonging to a large group is a positive thing."



CEO Lennart Eriksson

Roxtec

In 30 years, the Multidiameter™ garage invention from Karlskrona has established Roxtec as a global leader in sealing solutions for cable and pipe transits. Its modular and scalable solutions, which are used in lots of industries and environments, are available in 80 markets through subsidiaries and distributors. For many customers, Roxtec's solutions are essential when it comes to ensuring safety and operation and protecting lives and assets.

Facts

SALES
SEK 2,027 million

EMPLOYEES
around 820

HEAD OFFICE
Karlskrona

CHAIRMAN
Hans Stråberg

**PART OF THE MELLBY GÅRD
PORTFOLIO SINCE**
2006

Roxtec sees opportunities in all directions

Roxtec performed strongly in line with the global recovery after the pandemic, despite an uncertain start to the year and a market affected by material shortages, high raw material prices and price increases from suppliers. Gradual restarts in key markets in 2021 helped Roxtec's sales to reach the two billion mark once again. Aggressive new targets for 2025 were set during the year and will be achieved with new products and a bigger workforce.

“The market has been really dynamic the whole year. We saw early signs of an increase in demand in the Asian markets, then things picked up in Europe, and the year ended with a strong spurt in North America.”

Market movements resulted in Roxtec being more active in addressing challenges relating to suppliers and logistics during the year. The company also reviewed its pricing, which resulted in a number of new price adjustments.

STABLE YET UNCERTAIN

Roxtec supplies complete sealing strips to a wide range of industries for use on land, at sea and underground. Development for the Industry & Infrastructure business area continued at a steady and stable pace during the year, with an underlying expectation that the market will pick up again in 2022.

Power & Process Industries underwent a strong development in 2021. China in particular made significant investments in offshore wind power, with large orders month after month. Demand from the nuclear industry in the US remained strong, while oil and gas investments were significantly lower during the year.

The cruise ship industry continued to present challenges. The market for Marine & Offshore was unpredictable as German and Finnish manufacturers slowed down while customers in southern Europe were working at full speed.

ROXTEC SETS NEW TARGETS FOR 2025

Sales over the last few years, in combination with the changes in the market, resulted in a new sales target for Roxtec. Sales are set to reach SEK 3 billion by 2025.

“Reaching over SEK 2 billion in sales in 2021 has put us within touching distance of the sales record. We're now planning to exceed this by a long way in 2025.”

To achieve this, Roxtec has to focus on three development areas: product development, customer experience and value-added services. Roxtec will be making major efforts to recruit staff for sales and support functions, as well as development in 2022.

“We can see opportunities for Roxtec in all directions, and we have to really focus if we're to achieve this target. We're expecting to take on 90 new staff over the next year.”

DIGITALISATION AND NEW LEGISLATION

Continued growth involves digitalisation and service. Roxtec needs to capture more business by identifying, gathering and presenting product data and reinforcing its presence in more channels. Roxtec launched additional software in its digital product portfolio in 2021 so that customers themselves can keep track of installation, inspection and documentation. Roxtec Transit Operate™ is a Software as a Service (SaaS) solution that allows all transits to be recorded and surveyed while ensuring and documenting the quality of the installations. Roxtec currently also offers its digital products Roxtec Transit Designer™ and Roxtec Transit Build™ for design and configuration applications.

Roxtec also performs servicing with on-site inspections, but not many took place in 2021 on account of clear restrictions on visitors. New legislation for maritime classification came into force in 2021 and imposes additional requirements for inspections and documentation. This paves the way for new opportunities for Roxtec, which is certified for the inspection of watertight cable transits on board ships and at offshore installations. Roxtec also offers software so that users can keep track of the current status and history of transits.

SUSTAINABILITY PROVIDES BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

Roxtec initiated more structured sustainability work in 2020. In a sustainable transition, Roxtec's efforts mainly involve “protecting life and property”. The company also does its best to minimise its own footprint and identified clear targets for its sustainability efforts during the year which aimed to increase circularity and reduce carbon emissions. Examples include reusing rubber instead of letting it go to waste.

“We've received our first rating from the EcoVadis evaluation system, so we know exactly what's happening with our sustainability efforts right now. The next step will be to break down our work into activities and actions so that we can meet the targets. We have long-term owners who don't believe in cutting corners. They have every confidence in us and trust us to deal with this transition in the right way ourselves.”



CEO Magnus Holmberg

Älvsbyhus

Many people share the dream of owning a home on a little piece of land that's their own. This means the prefab house sector is always thriving. The pandemic increased people's interest in moving out of the city, leading to a surge in demand. But this is a highly competitive industry. To succeed, operators must be cost-effective and offer high quality.

Facts

SALES

SEK 1,265 million

EMPLOYEES

around 260

HEAD OFFICE

Älvsbyn

CHAIRMAN

Erik Andersson

**PART OF THE MELLBY GÅRD
PORTFOLIO SINCE**

1995

“Älvsbyhus represents honesty and security for customers”

Älvsbyhus makes the dream of your own house on your own land possible, and at a reasonable price. It’s a bit like H&M and IKEA, but for prefab houses. As a result, Älvsbyhus is now Sweden’s biggest manufacturer of prefab houses for the twenty-second year in a row. Sales increased by more than 50 per cent in 2021. Kent Johansson is the third-generation CEO of Älvsbyhus after his father Donald Johansson and his grandfather, founder Göran Johansson.

“We’re extremely proud to be able to deliver the highest profitability in the industry while still maintaining prices at a lower level than our competitors. Also, not every company offers a turnkey contract with the delivery of a turnkey house. All this is possible thanks to the fact that we control much of our production ourselves.”

Älvsbyhus prefabricates the parts for houses, has its own sawmill and even manufactures kitchen fittings. Not even IKEA can make kitchen fittings that are more cost-effective than its own production. In combination with constant cost awareness, this makes for the biggest, most profitable company in the industry.

FULL SPEED AHEAD AT THE FACTORIES

2021 was a really good year. Älvsbyhus is one of the companies that saw an increase in sales in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The trend of working from home has meant that more people have the opportunity to move from an apartment in an urban area to their own home in a rural area. The company’s three house factories in Älvsbyn, Bjärnum and Kauhajoki in Finland have been working at full speed since the summer of 2020.

Älvsbyhus sells products in Sweden, Norway and Finland. The Swedish market is the biggest by some margin, selling 835 houses in 2021. This gives Älvsbyhus a market share of almost 13 per cent, making it the industry leader – a position the company has held for many years.

The market in Norway remained stable with more than 180 houses sold during the year, with profitability higher than in Sweden. The price situation in Norway is higher than in Sweden because of different building standards, and also because of Norwegian purchasing power, which is relatively strong. More than 90 houses were sold in Finland. Finnish homebuyers are starting to return to Älvsbyhus after a few lean years.

More than 1,100 houses in total were sold by the Group in 2021. In figures, this represents an increase of more than 50 per cent compared with the previous year, which also ended strongly. This means that the increase is based on what are already relatively strong comparative figures.

“We’ve crushed the budget for sales in Sweden by almost 60 per cent. We’re running our factories as hard as we can without compromising on quality. This success comes at a price: it has a slight impact on profitability. The Swedish and Norwegian order intake has meant that the factories in Sweden haven’t caught up fully. This is why our Finnish factory had to produce a number of houses that were transported across the Gulf of Bothnia to our customers in Northern Sweden. The

cost of transporting the houses has eaten up some of the profit, but the alternatives weren’t as good.”

SELLING AT A FIXED PRICE A MATTER OF HONOUR

Another factor that’s placed pressure on profitability is the fact that Älvsbyhus sells its houses at the price fixed when the order is placed, but the customer only pays when the finished house is delivered. Delivery times have jumped to upwards of eighteen months with this year’s pressure on sales, which means there’s plenty of time for the cost of materials and inputs to go up. So in other words, the house costs more to produce than what was charged at the time of sale.

“Selling at a fixed price is a matter of honour for us, we won’t compromise on that. Älvsbyhus represents honesty and security for customers. And an extra house sold is always an extra house sold.

On the other hand there is economies of scale in production, which means the higher the production, the greater the profitability. Moreover, this success can be viewed as a way of marketing this well-established brand. All in all, though, sales pressure means slightly lower profitability, which is nevertheless still the highest in the sector.”

FULLY BOOKED FOR A YEAR

There’s nothing to indicate that growth will come to a halt in 2022. The factories are working at full capacity the whole year. New sales, for houses with delivery in 2023, are also looking very promising. The biggest challenge faced by Kent Johansson is to increase the delivery rate. The company is also producing houses with a different design than just a few years ago as houses now have significantly better energy ratings than they used to. Älvsbyhus used to produce more houses per week than it does now, but new production records are being set all the time with the company’s new, extremely energy-efficient houses.

“We haven’t yet identified our capacity limit for the new houses. What we do know is that our staff are working extremely hard to keep up the pace, while we’re seeing lots of staff off sick or taking time off to look after children on account of the pandemic, and all the precautionary measures that entails. I’d like to thank all our staff for their sterling efforts.”

CEO Kent Johansson





CECILIA BERGLING NAUCLÉR,
SECRETARY GENERAL, PROJECT PLAYGROUND

**“The COVID-19 pandemic
meant that many high
school students ended up in
a pinch”**

Project Playground offers children and young people in vulnerable situations a safe space where they can grow and develop through capacity-building, educational and developmental programmes. They offer support and encouragement in the education of children and young people and help them to pursue their interests through a variety of activities. Its programmes create a place where children can be children, and where individual goals are encouraged.

Meaningful leisure time helps bring about sustainable social development

Meaningful leisure time encourages drive in children and young people. This is the basic concept for Project Playground, and its approach to combating exclusion and helping make the world more sustainable. Project Playground empowers young individuals and gives them hope for the future by creating safe spaces and capacity-building activities for children and young people in vulnerable situations.

Project Playground's ambition is to create a world in which all children and young people can grow up with a belief in the future and the ability to make a positive impact on their own lives. This fundraising foundation was born out of the knowledge that scarce economic and social resources increase vulnerability among children and young people, which in turn can affect their well-being, self-esteem and future prospects. Founders HRH Princess Sofia and Frida Vesterberg wanted children in vulnerable situations to have the opportunity to take part in an organisation that focuses on personal development and needs from a holistic perspective.

ACTIVITIES IN SOUTH AFRICA AND SWEDEN

From the start in 2010, Project Playground has provided children and young people with meaningful and safe contexts in the form of capacity-building, educational and developmental programmes. By focusing on play, Project Playground aims to identify children and young people in vulnerable situations before they are at increased risk of social problems such as crime, lack of education, mental illness or substance abuse. The various programmes provide children and young people with the psychosocial support and encouragement they need to create and live the lives they want. Cecilia Bergling Naclér is the Secretary General of the Project Playground Fundraising Foundation. "Our programmes are available in Sweden and South Africa. Our aim is to help bring about sustainable development in both parts of the world. Leisure time is the most vulnerable time of day in many parts of South Africa. Project Playground runs free after-school activities such as football and help with homework among the shantytowns of South Africa. We also run "Play on Wheels", a daytime activity for young people with various disabilities.

"We're also working to create better conditions for all the family by offering psychosocial support and food parcels. Although the COVID-19 pandemic made it more difficult for us to reach out to people in South Africa, we managed to carry out more than 2,800 home visits and a total of 500 children and young people were active in our programmes."

THE PANDEMIC CREATED NEW NEEDS

Activities in Sweden began with the wave of refugees that arrived in 2015. Project Playground could see that the needs of unaccompanied minors arriving in Sweden were similar to those in South Africa. Project Playground was able to offer a range of activities in Sweden by building on the expertise acquired by the foundation in South Africa. Project Playground is now based in Sundbyberg and works in partnership with Praktiska Gymnasiet, Liljeholmen. Its programmes include sports and culture, but also skills-enhancing activities such as study support, coaching and lectures. Project Playground focused strongly on the well-being and academic achievement of high school students during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions meant that many high school students ended up in a pinch. Young people living in poverty or without internet access or a computer couldn't attend lessons remotely. This contributes to a sense of isolation and hopelessness among young people, which also affects their mental health. We offer help with homework and support for young people in need in partnership with the city of Sundbyberg. We run Hjälpakuten, an activity focused on equipping young people with the right tools for adult life, together with Praktiska Gymnasiet in Liljeholmen. We'll be offering contact pathways in the business community, and help with writing CVs. Besides these activities, we also make sure young people in need have access to school supplies and computers."



ANNA BLOM, GROUP CONTROLLER AT MELLBY GÅRD

The best part about my job is the contact I have with our subsidiaries, being allowed to follow different businesses and their development.

The controller who enjoys variation

Being in a workplace where there's a lot going on and where the duties vary has always spurred Anna Blom, Group Controller at Mellby Gård. She worked as an accountant for 16 years, and in that role she developed a taste for working with different companies facing a variety of issues and challenges. Anna joined Mellby Gård in 2014.

“Although I've been part of Mellby Gård for many years now, a number of my colleagues have been here even longer than I have. This shows we really love our jobs, and that this is an exciting place to work. The Andersson family are keen to make sure everybody thrives.”

What she likes most about her job at Mellby Gård is the variety, the fact that her duties change as the year progresses. Although the consolidated accounts are a common theme in her work, she also provides vital support to many Group subsidiaries. Her duties include working part-time as a Compliance Officer for the subsidiary Excalibur Asset Management AB.

“I worked at different offices, in different cities and in different roles over the years in my previous position, and this involved everything from auditing to method development, marketing and HR matters. I mainly worked with international companies and non-profit organisations. When I left, I was a bit worried about switching to a job where I might spend more time at the same office every day and end up working with the same figures over and over. But it soon became clear that this job is the best of both worlds, because I have lots of contact with the subsidiaries as well.”

GREAT INTEREST IN THE OUTDOORS

Outside work, Anna is keen on outdoor activities. She enjoys riding and beekeeping. She's also gone hunting a few times. Her dog Jussi, a Kleiner Münsterländer, accompanies her on these trips, and he's welcome in the office on weekdays, too. Anna is planning to take her hunting exam this year.

“I've been fascinated by the outdoors for years, and hunting adds yet another dimension to being out in the countryside. Now I'm about to take my hunting exam, and I hope this will give me opportunities to go hunting with Jussi in the future. Jussi is a lovely dog – he comes with me to the office occasionally and is very keen to join in with our coffee breaks!” laughs Anna.

Anna ended up at Mellby Gård rather by chance. She didn't know all that much about the company when she saw the ad for the controller position.

“I already knew Rune, and I knew Mellby Gård was an investment company. It's actually a variety of companies that work with different things, which is something I really like. When I saw the ad, I knew straight away that it was for me!”

