

NEWSLETTER

DID YOU KNOW THAT:

Querini's journey: Sweden

When Pietro Querini and his crew arrived in Trondheim on May 29, 1432, the rector of St. Olav church welcomed and hosted them. They could not continue towards Bergen due to an ongoing war between the Germans and the King of Norway, so they went to Stegeborg (outside Söderköping) instead, to meet their countryman Zuan Francesco, a baron of the King of Dacia, who lived in those lands. An extract from Querini's report *"After many discussions, it was decided, for greater security because of the war and the crossing of such a vast sea, that we would go to find a certain miser Zuan Francesco, who had been made a knight by their king and was also from our nation. He lived in his own castle in the kingdom of Sweden.*

On this journey, already forgetting our misfortunes, we approached within four days of Stegeborg, the castle where the aforementioned miser Zuan Franco resided. But first, we arrived at a place called Vadstena, where Saint Bridget was born. She established a rule for women and chaplains in devout observance. In her honor, the kings of the west built a most noble and magnificent church in that place, in which I counted forty-two altars, and its roof was entirely made of gleaming metal. After two days we set off to find our compatriot, miser Zuan Franco, and in four days we arrived, and how much comfort it was to see him cannot be expressed. As the time approached when, due to the devotion of a certain indulgence, countless Christians from distant provinces used to go to the church of Saint Bridget, already mentioned, in Vadstena, the valiant miser Zuan, for our comfort and instruction, said that he had decided to go and take us to receive said pardon, so that not only could we obtain the indulgence, which was great, but also see the gathering of many devout people and obtain information if from any maritime place there were ships departing toward Germany or England, places where it would be more convenient for us to go due to the necessity of our return home. We learned that in Lödöse (Sweden), a maritime place eight days journey away, there were two ships, one bound for Germany, that is, for Rostock (Germany), and the other for the island of England, which pleased us. However, the day came when the aforementioned Peristoe of Germany left, taking with him Nicolò di Michiel, who was once my scribe, Cristofalo Fioravante, navigator, and Girardo dal Vin, the constable, leaving us eight behind. Then, on the 13th of September, we departed for England, equipped with the necessary provisions. "

Quotation: Alberto Quartapelle (2025) The shipwreck of the Venetian Pietro Querino at the Lofoten Islands (Norway) in 1432, Terrae Incognitae, 57:1, 5-59, DOI:10.1080/00822884.2024.2441544



WHAT HAPPENED IN THE MEANTIME

Meeting in Vadstena

On 6 and 7 March, the County of Östergötland and the Diocese of Linköping hosted Västra Götaland County, the Ways of St. Birgitta and the Ways of St. Olav to discuss the development of the **Via Querinissima in Sweden**. This event marked a significant step forward in strengthening the presence of Via Querinissima in the country and deepening its links with the wider network of cultural routes in Northern Europe.

As part of the visit, the delegation explored the historic Vadstena Abbey where Pietro Querini and his companions recounted finding hospitality and enjoying an indulgence that took place in this very church in 1432, the Sancta Birgitta Klostermuseum, and the Vadstena Pilgrimscentrum. This evocative moment highlights the long-standing cultural and spiritual bridge between North and South, rooted in the shared values of pilgrimage, hospitality and exchange.

The meeting emphasised the connections between the Via Querinissima and the Routes of Saint Olav and Saint Birgitta, two great routes that Querini himself may have followed on his return

journey. Then as now, these routes invite curious and passionate travellers to rediscover Europe's common heritage.

Many thanks to Rikard Åslund, Head of the Department of Culture of the Östergötland Region, for the excellent organisation and warm hospitality.

The event was attended by, with Anna Martinez, project manager of Västra Götaland Region, Marie Landh and Petra Nordin Carlsson of the Östergötland Region, Per Roseberg of the Diocese of Linköping representing St. Birgitta Ways, Hans Morten Løvrød, Director of St. Olav Ways, Eleonora Berti, cultural routes expert at the Council of Europe and the director, Nicoletta Martorana with the chairman of the Scientific Committee, Stefano Agnoletto. Our sincere thanks go also to Daniel Andersson, 2nd Vice-President of the Culture Commission of the Västra Götaland Region and a founding member of the Via Querinissima Association, for his strong contribution to the development of the cultural route in Sweden. His efforts have also led to the Lodöse Museum becoming an Honorary Member of Via Querinissima.





Two new Honorary Members: Lödöse Museum and Jekt Trade Museum

Lödöse Museum

We are delighted that Lödöse Museum joins the Via Querinissima as honorary member.

Located in what was once one of Sweden's most important medieval cities, and the predecessor of modern-day Gothenburg—the museum holds a unique archaeological heritage that tells the story of centuries of trade, travel, and cultural exchange in Northern Europe.

With over half a million archaeological finds, Lödöse is considered Sweden's most extensively researched medieval city. Among the many treasures on display are Saint Olaf's axe, the ritual *Skälkniven* knife, and Jacob's scallop shell from Santiago de Compostela, powerful symbols of faith and pilgrimage that resonate deeply with the values of Via Querinissima.



Photo by Lödöse Museum

[Discover the museum](#)

Jektefartsmuseet

Jekt Trade Museum (Jektefartsmuseet) **is the beautiful museum in Bodø that has a close connection to the history of Pietro Querini.** This museum is part of the network of 20 museums in Nordland.