Anna describes the Group Controller role as being fairly similar to acting as a consultant. Working on the consolidated accounts does form a basis, of course, but she also has a lot of contact with all the subsidiaries that report their financial details to Mellby Gård. She's responsible for both in-house and external financial reporting.

“Contact with the subsidiaries, being able to monitor different types of businesses and their development, is the best part of my job.”

Companies and sectors all face different issues and challenges. So I end up learning new things all the time. And even though the accounts framework doesn't vary, the issues and challenges do, whether I'm working with a hedge fund, a funeral director or Mellby Gård's own farm.”

IMPRESSED BY COMPANIES' TRANSFORMATION DURING THE PANDEMIC

After a tumultuous 2021, Anna is now looking forward to seeing how all the companies continue to grow and develop – but she's also hoping to see some exciting new acquisitions. And it's also gratifying that the finance department took on a new colleague, Tamara Dubyna, just before Christmas.

“I think it's impressive to see how well the Group and all its companies have coped throughout the pandemic, that they've been able to adapt and emerge out the other side. In line with our business strategy, Mellby Gård has supported its companies throughout the period and allowed them take the time they needed. Looking ahead to 2022, I hope things will continue to go well for the companies and that they won't face any more setbacks due to the pandemic. And of course, it'll be exciting to see whether any new companies join the Group.

“I'm very much looking forward to seeing all my colleagues in the office again, too, and going to visit our companies and meet them face to face, just as we always did before the pandemic. I think 2022 will be a good year!”

Kappahl

Kappahl was founded in Gothenburg in 1953 and is one of the Nordic region's leading fashion chains, with around 360 stores under the Kappahl and Newbie brands and Shop Online in Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Poland and England. Kappahl has five brands and offers a wide range of products for all of life's occasions. Today, more than 75 per cent of Kappahl's fashion is made from more sustainable materials.

Facts

SALES

SEK 4,665 million

EMPLOYEES

around 3,780

HEAD OFFICE

Mölndal

CHAIRMAN

Thomas Gustafsson

PART OF THE MELLBY GÅRD**PORTFOLIO SINCE**

2013

“We can combine growth and sustainability”

2021 was both successful and eventful for Kappahl. Sales and earnings grew strongly, and Kappahl rolled out strategic projects and launched new brands to ensure growth would continue across the Group.

“**T**he Kappahl brand was reinforced during the pandemic as we managed to cope with lots of challenges in 2021, with positive outcomes. Kappahl now has even more loyal customers, and we managed to engage with them in a variety of channels while successfully managing our costs.”

If 2020 was a year in which Kappahl dealt with the challenges of the pandemic and planned for increased growth, 2021 was the year in which the company successfully made the transition from words to action. A number of strategic projects were launched and significant investments were made in order to reinforce and develop the brand and prepare for sales in more markets and channels. 2021 was also the year in which a climate strategy was devised that's realistic in commercial terms and firmly rooted in the ambitious plan for growth. Turnover rose to SEK 4,665 million and profit more than doubled compared with the previous year.

“We've demonstrated great drive and commitment throughout the company and implemented Kappahl's new brand strategy and our higher purpose: celebrating diversity in everyday life. We've also strengthened our values and clarified our business concept – affordable and responsible fashion to our customers in a simple yet inspiring way.”

CLIMATE STRATEGY ROOTED IN GROWTH PLAN

In 2021, Kappahl devised a climate strategy based on the Paris Agreement which is rooted in the company's ambitious growth plan: to shift to a sustainable business model. Its aim is to halve its absolute footprint across the entire value chain by 2030, from supplier to customer.

“We can combine growth and sustainability. To achieve this, we have to take responsibility for our entire carbon footprint, from design to production and, eventually, the user phase. We have to make it easy for our customers to adopt a more sustainable approach and ensure long life for their clothing.”



MAJOR INVESTMENT IN DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

During the year, Kappahl decided to invest SEK 200 million in a comprehensive digital transformation. This investment includes a new business system with integrated cash register and payment solutions, as well as customer databases for both physical and digital stores in different markets.

“If we’re to get Kappahl ready for growth, we have to replace systems and have a system solution that allows all elements to communicate. This is absolutely crucial for scalable and efficient growth.”

NEW GRAPHIC IDENTITY AND NEW BRANDS

A new visual identity was devised for Kappahl as to highlight the rollout of the new brand strategy. The aim of all this is to move the fashion chain’s position towards an even more value-based brand where the visual identity is a vital signal. The new identity includes an updated logo and a complementary communication concept that will be launched in 2022.

The Minories brand for children was launched in early 2021. The fashion chain already owns the Kappahl, kay/day, Newbie and XLNT brands.

“We’ll continue to grow, and we perceive major potential in reinforcing the brands held by the Group. They’re all at different stages of development, and they’ll eventually be meeting their respective customers also outside Kappahl as well, with their own channels, in the same way that Newbie does today.”

GROWTH IN NEW MARKETS AND CHANNELS

The Kappahl Group currently sells products in its own stores in Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Poland and England, and its ambition is to launch its brands in more markets and new channels. This includes the Group’s own stores and channels, as well as enabling sales on other platforms. The Group will also be working to optimise its store network and create some exciting new shopping experiences.

“We need to go on looking at each individual store on the basis of local market conditions, location and size. Customers are very interested in continuing to shop both in physical stores and online.

The fashion chain has developed some exciting new customer experiences both in-store and online. Liveshopping has been popular during the pandemic, and this concept offers major potential for the future. Members of the Kappahl customer club are also offered free advice and personal shopping online.”

Selected parts of the Newbie range can now be rented via the Hyber rental service. Kappahl Woman and kay/day also offer clothing subscriptions via the Hack Your Closet service. Kappahl has to keep pace with new customer preferences while also making clothes accessible to more people and extending the life of each garment.



CEO Elisabeth Peregi

Kappahl



Open Air Group

Excitement, community and a close proximity to nature – hunting and outdoor activities provide a sense of freedom and independence. And the experience is all the greater if you have the right equipment. The market for outdoor clothing and practical products has been growing rapidly for many years, and there's no sign of interest waning.

Facts

SALES

SEK 695 million

EMPLOYEES

around 75

HEAD OFFICE

Stockholm

CHAIRMAN

Rickard Kemfors

PART OF THE MELLBY GÅRD

PORTFOLIO SINCE

2019

A complete outdoor experience

The Open Air Group's nine different subsidiaries offer more or less everything you need in the wilderness, from woollen underwear to GPS tracking for hunting dogs. Two important acquisitions took place during the year, and the Group's expansion is continuing.

The Open Air Group is an acquisition-driven group aiming to grow by consolidating the market for outdoor activities, hunting and dogs. Synergies are achieved by means of cooperation among the Group's subsidiaries. The Group comprises of three divisions – Brands, Retail and Technology.

Retail includes the Widforss online shopping companies in Sweden and Norway, and the Finnish online shopping company Retkitukku. The division's sales increased by 15 per cent during the year, but the division is rigged for significantly faster growth than that. A new warehouse in Morgongåva, near Stockholm, opened this year. The warehouse covers an area of 20,000 square metres, compared with the 5,000 square metres from which it's relocating. Despite the challenges, Widforss.se was named E-Retailer of the Year in the sports and leisure category by price comparison company PriceRunner.

PANDEMIC BOOSTED OUTDOOR PURSUITS

"The first six months of the year were strong for Retail as the COVID-19 pandemic boosted outdoor activities at home rather than travelling abroad. But it wasn't long before we were faced with strained inventory management at our old premises. This is something we're addressing by relocating to a new, bigger warehouse."

Retail interacts naturally with the other two divisions by acting as the primary sales channel for them. Brands develop, design and sell clothing and equipment for hunting and outdoor activities. Its brands are Chevalier, Alaska and – through an acquisition as recently as December 2021 – Norwegian clothing company Aclima.

Aclima is a third-generation family business specialising in high-quality merino wool clothing. The company is the market leader in merino wool clothing in Norway, and its turnover last year amounted to more than SEK 200 million. This acquisition provides the Open Air Group with a majority holding and adds a significant platform for Brands in Norway, complementing the other Chevalier and Alaska offerings that are a little more focused on hunting. The acquisition also brings with it profitability right from the outset.

"Our online stores showed us that Aclima is a popular brand and that customers are becoming more and more interested in high quality outdoor clothing. The company will maintain its independence within the Open Air Group, but it will also have the opportunity to grow still further through our sales channels and best practices within the division."

HUNTING WITH DIGITAL SUPPORT IS GROWING

Technology is a new division which came into being in 2021 following the acquisition of Ultracom and Wehunt. Tracker is already part of the Group. These three companies develop apps for hunting and dogs. Tracker is a GPS system that indicates the location of a dog – this information can be viewed in an app on a mobile phone. Ultracom also offers a positioning system for dogs, but with a technological overlap with Tracker. The two brands together have more than 100,000 users, and will benefit from one another's expertise as technology continues to develop.

There's also Wehunt of Sweden, which has more than 400,000 users and is an app showing maps of hunting grounds and the positions of members of a hunting team. A 100 per cent holding in the company was acquired in early 2021. Together, these three companies have the opportunity to merge technologies to form the market's leading and most complete digital hunting system.

"Digital technology is growing apace when it comes to hunting. This is helping to make hunting safer while also enhancing the whole experience. Wehunt saw 50 per cent growth in 2021. The business model here involves subscription to the service, which provides recurring revenue. We have high expectations when it comes to development in this division."

Overall, the Open Air Group increased its sales by around 30 per cent in 2021, while also increasing its profitability.

"We've grown in just a few years to become a major player in our industry. But of course, that's really not enough for us. We're always on the lookout for complementary acquisitions both in Brands, where new brands can complement our offering, and in Technology, where new technologies can help to improve our services still further. We're also continuing to hone our online shopping to give an even better customer experience. I'd like to thank all our staff who've worked so hard to overcome the challenges we faced this year and helped to bring about our positive development."



CEO Camilo Sjödin

A man with a beard and sunglasses, wearing a black suit and a white shirt, is sitting on a concrete ledge. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background shows a blue body of water with ripples. The overall mood is relaxed and sophisticated.

Oscar Jacobson

Oscar Jacobson has been offering stylish, beautifully tailored men's suits for more than a century. Now the range has been extended for all occasions. Outstanding Swedish quality, in a simple but discreetly refined style, is key. The timeless design also lends itself well to reuse thanks to second-hand sales.

Facts

SALES

SEK 252 million

EMPLOYEES

around 75

HEAD OFFICE

Borås

CHAIRMAN

Thomas Gustafsson

PART OF THE MELLBY GÅRD

PORTFOLIO SINCE

2018

Swedish perfection since 1903

Swedish men grew tired of sweatpants in the second half of 2021, and the demand for more dressed garments increased. The year turned out to be a good one for the illustrious Oscar Jacobson. Investments made during the tough restriction period have paved the way for further sustainable success.

Oscar Jacobson is a menswear company offering clothing collections for men of all ages. The company originally provided beautifully tailored suits, a heritage held dear by the company for 119 years. The collections have been expanded of late to include more casual pieces to meet men's outfitting needs for both work and leisure, without compromising on a stylish, modern yet timeless look.

The headline to this text, 'Swedish perfection since 1903', equals the brand's motto. The Swedish aspect includes the distinctive nature of the design and the company's values. Perfection is the name of the game; from quality and fit to customer service and durability.

"We're a lifestyle brand for men's entire wardrobes, and we promise our customers Swedish perfection. Our company is Swedish, with all that this implies in terms of values such as equality, sustainability and human dignity. Our design work is all done in Sweden and we source quality fabrics and have garments made in Europe. Many others have garments sewn in Asia."

Richard Woodbridge has been the company's CEO since 2020 and has led the company through the COVID-19 pandemic, which has had a major impact on sales. Restrictions requiring people to work from home and cancellations of parties and events meant that the demand for smart clothes dropped dramatically. Oscar Jacobson's sales fell by one-third in 2020 compared with the previous year.

TIRED OF SWEATPANTS

But that said, there was a backlash towards the end of summer 2021. As the restrictions began to be lifted, it was obvious that lots of people were fed up with wearing slippers and sweatpants at home and that they needed to give their wardrobes a makeover. Sales in the autumn ended up being 30 per cent higher than in autumn 2019. Overall, 2021 ended with sales almost 30 per cent up on 2020 and 14 per cent down on 2019. And last but not least, the 2020 loss became a positive result in 2021.

"The pandemic has affected us more than many others in the industry. We were hit harder by the downturn, but this autumn we've come back stronger than the industry as a whole."

He points to the security and stability that comes from having a strong owner in difficult times. It provides a sense of courage and the opportunity to invest even when times are hard. The product range has been extended during the pandemic and it's been possible to launch a new business system, which will massively facilitate future expansion.

Under the leadership of Richard Woodbridge, Oscar Jacobson has

steered sales towards its own channels such as its own physical stores and online shopping. More than half of the company's sales were made through own channels for the first time in 2021. The company has 15 stores of its own, the biggest of which is at the NK department store in Stockholm. Its area was expanded by 50 per cent during the year.

FOCUSING ON THE SECOND-HAND MARKET

"We mustn't steer our customers. We have to have a presence in the places where customers in our target group want to be, whether that's at the premises of an external retailer, in our own store in town, or online. This is why we care for all our channels and let them go hand-in-hand through development."

One new venture that's seen major success during the year is the second-hand shop Sustain by Oscar Jacobson in Stockholm. Any owner of an Oscar Jacobson garment can go to this shop and receive 60 per cent of the sale value of the garment as a second-hand item. The shop then launders and repairs the clothes, which are then available for new owners to buy. This is an example of a sustainability initiative that's also achieved commercial success.

"Our garments are of high quality and last a long time, so this concept is ideal for us. There's been a surprising amount of interest in both dropping off and buying second-hand clothing. Our next step is to digitalise the concept so that more customers have the opportunity to drop off and buy second-hand items."

Other new initiatives during the year include the rental of partywear, an outlet store in Barkarby, near Stockholm, and a jeans launch.

"This has been a challenging year, with overcapacity at the outset and capacity shortages at the end. And in the middle of all this, we switched our business system and opened new stores. Ultimately, we'll come out of this stronger and look to the future with great confidence. I'd like to thank the owner and all our staff for their support and hard work that has brought us to where we are."



CEO Richard Woodbridge

Smarteyes

Smarteyes has been a challenger in the optician sector since it was founded in 2007, with a vision to be the most widely recommended optician. Innovative services allow Smarteyes to offer affordable and professional eye care with eye tests and sales of lenses and high-design eyewear under its own brand in 87 stores in Sweden, Denmark and Germany.



Facts

SALES

SEK 724 million

EMPLOYEES

around 410

HEAD OFFICE

Gothenburg

CHAIRMAN

Thomas Gustafsson

PART OF THE MELLBY GÅRD

PORTFOLIO SINCE

2007

Record year for sales and profitability

2021 was a record year for Smarteyes. Emphasis on design partnerships and new collections in combination with a strong store concept and dedicated staff are all key ingredients in Smarteyes' recipe for success.

“We’re having our best year ever, setting records in terms of both sales and profitability. Focusing on the right activities has allowed us to increase our average revenue per customer while balancing our costs in relation to sales at our stores really well.”

CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT TO DRIVE THE INDUSTRY

The company focused on key development areas in 2021 such as in-store concept development, digitalisation, clinical development, the in-store sales process and sustainability so as to create the conditions for continued growth. Smarteyes rolled out its new growth strategy in the past year, focusing on increased profitability, investments and continued expansion.

Looking back, Smarteyes is able to confirm that it developed its sales initiatives successfully and increased the average purchase per customer by 11 per cent during the year. Some 30 per cent of its revenue is currently generated by subscriptions, which is linked to increased demand for more glasses for different needs.

“We’ve managed to increase the number of customers in 2021 while achieving the highest average revenue per customer ever without increasing prices. We offer a wide and highly desirable range of products, and our designs and collections are key to creating market appeal.”

DIGITALISATION AND RENEWAL OF THE OFFERING

The optician sector, like many others, is going digital. Smarteyes has continued to develop and roll out a smart solution during the year that increases the availability of both the service and opticians, “Optiker på distans” [Remote optician], in more stores. Its aim is to facilitate the purchasing processes, but also to offer and utilise state-of-the-art eye care technology and expertise.

Customers do their eye tests in the shop in the usual way, while the optician is at home or elsewhere. High-speed video connectivity and a proprietary technology system allow the optician to control the equipment and carry out tests of various kinds. This is both a flexible and a cost-effective solution and enables Smarteyes to offer modern vision care and fantastic in-store experiences.

MARKET GROWING WITH NEW NEEDS

The optician sector is growing, and competition remains fierce. We’re all living longer, so we also need to change our glasses more frequently. Moreover, many customers choose a number of different pairs of glasses depending on their needs. Glasses help people to see and meet a variety of needs, but they’re also a way of expressing personal style. People often wear different types of glasses for computer work, driving or sports.

Smarteyes is always working on developing and adapting its range so that it can meet the needs of the market while also inspiring new behaviours when it comes to wearing glasses. The year saw the launch of 12 new collections in different price and style categories, the highlight being the eco-friendly Elements collection. Customers can now choose from more than 100 frames made from 100% biodegradable acetate. The established design partnerships with Efva Attling and Oscar Jacobson are still very popular, which has given us new customer segments.

“Our collections and design partnerships are key to strengthening our brand and market position.”

CULTURE IS SMARTEYES’ MAIN SUCCESS FACTOR

Digital services are evolving rapidly, but Smarteyes stores and employees are still at the very heart of the company’s offering. Service, commitment and how staff treat customers are key, as is expertise. Smarteyes has focused on reinforcing its organisation during the year by providing leadership support and training. It’s also implemented a new mobile tool to take daily stock of its organisation and gauge staff satisfaction and engagement.

“Our employees can make their voices heard, no matter where they are in the organisation. This is an absolutely vital tool for all our managers.”

Corporate culture is a success factor – there can be no doubt about that. Market surveys for 2021 indicate that Smarteyes is Sweden’s most widely recommended optician.

“This is brilliant testament to the work our staff do every day in our stores, and on our vision. It helps makes sure we always stay on our toes.”



CEO Thomas Kusoffsky



SUSANNE CANERSTAM, PA TO THE CEO AT MELLBY GÅRD

**“The next project
is always the most
enjoyable one!”**

Energetic PA driven by entrepreneurial spirit

Susanne Canerstam completed her first day at Mellby Gård a shade over seven years ago. She was ready for a new challenge after spending nearly 20 years in the construction industry. Someone told her about Rune Andersson when she was looking for speakers for an in-house conference, and that's how she came to discover Mellby Gård. Quite by chance, they were advertising the position of PA to the CEO on their website.

“When I read the details on the position, I felt straight away that they were looking for me. I like it when things happen, and I've always worked with entrepreneurs. I get to do precisely that at Mellby Gård. There are always loads of projects on the go, short decision pathways, people are always having new ideas, and there are projects where everybody can get involved. People are brave enough to try new things, even though they don't always get it right. Entrepreneurs are always aiming for something, and they always have something on the go.”

She never takes her foot off the gas, whether she's working or having time off. Above all, she's fascinated by motorbikes in general, and road racing in particular. She's done lap after lap of the Ring Knutstorp circuit over the years. Susanne is a road racing instructor, too. She recently discovered downhill skiing and is doing a harness racing course, too.

“I've been interested in road racing for a very long time. I even met my husband because of the interest we both have in the sport. It's good that we share our interests, because our activities take up a lot of our time. But there are times when we wind each other up – if one of us gets the urge for a new bike, for instance!” she laughs.

“I've always enjoyed trying new things. I put skis on for the first time five years ago. I really enjoyed it, and the family and I have been up to the mountains many, many times. I'm doing a harness racing course at the moment, too. I deal with the administration of Mellby Gård's 100 or so harness racing horses on a day-to-day basis, so I thought it was time to get more involved in the sport by actually learning harness racing for myself.”

THE SPIDER IN THE WEB

Susanne is the spider in the company's web in her role as PA to the CEO. She helps the Andersson family and her colleagues with all kinds of tasks and oversees the day-to-day running of the office, including technology, IT equipment and digital tools, as well as managing in-house and external communications for the company. She also helps to coordinate and select the various community engagements that Mellby Gård will be involved in.

“When it comes to our community engagements, I think it's so inspiring to be able to help out with the causes closest to our hearts here at Mellby Gård, such as the right to an education for everyone and the importance of embracing entrepreneurship.

“Mellby Gård is a small organisation where everybody plays their part in their own way, everybody is included in whatever's going on, and there are always loads of things happening – new projects, or activities.

“The Andersson family are good at making sure everybody is happy and feels a sense of commitment to what we do. They're also good at giving their staff a boost and helping them to develop, and they're happy to share their experience and expertise.”

PANDEMIC BROUGHT ABOUT CHANGE

The past year has presented a number of challenges too; for the companies co-owned by Mellby Gård, and when it comes to making the switch to a more digital way of working. But the Mellby Gård strategy remains the same and focuses on responsible, active, long-term ownership.

“Business has been fantastic in spite of the pandemic, and most of our companies have been able to adjust, adapt and recover. I can see major benefits to adopting a long-term position on our investments. When we buy companies in order to retain and develop them, this provides our companies with another level of security and support and we benefit in the long term. I love seeing how our companies develop over time, too.

“We've gone pretty quickly from nought to sixty in our use of digital tools in recent years, too. People have become even more inquisitive about new digital tools during the pandemic and have learned how to use them. And when people have seen the benefits on offer, this process has sped up.”

Looking ahead to 2022, Susanne is very much looking forward to the business starting to move, from working mainly on supporting all the companies through a few turbulent years to focusing once more on helping companies make the transition from promising to leading.

“The next project is always the most enjoyable one. Challenges and curiosity are what really drive us here at Mellby Gård!”



ANNA HEMLIN, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE SWEDISH BRAIN FOUNDATION

“We have to empower individuals, work with preventive measures – and eventually change society”

The Swedish Brain Foundation is a non-profit fundraising foundation without state funding that's donated almost a billion Swedish kronor to Swedish brain research since 1994 through donations from individuals and companies. It focuses on four causes – fundraising for and funding brain research, knowledge-sharing and advocacy in the field – to fulfil its ambition of a society in which all brains reach their full potential, free from disease.

Vital research aiming to change society

Mellby Gård
in society

The Swedish Brain Foundation's ambition is to create a society in which all brains achieve their full potential, free from disorders. When this ambition is achieved, our society will be a place where people live longer and enjoy better quality of life, where fewer people suffer or are affected by brain injuries, disorders and disabilities. Anna Hemlin has been Secretary General of the Foundation for seven years.

“I come from a marketing background, but I'm really driven by the privilege of working with brain research. Research is moving so quickly in many ways, with technological advances that help us understand more accurately how the body and its various disorders function, but it's clear that brain research isn't always prioritised as highly as research in other areas. I think it's time for research into brain disorders to catch up!”

The Swedish Brain Foundation's mission is to drive change focusing on brain research, and this is being done by funding research and share researchers' insights to society, aiming to improve well-being and health in the long term. The Swedish Brain Foundation is also a vital platform where people affected and their family members can find out all about various diagnoses and get support to help them live with the diagnosis.

“It's so important for researchers' insights to be shared in society, in healthcare services, and to employers. This allows us to empower individuals, work with preventive measures - and eventually change society. Bearing in mind more than one in four Swedes suffers from depression at some point in their lives and up to a million people suffer from some form of addiction, you can see this field of research is important to society. Neurological diagnoses affect everybody at some point, whether people themselves or their loved ones.”

FUNDRAISING RECORD

The Swedish Brain Foundation is reliant on people donating money to its causes by means of traditional fundraising or through bequests. There's been a major shift in people's willingness to donate in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Gifts bequeathed to us are our biggest source of income, and that's been the case for a long time. We normally arrange meetings with 50 to 100 participants so that we can tell them how to leave a gift to us in their wills. Last year's meetings had to take place online - and we managed to reach out to more than 2,000 people as a result! We were all very surprised and pleased, so we'll carry on holding these meetings like this going forward.

“Apart from bequests, 2021 was a record year for fundraising for us. I think people stopped and reflected during the pandemic on the important things in life. And what's more, it's become clear just how important research is for society. We need it so that it can break down barriers and help us think along new lines. So I'd like to say a big thank you to all our donors!”

CONTINUOUS SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH

The record year has had a positive impact on the Swedish Brain Foundation's opportunities to fund research in various areas. Awarding three-year research grants has been possible for the first time.

“Having the opportunity to award three-year research grants really makes a difference to our researchers. It provides them with another level of security and continuity in their work - and there's no need for them to spend so much time applying for new grants. We also know that successful research into one diagnosis can result in success with other diagnoses, so this will have a ripple effect when it comes to many brain disorders.”

The importance of continuity is key to progress in research, so she's grateful for the many years of support provided by Mellby Gård and Rune Andersson, particularly with regard to research into giant cell arteritis.

“Research into giant cell arteritis is incredibly important because relatively small numbers of people are diagnosed with it, but at the same time it causes a great deal of suffering for those affected. Not enough attention is paid to it, maybe precisely because it's rare. Mellby Gård has given us a great deal of help in this regard. Rune Andersson is also personally committed, driven and curious about the progress of the research, and he also helps out with raising the profile of both the Swedish Brain Foundation and our research - a true ambassador.”

DEVISING A BRAIN IMPACT ANALYSIS

Looking ahead to 2022, Anna sees plenty of things to look forward to - perhaps most notably all the brain research advances that are underway in fields such as Alzheimer's, mental health and addiction. The Swedish Brain Foundation is also working on a letter to the government in order to push for the implementation of a brain impact assessment that will culminate in a brain plan. The emphasis here is on the need to reform public systems so that they can be adapted more effectively to people's varying needs.

“We really need a knowledge boost when it comes to brain disorders. Everything from how schools and healthcare services work and how we build our cities, to how to receive a correct diagnosis and what support is available to sufferers and their family members. Now it's the brain's turn - we need to focus on it!”



AcadeMedia

High quality education and conditions allowing everybody to reach their full potential – these are the guiding principles for AcadeMedia, the biggest education company in Northern Europe. The company's size per se provides a sense of security and creates the opportunity for the company to be a long-term stakeholder in education that helps to build communities.

Facts

SALES

SEK 13,948 million

EMPLOYEES

around 20,000

HEAD OFFICE

Stockholm

CHAIRMAN

Anders Bülow

**PART OF THE MELLBY GÅRD
PORTFOLIO SINCE**

2017

Expansion – but never at the expense of quality

AcadeMedia runs preschools, primary schools, secondary schools and adult education. The pandemic was a difficult test – and the Group managed it well thanks to its well-developed digital tools and, not least, the efforts of dedicated teachers and educators. Its aim is set on growth.

There are some well-known names in the sector such as Pyslingen, Vittra, Pro Civitas and Eductus, which run Komvux [adult education] and SFI [Swedish for Immigrants] on behalf of local authorities. The Group had a total of 188,000 preschool children, students and adult participants in the last financial year.

“We’ve never educated more people than we do today. This demonstrates that we’re living up to the trust people place in us. Our outstanding quality, our 20,000 dedicated staff and our clear educational profiles are the key to attracting more people to our schools and programmes.”

ACTIVE IN A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES

AcadeMedia has 273 preschools accommodating 22,000 children in total. These can be found all over Sweden, as well as in Norway and Germany. Eleven new units have opened over the last year, nine of them in Germany. The pandemic has presented a major challenge to preschool activities as these are based on attendance. That said, the fact that development discussions and parent meetings have been held online has resulted in greater engagement. More parents have taken part when they were able to communicate online rather than having to travel to the preschool in person. Both parents participating has also become more common.

“Preschool activities in many countries aren’t regulated in the same way as primary and lower secondary schools. This provides opportunities for further expansion going forward, including new countries. But we’re looking at internationalisation at primary and lower secondary level, too. We can see opportunities in a number of countries.”

EMPHASIS ON DIGITAL TEACHING

AcadeMedia has primary and lower secondary schools only in Sweden to date, with 116 units and more than 26,000 students. Three new brands have been launched – Noblaskolan, Innovitaskolan and Montessori Mondial – totalling 49 units. These used to be Pyslingen schools. Name changes have come about in order to clarify the schools’ profiles. It’s vital for parents and students to know what they’re getting when they select a school, and for their expectations to be met. The pandemic had a profound impact on primary and lower secondary school activities, but well-developed digital teaching meant that schools were able to cope with the transition to temporary remote learning.

“Digital teaching was absolutely vital to upper secondary schools during the year. The 148 units accommodating almost 40,000 students were forced to teach lessons remotely for most of last year. Digital teaching and learning is continuing to be developed in partnership with Microsoft, the RISE research institute and others.

Efforts are also underway to bring a number of upper secondary schools together under one roof on physical campuses. This will give more schools the opportunity to grow in pleasant locations. Campus Södermalm and Campus Vasastan in Stockholm will be completed this year. Campus Online, a digital platform where students can access all school resources such as study information, recorded lectures and timetables, is also being developed.”