Right by the sea with the view of the majestic mountains as a backdrop, nestled in the spectacular landscape of Bodøsjøen Outdoor Museum in Bodø, you'll find the Jekt Trade Museum. A Museum that tells the story of the raw coastal culture, and how the jekts (traditional cargo vessels) connected Northern Norway to the rest of Europe. At the heart of the exhibition stands the only original preserved jekt from Nordland and invites you to dive into a world that is unrecognizable today.

Nowadays, trucks transports goods between different regions, but before, it was the jekts that played this vital role. The trade they facilitated was the lifeblood of communities. Cod liver oil, dried fish, clipfish, timber and firewood were transported along the coast, supplying cities like Bergen, Trondheim and Kristiansund. The jekts brought back essential supplies and goods such as grain, along with hemp, fishing equipment and other necessities. The jekts also carried home new cultural influences, habits and goods from distant lands.

The communities took it upon themselves to organize everything, this type of organization is known as Bygdefaret. The communities built the sturdy boats, prepared provisions for the voyage, produced stockfish to sell, and travelled all the way from northern Norway to Bergen. It was a true display of collaboration, resourcefulness, and survival in the harsh northern landscape.



[Discover the museum](#)

Photo by Jektefartsmuseet

VQ joins MED4REGEN

Via Querinissima takes part in MED4REGEN: paving the way for regenerative tourism!

We're thrilled to share that Via Querinissima has been selected as one of the flagship pilot initiatives in **MED4REGEN**, a newly launched project supported by the EURO-MED Programme.

As part of MED4REGEN, Via Querinissima will explore a forward-thinking model of regenerative tourism, one that goes beyond sustainability to actively restore and enrich local environments and communities. Museums and cultural institutions will serve as vital anchors, promoting heritage awareness and inspiring more mindful, responsible travel.

This marks an exciting leap towards a tourism model that honors local identity, embraces culture, and supports long-term community well-being.

Learn more about the EURO-MED Programme below!

[More info](#)

General Assembly

On 24th March the Via Querinissima members' meeting was held. An important moment of discussion in which the members had the opportunity to show the projects in progress.

The cultural journey of codfish in The Telegraph

We're delighted to share a wonderful article by journalist **Andrew Eames**, published in *The Telegraph*, following his participation in the **Via Querinissima Days in Greece** last December.

In his article, Eames explores the fascinating story of **codfish (Gadus morhua)**, a humble product that has long connected the icy shores of Norway to the warmth of the Mediterranean. At the heart of the narrative is the island of **Røst**, a major stockfish hub whose centuries-old trade continues to link northern and southern Europe. Special mention also for Querini Opera and Via Querinissima.

[To read more](#)

Interregional Cooperation Forum

Mara Tognon and Gian Andrea Garancini, VQ Staff, took part in the **11th edition of the Interregional Cooperation Forum Europe**, held in **Krakow**. It was a key event for promoting dialogue and shaping innovative strategies at the European level.

Via Querinissima was acknowledged as an **international best practice** in the field of **intangible cultural heritage**, thanks to its commitment to preserving and promoting centuries-old traditions and knowledge. For this reason VQ has been selected as a **strategic stakeholder** in the **INCREMENTAL project**.



Music, culture and memory along the route

In April, Via Querinissima had the honour of coming across two significant events in the heart of Nordland, which enrich the cultural story along our itinerary.

Stormen Konserthus

On April 8th, at 7 PM at the Stormen Konserthus in Bodø, an extraordinary concert took place as part of the inspiring project *New Sounds from the Cap of the North* by the Arktisk Filharmoni, dedicated to Sami and Kven musical traditions. **Just as Pietro Querini once discovered the stockfish of Nordland, the audience had the chance to explore how the musical heritage of the Far North can blend beautifully with classical music:** a sonic journey into the indigenous cultures of the Cap of the North. As Querini taught us, the Arctic offers not only breathtaking natural landscapes, but also rich culture and knowledge!

[More info](#)

Information Meeting about Sami Culture and History

Nordland, the region where Røst Island is located, and where, six hundred years ago, **Pietro Querini and the surviving members of his crew were welcomed has been traditionally inhabited by the Sami people** for centuries. On Wednesday, April 9th, at 7 PM, an engaging *Information Meeting about Sami Culture and History* was held at the Fauske Folk Museum, offering attendees a valuable opportunity to learn more about the rich heritage and traditions of the Sami community.

[More info](#)

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

New member



Gabriele Bucchi is full professor of Italian Literature at the University of Basel. His main research interests touch on Italian literature and culture of early modern period, with a focus on epic and chivalric poetry, the reception of classics in Renaissance (Ovid, Tacitus), the political and moral thought of the Counter-Reformation, the relations between learned and popular culture in 16th and 17thcenturies.

[More info](#)

On **March 19**, the newly formed **Governing Board** held its **first official meeting**, marking the beginning of an exciting new phase for the project.

Just a few weeks later, on **April 3**, a working session took place at **Nord University with Professor Dorthe Eide**. We explored how Via Querinissima can grow in the **Nordland Region**, particularly through the lens of **sustainable tourism**. The morning was dedicated to exchanging insights and outlining possible paths forward.

That same afternoon, a first creative session coordinated by Marit Laland was held with the Scientific Group of the 2026 Symposium (organised by Nordland County Library), including Professor Steinar Aas, a member of the Scientific Committee, Cristian Torset, and the VQ Staff.



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