GREATER DEMAND FOR ADULT EDUCATION

Adult education is AcadeMedia’s smallest field in terms of turnover, but one that engages the most participants. No fewer than 100,000 people attend vocational college, Komvux or labour market services every year. Demand for adult education skyrocketed in the wake of the pandemic outbreak in 2020 and has remained strong in 2021. Teaching has had to be provided online to a great extent, and this has been managed well thanks to experienced teachers providing remote learning and useful digital learning platforms developed over periods of many years.

“We’ve faced a lot of demanding challenges, but at the same time we’ve been able to develop our quality and expand with more schools and preschools. I’m really proud of that. The private school sector is in constant flux, but it’s clear that this is the first time so many people in Sweden have chosen independent schools. We’re aiming for continued growth both organically and through acquisitions, in Sweden and abroad. But we must never grow so rapidly as to compromise the quality of the education we offer. Quality is our raison d’être, and we must never place that in jeopardy.”



CEO Marcus Strömberg

Aros Kapital

With its motto “Everything but a bank” as a guiding principle, Aros Kapital has established itself as a financial partner for small and medium-sized enterprises in the Nordic countries and the UK. Innovative financing solutions in combination with straight talking and rapid service are laying the foundation for better business and greater growth.

Facts

SALES

SEK 341 million

EMPLOYEES

around 50

HEAD OFFICE

Gothenburg

CHAIRMAN

Hans Berggren

PART OF THE MELLBY GÅRD

PORTFOLIO SINCE

2015

Aros Kapital helps companies to grow

Capital is needed for growth and development. Aros Kapital aims to make this possible by being “everything but a bank”. Corporate finance in partnership rather than bureaucratic red tape has proven to be a winning concept for the company, which saw its best year ever in 2021.

Aros Kapital works solely with financing solutions for small and medium-sized enterprises; financing property purchases or technology initiatives made possible thanks to loans or leasing. Lending is quick and easy thanks to an automated process, often with loan approval and payment of funds within one or two days. Aros Kapital offers loans of up to SEK 500,000 in partnership with the European Investment Fund, which guarantees up to 80 per cent of the loan (the company is responsible for the rest). This type of loan has undergone massive growth in 2021, driven – not least – by developments in the UK, while also representing low risk for Aros Kapital. The company has also signed a number of partnership agreements in respect of factoring.

INNOVATIVE COMPANIES DEMAND NEW FINANCING SOLUTIONS

Aros Kapital views its finance offering as a form of partnership, typically focusing on companies that fail to fit into a traditional industry. Many customers are growth companies focusing on new technologies and business models. This is a sector where Aros Kapital see it can make a difference.

“Our analysis is a holistic assessment in which we analyse future circumstances and not just historical data and the people behind the enterprise. Many of the companies we’ve chosen to offer finance to are Tech companies where we truly believe we can develop the business together.”

Matsmart’s new solar-powered automated warehouse in Örebro was co-financed by Aros Kapital in 2021. Matsmart will eventually come to own the entire robot system on account of a leasing arrangement.

LONDON VENTURE REINFORCES POSITION AS INNOVATOR

Aros Kapital opened its first overseas office in the UK in 2020, a move that’s been very successful. The company has succeeded in reaching out to new customers, particularly in the field of property finance solutions together with its partner Assetz Capital. Their strategy is to identify additional partners while also extending their offering to include more channels and launching their invoice buying service in the British market.

The successful launch in the UK is explained to an extent by the generous guarantees provided by the UK government during the pandemic, combined with the fact that Aros Kapital differ from traditional banks.

“We’re different to many other lenders in London because we’re just less bureaucratic and more nimble, and we’re much more professional. And many lenders haven’t dared take the risk even though it’s a massive market.”

STRONG GROWTH AND FOCUS ON NEW MARKETS

2021 was Aros Capital’s strongest year ever. Turnover increased by more than SEK 200 million to SEK 566 million and profitability doubled to SEK 200 million. This success is mainly explained by the very low credit losses.

The positive experience in the UK has strengthened the company’s ambitions, and it’s now aiming to accelerate its growth and establish a presence in more markets. Aros Kapital signed a contract with a new partner in Ireland in 2021, and the company will be offering its first loans here in 2022. Aros Kapital also established a presence in Norway and is considering opening offices in Finland in future.

“Our success lies in our scope and our talented staff. We have a strong culture and their commitment is as strong as ever despite the fact the company has grown. It’s also building on our owners’ strong brand. Aros Kapital can go on moving forward quickly in an industry that’s slow-moving and traditional thanks to Mellby Gård’s financial strength, long-term vision and stability.”

This interview was conducted in December 2021 with Daniel Grüner, who was CEO at the time. Erik Berfenhag has been the acting CEO of Aros Kapital since April 2022.



Acting CEO Erik Berfenhag

Excalibur

Rising inflation, concerns regarding the pandemic and uncertainty on the stock market. It might be time to reduce risk and protect your assets when the entire financial market is in a state of flux. More and more people are recognising that Excalibur offers a safe haven.

Facts

SALES
SEK 11 million

EMPLOYEES
6

HEAD OFFICE
Stockholm

CHAIRMAN
Rune Andersson

**PART OF THE MELLBY GÅRD
PORTFOLIO SINCE**
2008

More people looking to reduce risk after a decade of stock market gains

Excalibur offers fund management on the interest rate market to both institutions and individuals. Its aim is to achieve positive returns at low risk regardless of market conditions. This is something the fund has achieved almost every year for two decades. And 2021 was no exception.

The fund invests for absolute returns and seeks the market alpha, which means that the fund should see positive returns regardless of the market situation. Things have gone well to date. Excalibur celebrated its 20th birthday in 2021, and in all this time the fund has seen positive returns every year except for two. The fund has been nominated as one of Europe's best fixed income hedge funds by the Eurohedge Awards.

The fund has returned about 5 per cent per annum on average since it began. This may not sound like much compared with the stock market rises in recent years, but the fund's investments involve much lower risk than stock investments.

NEED FOR LOW RISK MANAGEMENT

There's a need for low-risk asset management, although this has all but been forgotten over the last decade because interest rates have been so low and yielded non-existent returns. The stock market has risen largely due to the lack of alternatives offering returns, and so most investors – including small savers – have been tempted to take ever-increasing risks.

“We experienced a difficult period with net outflows from the fund, where customers took their money and went elsewhere. But we've had a net inflow in 2021. It's obvious that more people reckon it's time to reduce their risk after a decade of stock market gains.”

Achieving absolute positive returns regardless of market situations, at low risk, is a tricky task, requiring an in-depth knowledge of the market. But it is possible, with extensive experience of previous shifts in the economic cycle – and of factors that influence what's known as market sentiment. Thomas Pohjanen and his team have precisely that experience, having worked on the interest rate trading floor of what used to be Nordbanken.

“Buying a bond and then just holding onto it is completely pointless if it doesn't pay any interest. We trade on movements and mispricings in the interest rate and money markets. Getting older is a great advantage in this job, because the market tends to evolve in cycles and we see movement patterns recurring. If you've seen a few cycles of

this kind, you'll find it easier to spot the next one. And there are always overreactions during both upturns and declines. We can recognise an overreaction when we see one. It's all a matter of judgement and timing – that's how we create returns.”

RAPID RECOVERY FOLLOWING THE PANDEMIC

This year's overreactions and surprises in the financial markets include the unexpectedly rapid recovery following the first COVID shock. Emphasis then shifted to the vaccine rollout, where the market rejoiced at times, trembled at others. Moreover, rising inflation has taken the world's major central banks by surprise. But in hindsight, just how surprising is it that worldwide downsizing of production, transport stoppages and increasing protectionism among the US, China and Russia should cause a supply bottleneck, resulting in increased prices?

“We'll see central banks cutting back on bond interventions in the first stage of this development, which means market interest rates will be allowed to rise. We can exploit this by taking forward positions. We also expect inflation in Sweden to reach 4 per cent by the end of 2022. That's twice as much as the inflation target set by Riksbanken. We'll have to wait and see what that involves.”

Excalibur trades in securities denominated in Swedish kronor, euros and dollars, about one-third each. This, too, is a way to access market opportunities while also balancing risk. Thanks to new deposits, fund assets at year-end stood at around SEK 600 million, representing a net increase of around 20 per cent. Returns to fund shareholders stood at around 4 per cent after fees.”



CEO Thomas Pohjanen

Klarahill

Klarahill Group rests on two firm foundations – funeral services and family law. The Group's aim is to consolidate the sector in terms of funeral services, offering co-ownership and participation to funeral directors with strong local roots. Group subsidiary Verahill focuses on growth in litigation and preventive financial family law, as well as legal issues in the event of death. Collectively, they employ around 180 people and have more than 50 offices, from Uppsala in the north to Malmö in the south.



Facts

SALES
SEK 194 million

EMPLOYEES
around 130

HEAD OFFICE
Nacka

CHAIRMAN
Sven Knutsson

**PART OF THE MELLBY GÅRD
PORTFOLIO SINCE**

2015

Klarahill offers complete control over life and death

Klarahill continued its growth in 2021. Three strategic acquisitions of funeral homes were made, and digital funeral home Lova was integrated. Growth in the field of family law was boosted by a broader portfolio of services and greater cooperation within the Group.

Klarahill provides its funeral services under the motto “By funeral directors, for funeral directors”. Entrepreneurial spirit and genuine expertise are vital when it comes to consolidating the Swedish funeral industry, and also for new acquisitions. The company has grown constantly since it was founded in 2014.

Three funeral home enterprises were taken over in 2021: Jarls in Sjöbo, Widéns in Karlstad and Östlunds in Katrineholm. The ten new offices helped the company to achieve a SEK 145 million turnover in funeral services, as well as significant improvement in profitability.

“This year’s acquisitions haven’t just brought in new business for us: they’ve also put us on the map in some important new regions. We’ve found the key to success and are now stepping up the pace so that we can take further market share. Our strong in-house culture and infrastructure are allowing us to grow together gradually without compromising on either our quality or our professional pride,” says Sven Knutsson, Chairman and Acting CEO of Klarahill.

THE RIGHT CONDITIONS IN PLACE

It’s important to offer a digital alternative so that more of the market can be covered. People must find it easy to find a funeral home online and receive practical and legal assistance even if they’re not physically in attendance. That’s why digital funeral home Lova Funeral was taken over in late 2020. It’s now an integral part of Klarahill and provides a national complement to the Group’s local presence.

The growth in recent years wouldn’t have been possible without shared ownership, decentralised leadership and strong local brands. The organisation can identify new customer needs quickly and offer relevant solutions. The switch to digital funerals during the pandemic is one good example.

“There’s been something of a thaw in the industry. We’re being approached by more and more funeral homes after they’ve talked to their colleagues in the industry. Klarahill offers both funeral homes and their employees a future. Being part of our community ensures that support is provided when challenges are encountered, but it also places companies in more of a position to create new opportunities. It relieves the burden on owners without them losing their influence. In simple terms: Klarahill allows funeral homes to have their cake and eat it.”

VERAHILL GROWS TO INCLUDE LEGAL ISSUES RELATING TO LIFE

Verahill’s ambition is to become the leading family law firm in Sweden through organic growth together with legal issues addressed by Klarahill in the event of death. Former operations manager Petra Segerdahl was appointed CEO of Verahill in 2021 so as to head the development initiative.

“Our origins in the funeral industry give us a major advantage over our competitors. The classic legal issues that arise in the event of death – probate, inheritance and administration of estates – provide us with a steady flow of cases, and demand is growing as Klarahill makes more acquisitions,” says Petra Segerdahl, CEO of Verahill.

Turnover increased by 60 per cent from SEK 30 million to SEK 48 million in 2021, while the number of employees increased from around forty to almost sixty. This growth has mainly come about due to cases where the company represents private individuals in disputes, and also systematic efforts to increase both intermediation and conversion of cases from Klarahill to Verahill.

Over the last year, Verahill also established a number of new external partnerships in the field of preventive family law, as it is known, including enduring power of attorney, wills and cohabitation agreements.

“We’ve chosen to hold off on offering automated services to date, because we want to be certain that the legal advice offered is of good quality. That said, we’re closely monitoring the digital transformation of the industry. We’re planning to offer a new digital service for 2022 which focuses on simpler probate services. This will advantageously complement our existing offering and grow the business still further.

The company is aiming for further growth in 2022 by continuing to invest in its priority areas, thereby ensuring a good balance of cases and less reliance on legal issues in the event of death. This will make Verahill more attractive to young lawyers who have an interest in the broad field of family law.”

Sven Knutsson,
Chairman
Petra Segerdahl,
CEO of Verahill





Perituskliniken

Perituskliniken opened in the autumn of 2020 and is now one of Sweden's most modern and best-equipped specialist clinics. Its objective is to provide first-class healthcare services, primarily in the field of urological diseases. This private hospital is situated in Medicon Village in Lund, in an environment promoting research and innovation. Three owner families are responsible for Perituskliniken: the Andersson family (Mellby Gård), Mats Paulsson (PEAB) and Göran Ennerfelt and Antonia Ax:son Johnson.

Facts

SALES

SEK 19,5 million

EMPLOYEES

30

HEAD OFFICE

Lund

CHAIRMAN

Johan Andersson

**PART OF THE MELLBY GÅRD
PORTFOLIO SINCE**

2018

“We have a unique opportunity to make a difference”

There’s a major need to increase capacity when it comes to Swedish healthcare services so as to reduce the growing queues for healthcare. Perituskliniken can offer complementary services in this regard, mainly in the field of urology, and contracts with the healthcare regions are vital as a way of helping to bring about faster diagnosis and treatment for more people. Perituskliniken offers “care without waiting”, which allows the clinic to really make a difference and be there for everybody.

The clinic gets its patients from three sources: contract patients from the Swedish healthcare regions in which Perituskliniken is a contracted healthcare provider; via insurance companies; or private patients who seek the services of the clinic directly.

Perituskliniken signed contracts with public and private healthcare providers in 2021, and there was a gradual increase in patient flows.

“We thought getting contracts with the regions would be easier and that there’d be more patients, but we maintain good communication with the regions and are working to establish more of a presence so that we can show we’re there to help when the need arises. We’re expecting to see greater patient flows from 2022 onwards as people simply can’t put off the treatment they need any longer.”

Perituskliniken was awarded a direct contract by Region Skåne in 2021 for the treatment of gynaecological cancer. The clinic also has a healthcare guarantee agreement with Region Halland for benign urology. Perituskliniken signed health insurance contracts with a number of the market’s major insurance companies, as well as concluding contracts with other private healthcare providers. Aleris, for example, performs orthopaedic surgery on knee and hip patients four days a week.

“Private healthcare providers joining forces to bring down waiting times is a new feature in Swedish healthcare.”

BIG HOSPITAL IN A SMALL BODY

What sets Perituskliniken apart from other hospitals is that it combines excellence and technology under one roof. Its modern facilities include diagnostics with a separate X-ray department (offering MRI and PET/CT scans), specimen taking and operating theatres with a robot for keyhole surgery.

Perituskliniken can live up to its motto, “care without waiting”, by having all parts of the investigation chain at its disposal. The same investigations that take public healthcare services between 60 and 130 days can be completed in around a fortnight here.

“No other private or public healthcare provider in the Nordic countries offers the same quality at all stages, the way we do. Simply, Perituskliniken is a big hospital in a small body.”

The use of new technologies sets Perituskliniken apart from other private healthcare providers. Most urology clinics in Sweden perform prostate biopsies without prior MRI examination using tissue samples taken via the rectum. Perituskliniken uses what’s known as fusion technology with both ultrasound and MRI, as well as samples taken via the skin instead of the rectum. This method increases precision as well

as minimising the risk of infection. Moreover, laser vaporisation is used to treat benign prostate enlargement, resulting in minimal discomfort and aftercare for patients.

“We have oncologists, urologists and radiologists at the clinic, so we can also offer multidisciplinary conferences for patients who’ve been diagnosed with cancer. We’re the only private clinic offering this in Sweden today.”

MAJOR POTENTIAL FOR DEVELOPMENT

Resources are needed in order to build and establish a hospital. Creating a new team while also managing complex regulatory and clinical requirements so as to ensure effective, safe care is both exciting and challenging.

Besides the fact that Perituskliniken already provides additional capacity for Swedish healthcare services, there’s potential for development in a range of areas. Going forward, the clinic will be focusing on increasing its presence in the Swedish regions still further and exploring participation in training projects.

“We have a fantastic medical team. They have unique experience and expertise in fields such as incontinence surgery. Not many people have that these days, so we can help to train more specialists in the field.”

There will also be opportunities to go on working in partnership with other private and public healthcare providers for surgical treatments of women’s cancers such as breast cancer and gynaecological cancer, for example.

There’s an ambition to establish Perituskliniken in the international arena. This will be achieved by means of research in radiology and intestinal X-rays, for instance. As patient flows increase and statistical data becomes sufficiently extensive, we are seeing more of an opportunity to participate in major international research partnerships. The clinic has received requests concerning participation in various clinical trials and is assessing opportunities in 2022.

“Nobody has ever opened a private hospital of this magnitude, and Sweden has nothing else like it at the moment. We have a unique opportunity to make a difference – here and now, certainly, but also in the long term.”



CEO Åsa Dahm

StudentConsulting

The Swedish labour market is undergoing rapid change. The gig economy, as it's known, means that more people are choosing to take on consultancy roles instead of being employed by companies. The role of the Public Employment Service is in the process of changing. Digital recruitment is becoming more and more widespread. StudentConsulting is playing a key part in this switch.



Facts

SALES

SEK 1,204 million

EMPLOYEES

around 1,700

HEAD OFFICE

Luleå

CHAIRMAN

Robert Dackeskog

PART OF THE MELLBY GÅRD

PORTFOLIO SINCE

2007

“The pandemic meant we could demonstrate our capabilities”

StudentConsulting has been finding jobs for students, graduates and professionals for almost two decades. The recruitment agency’s database – a network where jobseekers are digitally matched to the right jobs – contains records for almost half a million people. The company’s turnover broke the billion krona mark in 2021.

StudentConsulting was founded in the late 1990s by – among others – Tobias Lindfors, who is still the CEO. Things really started to take off in 2005, and at that time the company had a turnover of SEK 32 million. The company is growing by about the same amount today – but per month. Turnover reached SEK 1.2 billion in 2021, which represents a 30 per cent increase compared with the previous year.

“Profitable growth is in our DNA. But there’s no such thing as a free lunch. None of our clients (companies looking for temporary staff) can do what we do better or cheaper than we can – and that’s the key to our success. This means we can go on improving what we deliver to our clients: the right person for the right job, at the right time, at the right cost.”

DIGITAL JOB MATCHING SAVES TIME AND MONEY FOR CLIENTS

StudentConsulting’s activities include temporary staffing, temporary staff management and recruitment of students, graduates and professionals. Jobseekers register with the company and are placed in a pool. The company’s digital matching system, known as SC Jobbot, then suggests the right person for the right job. This digital preparator work is now so advanced that it saves vast amounts of time and money. There are almost half a million jobseekers in the pool at the moment, and the system has been developed so that it now includes graduates seeking temporary employment or permanent jobs.

“We’ve spent two decades building and refining the system. A new consultancy app was launched in 2021, further upgrades to the system were launched and in early 2022 along with an enhanced application for scheduling and job passport orders. Based on what the client orders, the system suggests the right people for the job and sends out passport requests to candidates. The candidates then respond and the client/ordering party receives the appointed job passports.”

As stated, the StudentConsulting matching system contains more than 500,000 candidates and 17,022 clients, and 15,878 job placements were made at 206 assignment locations in Sweden, Norway and Denmark in 2021.

PANDEMIC INCREASED THE NEED FOR TEMPORARY STAFF

StudentConsulting underwent accelerated growth during the pandemic. Large numbers of staff on sick leave in many workplaces created a major need for temps and substitute staff, not least in the country’s schools.

“The pandemic meant we could demonstrate our capabilities. We’ve been seeing extreme demand for fast, flexible temporary staff management, and of course even candidates in our pool have to take sick leave occasionally. But we decided early on in the pandemic to invest and maximise our pool and not hold back, and that decision has really paid off.”

StudentConsulting has significantly outperformed its competitors during the pandemic and is now one of Scandinavia’s top ten temporary staffing and recruitment companies. Moreover, its digital screening is so effective that there are economies of scale to be had as more matching requests are received. That’s why the company’s profitability is increasing more than its growth in sales.

The company has identified a number of sectors in which it can focus its activities: e-commerce, warehousing and logistics, transport, customer service, supply teachers, IT, finance and administration, and production.

“These are all areas where there are frequent changes in the need for temporary staffing, and speed and flexibility are often key here.

StudentConsulting is also seeing strong growth in terms of recruitment. Increasing numbers of exclusive contracts are being signed with both companies and local authorities. The company has contracts with the municipalities of Boden, Luleå and Piteå regarding recruitment of both employees and managers.”

StudentConsulting is at the forefront in private employment services, taking the highest employment percentage among all companies. It’s anticipated that volumes in this field will increase still further in years to come, as parts of the employment service are to be outsourced more widely to private operators.

“According to Evimetrix, StudentConsulting has taken the title of having the most satisfied customers in the temporary staffing industry; for the seventh consecutive year. With an increase in turnover of around SEK 300 million in 2021 along with doubling of profitability, we start 2022 with our strong growth ongoing and are continuing just as before.”



CEO Tobias Lindfors

A portrait of Beata Kull, CEO of the Lärargalan Foundation. She is a young woman with dark hair, wearing a light blue blazer and a necklace. The background is a blurred painting with abstract shapes and colors.

BEATA KULL, CEO OF THE LÄRARGALAN FOUNDATION

“Many teachers never receive the attention and recognition they deserve”

The concept and basic structure of Lärargalan came about due to the lack of attention paid to teachers, the most important people in the world. The Lärargalan awards provide students in Sweden a unique channel to show everyone what aspects of teaching they really appreciate. The reflections of students and teachers form recipes for success on how to create good learning.

Teachers' contributions to society take centre stage

Lärargalan Foundation has been presenting annual awards to the best teachers in Sweden since 2016. Initiator Beata Kull is aiming to reinforce the role of the profession by shining a light on teachers from all over Sweden. Lärargalan is now an important activity and platform for recognising the efforts of talented teachers, supporting their work and passing on their expertise to other teachers in the profession.

Founder Beata Kull recognised the importance of good teachers at an early stage. Kull discovered interests, learned new things and built up self-confidence in the classroom. But the Lärargalan concept first occurred to her when she visited the US when she was 18. This was where she encountered a culture that celebrated teachers' efforts; Sweden had absolutely nothing like it at the time.

"I was a shy little girl, but my ambitious and talented teachers made sure I eventually was brave enough to do my own thing. But I felt many teachers never received the attention and recognition they deserved. So that's why I was pleasantly surprised by the American view of the teaching profession, which went on highlighting and celebrating the role of teachers in society. That was when I decided this approach should be reinforced in Sweden – and that was the starting point for what happens now."

40,000 NOMINATIONS

The annual Lärargalan awards showcase the important work that all teachers in the country do. What makes the Lärargalan awards unique is the fact that students are involved in influencing and deciding which teachers should win. Giving students the opportunity to nominate their own teachers provides the school system and everybody else with an insight into the characteristics and qualities of teachers. This creates role models in the profession, and society can draw inspiration from them.

"It's brilliant to see the commitment from students in Sweden. We received 700 nominations back in 2016, but now nearly 40,000 students are choosing to nominate their teachers for the Lärargalan awards. The ever-increasing number of nominations is an indicator of how much teachers mean to their students. The Lärargalan awards create a brand-building platform for the profession by presenting awards to the best teachers in Sweden. The teaching profession is complex. This profession has the greatest understanding of the situation, needs and abilities of each new generation. This has to be put to good use."

DEVELOPING A SHARING PLATFORM FOR LESSONS

The foundation is working on a number of other activities besides the Lärargalan awards. Lärargalan has just launched a new platform, Masterteacher.se, which encourages expertise exchange between teachers. This platform will allow teachers to share their successful lesson plans with other teachers.

"We've been working on a voluntary basis at Lärargalan for the last couple of years in order to develop the platform. The reason why we're developing the platform is that teachers' efforts to create, interesting lessons can take a lot of time. So we wanted to make their work easier. Allowing teachers to save time, this platform will provide a way to build their own brand. We're hoping that all teachers will join in and work together to take lessons to exciting new levels."

A man with a beard and short dark hair, wearing a dark suit jacket over a light blue button-down shirt, stands in the center of a city street. The street is lined with parked cars and multi-story buildings, with a blurred background suggesting a busy urban environment.

JOHAN EKLUND, CEO OF THE SWEDISH ENTREPRENEURSHIP FORUM

“For us, the most important thing is to ensure that the research we conduct is of use to society”

The Swedish Entrepreneurship Forum is an independent research foundation that's driven by the guiding principles of Research, Networking and Debate. The aim is for the forum to be the leading national venue for gathering intelligence for decision-makers, researchers and formers of opinion on economic policy issues relating to aspects such as entrepreneurship and innovation.

For better economic and political decision-making

The idea for the Swedish Entrepreneurship Forum came about from a discussion about the ability for researchers to share knowledge with politicians and decision-makers. This idea became reality in 1994, and since then the Entrepreneurship Forum has gone on conducting policy-relevant research and ensure its popularisation and distribution. Johan Eklund, Professor at Blekinge Institute of Technology, has been the CEO of the forum since 2015.

“I’m from a research background myself, I’m a professor of economics. But what really spurs me is ensuring that research is of benefit to society, politicians and decision-makers. This is why the Entrepreneurship Forum is so vital – we provide a link between researchers, society, the business community and politics.”

There are three main areas for the forum’s activities. It initiates, conducts and communicates research relevant to policy regarding entrepreneurship, innovation, running small businesses, renewal and growth; it runs a unique network involving academia, politics and the business community; and it shares knowledge so that informed decisions can be made.

The aim is to be the leading national venue for knowledge-sharing for decision-makers, researchers and formers of opinion on economic policy issues linked with aspects such as entrepreneurship and innovation.

“For us, the most important thing is to ensure that the research we conduct is of use to society. One example is our work related to exclusion in the labour market and self-sufficiency issues, where we can now see – ahead of the 2022 elections – that a number of political parties have taken on board our research and proposals and are using them for policymaking. It’s brilliant to see our work having that kind of specific impact.”

EMPHASIS ON THE LABOUR MARKET

2021 has been an unusual year for the Entrepreneurship Forum, as for many others. Much of their research has focused on how to get Sweden restarted in the wake of the pandemic, with emphasis on increasing the competitiveness of our economy. A number of reports on this issue have been published during the year.

“We have a major matching problem in the Swedish labour market at present, and it is clear that permanent unemployment will remain relatively high even after the pandemic, unless we act. Something is

very wrong when we have both a labour shortage and a high level of unemployment. We particularly need to come up with new ways of supporting the growing group of people who are currently far from the labour market so as to reduce economic exclusion among individuals in this group.”

RESEARCH INTO SWEDEN’S COMPETITIVENESS

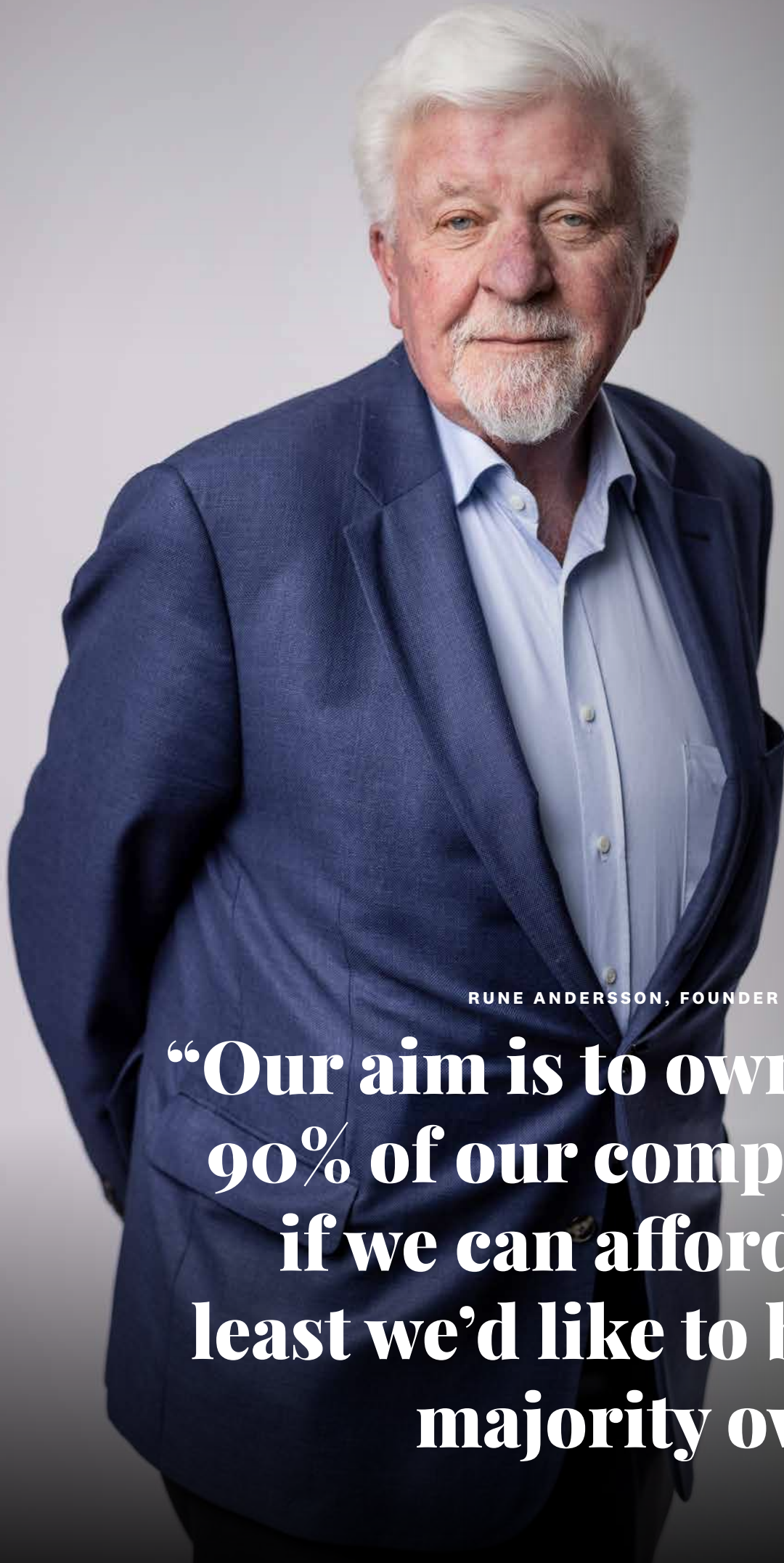
Now that the pandemic is almost over, Johan Eklund is looking forward to tackling some new issues and taking on research in relevant fields that have been overshadowed over the last couple of years.

“It’s clear to me that we’ll be able to alter our focus now that we’re returning to a more normal routine. Of course, it’ll be wonderful to see whether our efforts on self-sufficiency issues will continue to have an impact on the political debate, but it’s also great to see we’re broadening our perspectives and are able to consider the long-term renewal capability and competitiveness of the Swedish economy. There’s also the impact of recent geopolitical issues and security policies to look at, and how these affect the Swedish economy.

“What’s more, I’m very much looking forward to having fewer digital meetings and seeing all my colleagues and partners in person again.”

Mellby Gård is one of a number of partners to the Entrepreneurship Forum, and has been for many years. Johan can see lots of advantages in the Andersson family being part of the forum.

“The discussions about social issues with Mellby Gård, through Rune and Johan, are really crucial for researchers. This provides us with an indication of which issues are of relevance to the business community. They’re always dedicated, well-informed and interested, and the discussions we’ve held generally result in specific issues that we can take forward – regarding the functioning of the labour market and exclusion from the labour market, for example.”



RUNE ANDERSSON, FOUNDER OF MELLBY GÅRD

“Our aim is to own over 90% of our companies, if we can afford it, at least we’d like to be the majority owner”

How Mellby Gård was built

Mellby Gård AB was founded as an agricultural company in 1986 when Rune Andersson took over Mellby Gård farm, a few kilometres to the north-east of Sösdala in the municipality of Hässleholm.

“We started up a separate company to run the farm: this is the actual, original Mellby Gård AB. Nothing dramatic happened within the company over the next three years, except for the continuation of agricultural activities, which were based on both animals and grain.”

Rune Andersson bought Getinge AB with Carl Bennet in 1989.

CO-OWNER OF ANDERSSON & BENNET

“The transaction was conducted by the newly formed company Andersson & Bennet AB. Mellby Gård AB owned half the company, while Carl owned the other half. After that, the two of us worked together at Andersson & Bennet AB, and we took over a number of companies and their subsidiaries over an eight-year period.”

The company bought half of Älvsbyhus, for instance, and the Johansson family owned the other half. It also bought out Söderberg & Haak, two companies that still form part of Mellby Gård. Bewator and Svanströms were two other companies that were taken over by Andersson & Bennet.

“Andersson & Bennet grew nicely until 1997, when Carl Bennet wanted to leave the operational work at Getinge to focus on his chairmanship. We decided together to split Andersson & Bennet between us and had all our holdings valued. To put it simply, Carl was given all the shares in Getinge AB, while Mellby Gård got everything else.”

Mellby Gård took on sole responsibility for a number of companies as a result and needed to build up its own administration. Monika Olsson had already been taken on, and Sten Libell and Rolf Andersson – who were both employed by Andersson & Bennet – joined her at Mellby Gård. Anders Bülow was taken on a few years later, and he went on to become a key person in the further development of Mellby Gård.

START ANEW OR TAKE OVER FOR PERPETUAL OWNERSHIP

Since then, Mellby Gård has gone on taking over or starting new companies with its sights set on one of Rune’s most important building blocks: owning and running the companies so that they can go on being developed further.

“We’ve managed to work according to the principle of perpetual ownership, with just a few exceptions. There have always been specific, structural reasons for our decisions on the few occasions when we’ve sold companies. We don’t normally sell to financial investors or private equity firms, but to industrial investors who are taking over a business with a view to growing it.”

One example of this is the office equipment company Svanströms, which Mellby Gård owned and run for around 14 years and sold in 2011.

“The market was moving towards more international customers, and we couldn’t give them a full service because we only had a presence in Sweden. So we made the decision to sell the company to Office Depot, one of the world’s biggest stakeholders in that market.”

Mellby Gård hasn’t really performed any kind of active analysis into what kind of companies it wanted to take over. Most of its acquisitions have largely been coincidental.

“Most commonly, somebody has got in touch with me. I was contacted either by people who wanted to start from scratch – like in the case of Feralco, for example, when a former manager at Kemira got in touch with me – or when a new owner or co-owner was needed, like when the Johansson family got in touch when they wanted to buy out Älvsbyhus.”

IF ONE SECTOR IS AFFECTED, THEN SO IS EVERYBODY

“In my experience of the business community, I found out that if one sector is adversely affected, so all companies in that sector are usually affected as well. That’s why it’s been vital not to have too many companies working in the same sector. Holdings shouldn’t co-vary in the economic cycle, and now I look back I can see we’ve actually managed that balance well.

“It’s also crucial to strike a balance between companies that import and companies that export. I decided early on to focus on operating companies, primarily industrial companies, and one or more trading companies such as Söderberg & Haak to act as a counterweight. Then came Kappahl, which has grown to become one of our biggest holdings.

“Our aim is to own over 90% of our companies, if we can afford it, at least we’d like to be the majority owner. When it comes to corporate governance, Mellby Gård’s principle is always to want the chair, and sometimes to have an additional seat on the board as well.”

A SUCCESSFUL GENERATIONAL SHIFT

“The generational shift at Mellby Gård began in 2013, when Johan took over the role of CEO. That’s when the management team I was working with also began to wind down, and now Johan has built up a new team of people of his own generation. I think Johan has coped brilliantly with the generational shift!

“As regards the future, Mellby Gård will have no debts as of the end of the year despite investing rather intensively for a number of years. We’ve also sold Flowbird which means that we’ll have plenty to spend on for various types of investments. I think this gives us a sense of reassurance in these troubled times.

“First off, we’ll be making investments in our subsidiaries and then making new investments in Mellby Gård, which is a much bigger and strategic issue. And an unexpected opportunity may crop up tomorrow – as has been the case throughout all the years of Mellby Gård – and we need to be on our toes and assess quickly whether the opportunity is attractive to us and whether we should act on it.”

BM Agri

BM Agri buys and sells grain, oilseeds, legumes and fertilisers on the global grain market. The company also works with price markdowns via various commodity exchanges and provides market information to Swedish farmers on an ongoing basis. BM Agri operates all over Sweden. By focus on strong relationships, cost-effectiveness and innovative solutions, BM Agri is a partner that helps to benefit farmers – for real.

Facts

SALES

SEK 617 million

EMPLOYEES

around 10

HEAD OFFICE

Lidköping

CHAIRMAN

Thomas Svensson

PART OF THE MELLBY GÅRD

PORTFOLIO SINCE

2011

Challenges and opportunities in record price market

Poor harvests, government incentives, low interest rates and increased shipping costs drove up the price of grain in 2021. BM Agri had to navigate a very unusual market that offered both challenges and opportunities.

“I’ve been in the industry for 30 years, and I’ve never seen anything like this before. Price levels for all grain varieties, including oilseeds and fertilisers, reached an all-time high in December. Nobody expected that of 2021, we were anticipating the opposite.”

PRICES INCREASED AT ALL LEVELS

As a trading company, it’s vital to always be pitched correctly in the market. Price increases benefit growers while making it harder to sell produce with the right margins. The 2021 harvest in Sweden was significantly lower than in the previous year (5.0 million tonnes compared with 5.7 million tonnes), which meant BM Agri had less tradable produce and so its business was affected. Harvests in Canada were also poorer, resulting in shortages of both oilseed rape and grain. Prices reached new record levels in late 2021, and the price of wheat rose from EUR 200 to more than EUR 300 per tonne.

“It goes without saying that you can earn quite a lot of money. But that said, there’s more of a risk if anything happens along the way, or if there’s a problem with stock as more capital is tied up. Many farmers are also choosing to withhold their produce to await further price increases. This makes it hard to navigate and know where the peak lies.

“Shipping costs also increased during the year; not least when it came to shipping by sea, which rose by 100 to 200 per cent and hampered both imports and exports. This led to a significant increase in the price of fertiliser bought by BM Agri from Russia, Poland, the Baltic States and Germany. Fertiliser became very expensive to buy and sell in 2021. This also reduces exports, as they’re just too expensive given price increases throughout the value chain.”

CUSTOMERS DRIVING SUSTAINABILITY SHIFT

BM Agri’s wholesale operations deal with some 3,000 growers all over Sweden. These farms supply the global food and drink industry with wheat, malting barley and oilseeds. BM Agri’s main commodity crops are malting barley, starch wheat and oilseed rape, and Viking Malt, Absolut Company and AAK are its biggest customers in Sweden.

Absolut Company, producer of Absolut Vodka, announced a sustainable new farming concept in the autumn of 2021. This means that the 400 or so farms in southern Sweden that supply the company with winter wheat have to adapt their farming to meet a number of sustainability requirements. These requirements include reducing the use of fossil fuels, increasing traceability and enhancing biodiversity. Every farm has to adapt the requirements to its own unique circumstances and will be assessed on the basis of a points system that will determine the amount of compensation to be received.

The idea behind this is to maintain the high quality of the wheat constituting the main ingredient in Sweden’s most exported food product. These requirements will be applicable to the 2022 harvest and should help to bring about a more sustainable supply chain.

GROWTH THROUGH MORE OF EVERYTHING

BM Agri’s target for growth in the long run is to achieve a turnover of SEK 1 billion. Above all, the company has to grow organically by taking on more growers and producing bigger volumes, as well as extending its storage capacity. Turnover for 2021 as a whole amounted to SEK 600 million (761).

“Prices are higher and demand is stronger than we could ever have imagined, but that’s not compensation for the global grain shortage. We simply have to have the produce to sell if we’re to do business and grow.”

The company is expecting the market situation to be more normal in 2022, with prices remaining high for grain, fertiliser and shipping – albeit not as high as in 2021.



CEO Per-Arne Gustavsson

Söderberg & Haak

Agricultural and construction machinery is what is building Sweden. A series of scheduled major infrastructure projects will ensure there's plenty of demand for construction machinery over the next few years, while the agricultural market is more mature. Söderberg & Haak is aiming to gain market share.



Facts

SALES
SEK 849 million

EMPLOYEES
around 100

HEAD OFFICE
Staffanstorp

CHAIRMAN
Sven Knutsson

**PART OF THE MELLBY GÅRD
PORTFOLIO SINCE**

1995

Easing off the brakes and gearing up

Söderberg & Haak has been working for three years to turn things round and put the company back from red to black. Higher sales and profitability have now been placed on the agenda. This will be achieved by capturing market share with strong brands in a carefully considered network of dealers.

In specific terms, this means the company has cut its costs by phasing out much of its own network of dealers and instead building up a network of external dealers all over Sweden. Söderberg & Haak now has a well-balanced mix of its own sales staff and external dealers, and so to some extent the company has returned to its original business concept: importing agricultural and construction machinery.

“Our job is to provide a link between manufacturers and local dealers. We can contribute our expertise, service and accessibility that form the cornerstone of our raison d’être. We’ve now altered the number of sites we run ourselves while plugging geographical gaps in our network of dealers by engaging some new independent dealers.

“We’ll be continuing to develop our distribution with both our own sales teams where so demanded by customers and geography, and also with talented external dealers if that’s the right way to proceed.”

Söderberg & Haak has two business areas. One is construction machinery under the Komatsu and Bomag brands; while the other is agricultural machinery under the Deutz-Fahr, Krone, Amazone and Dal-Bo brands.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS FOR THE KOMATSU BRAND

Contracting currently accounts for some 60 per cent of sales, while agriculture accounts for around 40 per cent. Further growth is expected in both business areas, but potential growth is deemed to be greater in respect of construction machinery; particularly with Komatsu, which has a relatively low market share in Sweden compared with other European markets. The brand had been trailing in terms of distribution and servicing for a while when Söderberg & Haak took it over in 2016.

“We can see opportunities to grow all our brands. The greatest potential is definitely offered by Komatsu, as we’re representing one of the world’s strongest brands in the industry: it offers a wide range of excavators, wheel loaders, graders and more. We’ve been working to improve sales and service all over Sweden since we took over Komatsu, and we can see that what we’ve done has had a positive impact on sales. There’s still more to do, and we should be able to double our market share from the current level of about five per cent over the next few years.

“There are a number of major infrastructure projects in progress and scheduled all over Sweden, mainly in and around the three metropolitan areas of Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö, and these are forming a strong base for demand.”

SALES GROWTH TO BE REFLECTED IN EARNINGS

Sales for 2021 totalled SEK 770 million, which represented an increase on the previous year. Throughout the year, what pleased Jonas Jaenecke the most was the fact he was able to increase sales while restructuring was in progress. The COVID-19 pandemic has had less of an impact in 2021 compared with 2020. The weather in spring and summer has had an adverse impact on harvests for the agricultural sector, making farmers less willing to invest in the latter part of the year. Moreover, fuel prices have gone up, fertiliser has become more expensive and there’s a general shortage of components, too. It’s fantastic to see that Söderberg & Haak managed to increase sales despite all this. The company is now prepared to see continued sales growth reflected in its earnings.

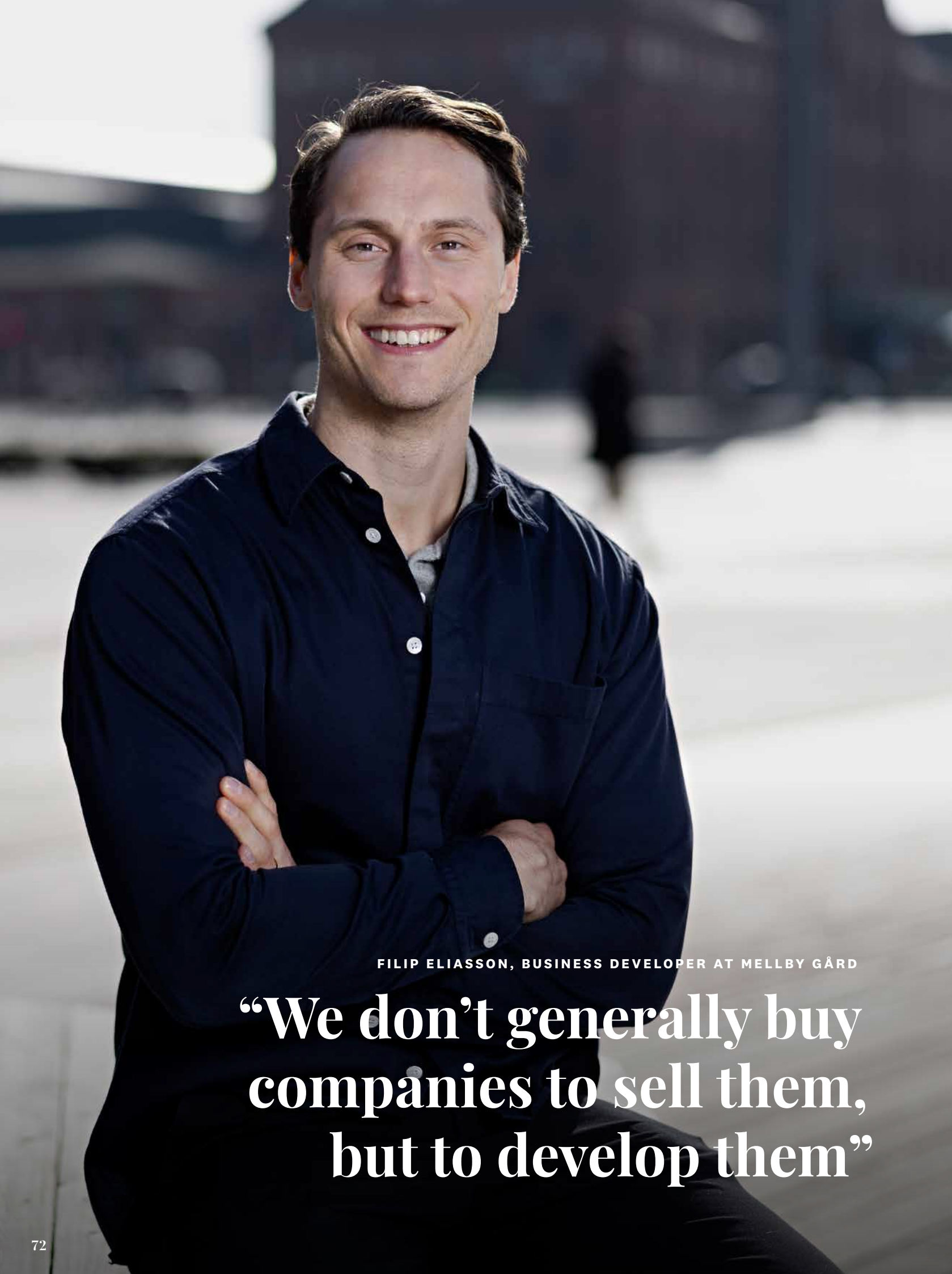
Sustainability initiatives at Söderberg & Haak involve in-house work, as well as external efforts in respect of the product range. As an importer, the company has difficulty influencing the production processes: instead, it has to focus on transport, management of inputs and energy consumption for activities.

“The machinery hasn’t advanced as much as in the automotive sector, but changes are being made. For instance, Komatsu manufactures hybrid excavators with fuel consumption around 25 per cent lower than a conventional excavator, and the noise level is significantly lower as well. Demand for this type of machinery is growing apace, with major customers such as construction companies Peab, NCC and Skanska driving more sustainable purchasing.

“I’m looking forward to the future with a great deal of confidence, and I’d like to thank all our staff for their hard work during the tough years when we were making the transition. Having Mellby Gård as our owner during the transition has also given us a massive sense of security.”

CEO Jonas Jaenecke





FILIP ELIASSON, BUSINESS DEVELOPER AT MELLBY GÅRD

**“We don’t generally buy
companies to sell them,
but to develop them”**

Business developer taking companies from promising to leading

Filip Eliasson has been working on business development at Mellby Gård since August 2020. After spending nearly six years in Stockholm, he decided it was time for new challenges at home in Skåne. His job at Mellby Gård combines the best of both worlds – strategic development of the company’s portfolio, and hands-on work by providing support on various company-specific issues.

Alongside his work, Filip enjoys spending his free time working out in a variety of ways, such as weight training, running and cycling. He also likes spending time with family and friends, enjoying a nice dinner or an enjoyable activity such as a day in the countryside or visiting an art exhibition. He and his fiancée are also busy on various projects at their home, which he finds both relaxing and instructive.

“The best thing about my job is the variety; having the opportunity to work with different companies and different industries and develop them over time. I work with our companies on an operational level, but I also work with Mellby Gård’s investment strategy on a general level. As far as the latter is concerned, there’s a bit of a delicate challenge for us in that we have a strong balance sheet. Taking the Mellby Gård investment philosophy as our starting point, I’m absolutely sure we have everything we need to fulfil our investment ambitions, and being part of this journey is just brilliant.”

As far as Filip is concerned, there are lots of advantages to working at Mellby Gård. Besides the variety, he highlights Mellby Gård’s strong core values that the company works with and that permeate it: he feels these make the job really stimulating. He also perceives enormous strength in the long-term investment and ownership profile.

“It goes without saying that I really enjoy going to work when I know we’re doing something great. We have a major impact on society and welfare as owners of our companies, but we’re humble in that regard and rarely brag about our contribution. Maybe we could give ourselves the occasional pat on the back!”

LONG-TERM CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT

“Mellby Gård focuses on long-term ownership and corporate development, which I think is healthy. We have a different horizon from lots of other investment companies, which creates different circumstances for our companies. It can also help make us more attractive when we talk to entrepreneurs. I reckon most companies in Sweden know who Mellby Gård are and what we stand for – that we’re a respected and persevering owner that maintains a long-term perspective and gives companies every chance to grow.”

Mellby Gård is specifically known for the long-term nature of its investments. They represent secure, stable ownership and join their companies in their development. They take companies from promising to leading, with emphasis on active ownership.

“We don’t generally buy companies with a view to selling them on. I’m absolutely sure we can go on developing our companies and

making them better and more competitive, given their respective circumstances and challenges.”

NEW PROJECTS DESPITE THE PANDEMIC

In the light of the COVID-19 pandemic, 2021 was a year where Mellby Gård faced many new challenges as companies needed different types of support in their business transformation. In spite of this, Mellby Gård has not been resting on its laurels. Instead, the company has continued to get projects off the ground together with the portfolio companies. One such example is a start-up initiative that’s aiming to invest in innovative water treatment solutions. This project is being run by Mellby Gård colleagues Mikael and Filip together with the portfolio company Feralco.

“I’m really pleased we’ve formalised this concept. It’s an initiative offering lots of potential. Access to clean water is a crucial issue on a global level, and it’s clear that humans need to start managing water as a finite resource, both now and in the future. We can ensure its availability by means of smart technologies and solutions. We can really benefit from Feralco’s expertise in this regard when we’re evaluating companies to invest in. Feralco has built up extensive know-how in the field of water treatment and water treatment chemicals over time, along with legislation in the field. Feralco’s know-how in combination with Mellby Gård’s ability to develop companies makes us a perfect partner for many entrepreneurs in this industry.”

Filip is also looking forward to 2022, when he hopes the water initiative will culminate in some exciting investments. He also thinks it’ll be interesting to monitor the ongoing development of the portfolio companies as society returns to the new normal in the wake of the pandemic. He sees a need for greater emphasis on sustainability issues and continued digitalisation for both companies and investors in years to come.

“We have to remain humble when it comes to issues such as sustainability and digitalisation and go on working on the basis of our core values. Our established business logic will guide us in our choice of investments within the scope of existing businesses as well as in the pursuit of new acquisitions, and it’ll help us not to fall into the embellishment trap. Going forward, both sustainability and digitalisation must form an integral part of every company’s business. This will be key to the value created for – and demanded by – customers, and hence to companies’ competitiveness as well. In my view, we have an important part to play in this as owners, together with our companies.”



Eriksberg Hotel & Nature Reserve

Eriksberg Hotel & Nature Reserve in Blekinge is one of Northern Europe's biggest game reserves and the biggest safari park in the Nordic region. There's all kinds of wildlife here, including red deer, fallow deer, Père David's deer, wild boar, European bison (Europe's biggest breeding herd) and mouflon sheep – around 1,600 animal graze here in summer. Eriksberg offers visitors a unique experience, with a restaurant, hotel and conference facilities, events, tourism, the forest, nature conservation and hunting.

Facts

SALES

55 MSEK

EMPLOYEES

39

HEAD OFFICETrensum, municipality of
Karlshamn**CHAIRMAN**

Sten Libell

PART OF THE MELLBY GÅRD**PORTFOLIO SINCE**

2008



The biggest safari park in the Nordic region can be found just outside Karlshamn in Blekinge. There's an exclusive hotel, restaurant and conference facility here, nestling in the forest, mountains and archipelago. The nature and wildlife are the main attractions.

Nature is always at the heart of any visit to Eriksberg Hotel & Nature Reserve. In combination with world-class architecture and design, visitors are offered an unparalleled and unexpected experience. Quite simply, Eriksberg is a place that meets the highest expectations and where people make memories that last a lifetime. Eriksberg leaves its mark on everyone who visits.

"We've had a decent year even though we've been under restrictions. Staycations have become the obvious choice for many people. What we have to offer competes with beaches and swimming in summer, but we've managed to make up for it with coach trips and conferences for the rest of the year."

The aim is to create a year-round destination where sustainability and design help to reinforce the experience and the links with nature. 2021 was a better year than 2020 overall, with visitor numbers increasing from 60,000 to 80,000.

INNOVATIVE ACCOMMODATION THAT'S CLOSE TO NATURE

Blekinge is short on hotel accommodation. But Eriksberg is aiming to change that – in its own way. The emphasis here is on unique, natural accommodation combined with the very best of architecture and design. SynVillan, the Illusion Villa, is made of stainless steel, reflecting the countryside and becoming one with the environment. This building was designed by SandellSandberg and won both the 2020 Karlshamn Urban Design Award and the 2021 Sheet Metal Award.

"We're always on the lookout for new ways to evolve, and part of this involves working with renowned architects. It opens up completely new channels, and raising our profile in exclusive design and travel magazines gives people more of an interest in us."



HOTEL INITIATIVE TAKING INSPIRATION FROM THE BIBLE

Eriksberg is now about to embark upon another spectacular hotel initiative. The new freestanding wooden building was designed by Oskar Årevall and is shaped like a boat, with all rooms overlooking the Savannah. This hotel, with the working name Arken – The Ark – will invite guests to embark upon a journey that will teach them more about animals and nature. Just like in Noah’s time.

“We’re aiming to enrich the experience at Eriksberg on the basis of nature. We want to blur the boundaries between indoors and outdoors, and make nature accessible 365 days a year.”

The new hotel is designed and will be built with emphasis on sustainability so as to minimise its environmental impact. This is also the aim with the choice of façade and roof, which will be made of wood and sedum, as well as heating, ventilation and operation. The hotel rooms will also have obvious environmental themes so as to enhance the natural experience still further. Completion of the new Arken Hotel is expected in 2023.

FROM THE ICE AGE TO THE PRESENT DAY

The unique environment is inspiring. The first humans who were here were aware of this 10,000 years ago, and it’s still true today. Places like Eriksberg are needed in order to show the urbanised population how animals and nature actually function. Founder Bengt Berg took this as his starting point in the 1940s when he created the Mahraviken biological experimental area. This is still the Eriksberg business concept, and the philosophy lives on with the family that now owns it.

“Having Mellby Gård as the owner is absolutely vital to the running of Eriksberg. We might have ideas and ambitions, but without our owners we’d never have been able to either establish or, indeed, develop the business. Like now, with the latest Arken hotel initiative and the exciting journey ahead.”

2022 heralds the 80th anniversary of the founding of Eriksberg, and preparations for the anniversary year are in full swing. Exhibitions and lectures are planned in order to highlight the farm’s natural heritage and significance. Eriksberg is a place that leaves an impression – and it’s hoped that future generations will agree.



CEO Per-Arne Olsson and Chairman Sten Libell

“We need to focus our efforts and join forces to make Blekinge sexier”

Blekinge is known as the Garden of Sweden. So working in partnership with seed company Nelson Garden seemed like a natural choice in Eriksberg’s attempts to enhance biodiversity on the basis of the local crofter culture. The first step was to create a herb garden designed to inspire visitors to grow their own herbs at home, provide the chefs with fresh, locally grown herbs and promote habitats for bees, butterflies and other insects.

“Being outdoors is in, so we want to give people more of an interest in nature and gardens – and what they mean in terms of health and sustainability.”

Eriksberg is Blekinge’s single biggest employer in the tourist industry, so it goes without saying that the region should be developed as a tourist destination. The Archipelago Walk is one initiative that Eriksberg is typically passionate about. Building bridges between islands, islets and skerries will enable people to walk along the coast. Focusing on a strong gastronomic team and fine dining also proved to be a huge success. Coverage in the gastronomic press meant more guests – and more competition for staff.

“There’s so much in Blekinge that remains undeveloped. We need to focus our efforts and join forces to make Blekinge sexier.”



Agriculture and harness racing

Mellby Gård Jordbruk, just south of Hässleholm in Skåne, is a modern, large-scale farm and forestry business producing pigs and cattle, running forestry operations and breeding horses. The farm covers an area of 8,000 hectares, 86 per cent of which is productive forest and 14 per cent is arable land, pastureland, and the rest of the area offers plenty of opportunities to hunt elk, wild boar and deer.



Forestry and renewable energy driving growth

Major fluctuations in the market during the year, in combination with emphasis on rationalisation, meant that Mellby Gård continued to work for profitability and sustainability. New woodlands and investments in renewable energy will drive the farm forward.

In 2019, Mellby Gård made the decision to conduct a major transformation in order to optimise operations and profitability. This work continued in 2021, and as a result the farm discontinued its multiplier production during the year, at the same time continuing its annual production of about 17,000 pigs for slaughter and 200 suckler cows. This was due to a need for major investments on the farm and reduced profitability towards the end of 2021.

“Both energy and feed have gone up massively in price over the year, and we’ve been unable to compensate for this,” says Petter Beckman, inspector at Mellby Gård Jordbruk.

The last few years have been turbulent for the farm, with major fluctuations in the market, just as for many other businesses and industries. Demand was good in early 2021, but profitability deteriorated significantly as feed and energy prices spiralled.

GROWTH WITH EMPHASIS ON FORESTS

Extended forestry is part of the Mellby Gård strategy for growth. Its objective is to have viable forest units. Forests adjacent to the farm’s land in Skåne and Småland were acquired in 2021.

Timber prices remained stable throughout the year. Initiatives implemented and adverse weather conditions for the bark beetle meant that the infestation wasn’t as extensive as in previous years, and the harvest was mainly on plan.

SUSTAINABLE ENERGY SUPPLY WITH SOLAR PANELS

Mellby Gård is assessing opportunities for a sustainable transition and how the farm can contribute to the circular cycle in its efforts to optimise operations and profitability. The energy supply is one success factor in this initiative. The farm invested in solar panels on one of its buildings in 2021, and this now generates energy covering one-third of the electricity needed by the unit. The farm is assessing further investments in renewable energy.

“We’re considering more investments in photovoltaic systems, on our land as well as on buildings.”

Mellby Gård no longer grows grain of any kind, so this land can be used to set up more solar panels.

MELBY FREE FINISHES ON A HIGH

Mellby Free completed her final competition season in 2021, and she did so with enormous success. She was way out in front in her last start at Solvalla, and she crossed the finish line several lengths ahead of the other teams. In her career, Mellby Free has won more than SEK 10 million in prize money and she’s ranked as the ninth most successful mare of all time in terms of prize funds won – but now retirement and foals await her.

“Mellby Free has really finished on top. We’re hoping now that she can produce lots of fine foals, and she’ll be mated to the stallion Calgary Games in spring 2022,” says Jan-Olov Alfredsson, harness racing trainer at Mellby Gård.

Mellby Gård is focusing on breeding its own horses instead of buying them. The stables are home to 77 horses – it’s not a huge facility, but a lot of our horses win races. Mellby Free’s successes are like a quality hallmark for Mellby Gård.

“At Mellby Gård, we’ve chosen to go the hard way about things by breeding our own horses. It can take a long time to produce good horses that win prizes. But there is potential, that’s for sure. Mellby Jinx performed really well in 2021, winning SEK two million from nine starts.”

Inspector Petter Beckman and harness racing trainer Jan-Olov Alfredsson





STEFAN JÖNSSON, CSR AND YOUTH OFFICER, TRELLEBORGS FF

“We want to offer children and young people the opportunity to try football and enjoy meaningful leisure time”

Trelleborgs FF offers all boys and girls the opportunity to train and play football, thus making them part of the scope that builds established elite teams in the long run. Its activities are based on a non-profit commitment where everybody involved acts as important ambassadors for Trelleborgs FF. The association creates opportunities for everybody to develop as part of Trelleborgs FF: as players, as leaders and as people.

Trelleborgs FF – a force to be reckoned with

The ambition for Trelleborgs FF is for football to be accessible to everybody in the city. Off the pitch, the association is a force to be reckoned with, using locally based initiatives to create a sense of hope for the future among young people and adults alike. The ability to see every individual and understand the city's needs allows Trelleborgs FF to build long-term relationships and remain a strong association.

The association is an integral part of Trelleborg for the city's residents. Trelleborgs FF offers all boys and girls the opportunity to be active by playing football. No fewer than 600 young people and more than 100 leaders are active members of the club. Trelleborgs FF cherishes its club activities and wants its activities to benefit everybody. This is why Trelleborgs FF actively work to get more people in the city moving.

"We can see there's a real need to encourage people to be active. Many young people nowadays don't exercise, unfortunately, which affects both their physical and mental health. We're also seeing a trend where young people decide to drop football and club activities as they get older. We want to use our activities to offer children and young people the opportunity to give football a try and enjoy meaningful leisure time. Our activities are designed for both boys and girls, and we use long-term approaches to make sure football is an integral part of the children's lives."

STRONG COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

All active members of Trelleborgs FF – members, leaders and football players – live by the association's core values, which are characterised by humility, a sense of community, openness and respect for the equal worth of all people. These core values permeate everything the association does and form part of specific activities both on and off the pitch. Trelleborg FF runs "TFF – En kraft i samhället" [TFF – A force to be reckoned with], which is the umbrella name for all community initiatives run by the association.


"We run a series of initiatives and activities as part of "TFF – A force to be reckoned with" so that we can help improve our local community." The "Motivationslyftet för unga idrottare" [Motivation boost for young athletes] project is just one of many successful examples. This partnership project is the first of its kind in Sweden, and Trelleborgs FF's youth players work with self-leadership and take responsibility for their training, schooling and health in order to prevent mental illness both now and in the future.

DESIRE TO STRENGTHEN COHESION IN TRELLEBORG

"We also give lectures to Year 4 students at schools, entitled "Vi i rörelse" [We're on the move]. At weekends and during holidays, we open up our sports halls and football pitches by way of an extension to this lecture so that children and young people can have the chance to play and get themselves moving."

Trelleborgs FF also works with selective measures with a view to reinforcing cohesion in the city. The club has held a fundraiser for the refuge for women in the city, for instance, and the association visited old people's homes in 2021. Trelleborgs FF is now looking forward to a new year, with new opportunities together with partners.

"Our long-term partnerships with the business community are incredibly valuable. We maintain continuous lines of communication with Mellby Gård on how we can improve the association and the cooperation with various stakeholders. We're looking to 2022 with confidence, and we're hoping to achieve superb results both on the pitch and in the community."

A full-body portrait of Johan Andersson, CEO of Mellby Gård, standing against a light grey background. He is wearing a dark grey blazer over a light blue button-down shirt and dark trousers. He has short, light brown hair and is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile.

JOHAN ANDERSSON, CEO OF MELLBY GÅRD

**“I think entrepreneurs
focus too much on
their exit at times. That
doesn’t impress me.”**

Tips for raising capital

When you're an entrepreneur, you always want your ideas to take flight and your business to grow. But there are times when you might need a little help. In that case, it might be worth looking at the option of raising external capital from one or more investors so as to ensure growth and continued operations. But how do you go about raising capital?

Johan Andersson, CEO of Mellby Gård, has a series of tips to help entrepreneurs who are just starting out to raise capital. The first thing he points to as key is to have a business model that is proven and works in practice, that you have your first customers and know what kind of investors you want to partner with. Secondly, it is important to find an investor who believes in the entrepreneur and the idea and sees the potential in it.

“When you're ready to raise capital, I think you have to be able to present some form of track record for your business so that investors know what they're getting. Then there's no doubt that the entrepreneur and the team behind the company are every bit as important as the business concept – that as an investor, I believe in the people who run the company.”

SCALABILITY CRUCIAL

Next, it's important to define what kind of support you need in your capacity as an entrepreneur. Johan feels it's important for the capital to be earmarked for something specific that can help the company to grow, such as marketing, developed IT systems or more personnel. It's also important to define expectations for the partnership.

“As I see it, the most important quid pro quo is that as an investor, you feel the entrepreneurs responsible for the company are taking a big risk themselves. That helps you feel a greater sense of shared ownership, and that the entrepreneur is going all-in on this particular project and not focusing on loads of other things.”

Fourthly, Johan highlights the importance of having a scalable business model so that it becomes profitable and applicable in the long term even though it's not cheap to build up initially. This is linked to how you go about building up a critical mass of customers, how you price your products and services, and how the initial sales process works in practice. You can work on the basis of that and gradually streamline and expand your activities.

PITCH WHAT YOU HAVE TO OFFER

When these things are all in place, it's time to build up your pitch to investors. There are lots of things to take into account here too, according to Johan.

“Personally, I'm impressed when people have given plenty of thought to as many parameters as possible. Sometimes, it's clear to me that there's just too much emphasis on simply building volume and getting customers, and this business of profitability trails in second place. A lot hinges on pricing, and that's something I focus on extensively – just making sure you've really thought about where to pitch your product in terms of price. Because it's only then you'll know whether you can build up a company that's healthy and sustainable in the long term.

“After that, it's important to make sure you've carried out a thorough analysis of your competitors. Many entrepreneurs start up businesses in sectors that are already accommodating a number of smaller companies, or sometimes big ones. So it's important to ask yourself over and over: if we make a success of this, what will our competitors in this industry do?”

COMMON PITFALLS

Before pitching to investors, there are also a series of pitfalls that entrepreneurs have to watch out for. Johan highlights the fact that lots of entrepreneurs have too narrow a time horizon for their companies, and too early an exit plan.

“I think entrepreneurs focus too much on exit at times. You receive a pitch, and on the second page you see “we are planning to sell the company at a very high value in four to five years' time”. Thinking along these lines isn't wrong, but it doesn't impress me. I like to see people taking a long-term approach, and if you've gone to the effort of founding a company, I'd at least like to feel that the entrepreneurs are in it for the long haul.”

TIP! HOW TO PITCH TO INVESTORS TO RAISE CAPITAL

BEFORE YOUR PITCH:

- Identify the right investors for your idea
- Identify the specific capital you need and what you plan to use it for

DURING YOUR PITCH:

- Present a tried and tested business model
- Demonstrate that your business model is scalable
- Indicate that you've set the right price for your product or service
- Analyse your competitors and indicate how your business is affected by market dynamics
- Define expectations for your potential partnership

HISTORY

Our history

A lot has happened over the years since Mellby Gård was founded. Here are some of the most significant events in the development of the company.



1986

Mellby Gård AB is founded by Rune Andersson when he buys the Mellby Gård farm in Sösdala. In those days, Mellby Gård AB is a purely agricultural company working with animals and grain.

1995

Acquisition of 50 per cent of Älvsbyhus. Acquisition of 100 per cent of Söderberg & Haak. Alongside Älvsbyhus, these two holdings are currently Mellby Gård's oldest.

2000

Acquisition of 49 per cent of Feralco.

1989

Mellby Gård AB and Carl Bennet AB form Andersson & Bennet AB, each with a 50 per cent holding. Until 1997, all expansion takes place within Andersson & Bennet AB.



1997

Andersson & Bennet AB is divided by transferring some assets to Mellby Gård AB and some to Carl Bennet AB.





2007

Acquisition of 22 per cent of Duni (publ). Acquisition of the remaining 60 per cent of Roxtec.

2011

Acquisition of 12 per cent of Kappahl.

2016

Acquisition of 10 per cent of AcadeMedia.



2020

Perituskliniken opens and welcomes its first patients.

2006

Acquisition of 40 per cent of Roxtec.

2013

Johan Andersson is appointed as the company's first CEO. A Board of Directors is formed, with Rune Andersson as Chairman.

2019

Acquisition of over 90 per cent of shares in Kappahl. Kappahl is delisted from the Stockholm Stock Exchange.

2008

Acquisition of a further 8 per cent of Duni, with a total holding of just under 30 per cent.



2021

Mellby Gård records its best result ever.

Our holdings

● CONSUMER GOODS	● INDUSTRY	● SERVICES	● AGRICULTURE
KAPPAHL >90%	DUNI GROUP 30%	ACADEMEDIA 21.3%	BM AGRI 39.6%
OPEN AIR GROUP 23%	FERALCO >90%	AROS KAPITAL 36.2%**	SÖDERBERG & HAAK >90%
OSCAR JACOBSON >90%	HEDSON TECHNOLOGIES 61.1%*	EXCALIBUR 51%***	
SMARTEYES >90%	ROXTEC >90%	KLARAHILL 86.3%	
	ÄLVSBYHUS 50%	PERITUSKLINIKEN 33.3%****	
		STUDENTCONSULTING 47.5%	

* Hedson Technologies was sold in March 2022

** The share of capital amounts to 17.8% and votes to 36.2%. Aros Kapital AB was taken over by Mellby Gård AB from the parent company Mellby Gård Intressenter AB in April 2021.

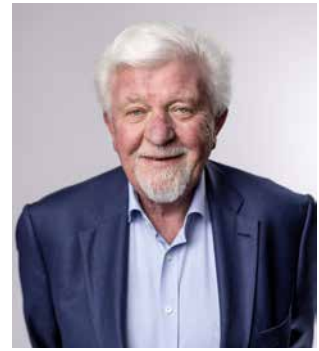
*** Excalibur's share capital amounts to 40% and votes to 51%.

**** Perituskliniken is owned by Mellby Gård Intressenter AB, the parent company for Mellby Gård AB.

Board of Directors at Mellby Gård

RUNE ANDERSSON (CHAIRMAN)
JOHAN ANDERSSON
ERIK ANDERSSON
GUSTAV ANDERSSON
ANDERS BÜLOW
HANS STRÄBERG
THOMAS GUSTAFSSON

The team at Mellby Gård



RUNE ANDERSSON
Chairman
Mellby Gård AB



JOHAN ANDERSSON
CEO, Mellby Gård AB



THOMAS GUSTAFSSON
Deputy CEO, Mellby Gård AB



MIKAEL HELMERSON
Deputy CEO, Mellby Gård AB



SVEN KNUTSSON
Deputy CEO, Mellby Gård AB



ANNA BLOM
Consolidated accounts manager



FILIP ELIASSON
Business Developer



KARIN MILLER
Accountant



MAGNUS BROKELIND
Tax Director



ORVAR MAGNUSSON
Chief Financial Officer



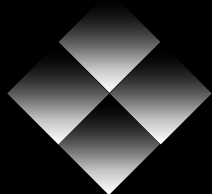
ROLF ANDERSSON
Chief Accountant



SUSANNE CANERSTAM
PA to the CEO



TAMARA DUBYNA
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