



Garden wall with the Steno Museum behind

Aarhus University – The Steno Museum Herb Garden

The Steno Museum's south-facing patio is laid out as a historical medicinal herb garden. It contains more than four hundred species, all with a history as medicinal plants in Denmark or abroad. Part of the garden has been arranged in accordance with the manual on medicine by Henrick Smid in 1546, *En skøn lystig ny Urtegaardt* ("A Fair and Vibrant New Herbal Garden"). The book describes around 220 plants, a mix of wild and cultivated plants together with the ailments for which they are suited and the ways in which to use them, i.e. either internally or externally. The manual includes a supplement on the preparation of concoctions, oils, etc., to be used for the treatment of ailments. The preface to his manual was written by one of Henrick Smid's friends, Christian Torkelsen Morsing, the first professor of medicine at the University of Copenhagen.



Western part of the herb garden

Henrick Smid

Henrick Smid was born in Malmö in 1495 and died there in 1563. In 1514-15 he attended the University of Rostock, where he received basic academic education and obtained the degree of “baccalaureus”. He spent another four years in Germany, partly in Wittenberg, partly in Leipzig. On his return to Denmark he made his mark as a Protestant in a country divided along both religious and political lines. He was soon in the service of the Mayor of Malmö, a devout Protestant and one of the loyal supporters of King Christian II. When the king was forced into exile in 1523 his supporters had to leave with him, among them the Mayor of Malmö and Henrick Smid. The latter returned to Malmö about ten years later.



He was an industrious writer and published a number of books within the fields of theology, law and medicine as well as two Latin dictionaries. Most famous among his works are the six medical publications which he had translated and adapted from various German sources. One of the publications is “A Fair and Vibrant New Herbal Garden”. In 1577 all six books were published as a collection entitled “Henrick Smids Lægebog” (“Henrick Smid’s Leech Book” – the book is among the exhibits at the Steno Museum). It has been reprinted several times and a facsimile edition was issued in 1977.

For a while Henrick Smid practised in Malmö, but he later quit medicine and instead took over his father’s position as customs toller. He died of the plague during the epidemic which ravaged Malmö in 1563.



The garden from the west



Top: the mistletoe



Bottom: view to the south

The Steno Museum organises guided tours to the herb garden for groups and holds exhibitions on the history of science and medicine.

Booking of guided tours in the herb garden and further information are available on telephone or via e-mail at the latest a fortnight in advance. The Steno Museum management is open Tuesdays to Fridays from 10 am to 2 pm.



Western part with herb beds

Steno Museum

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Opening hours

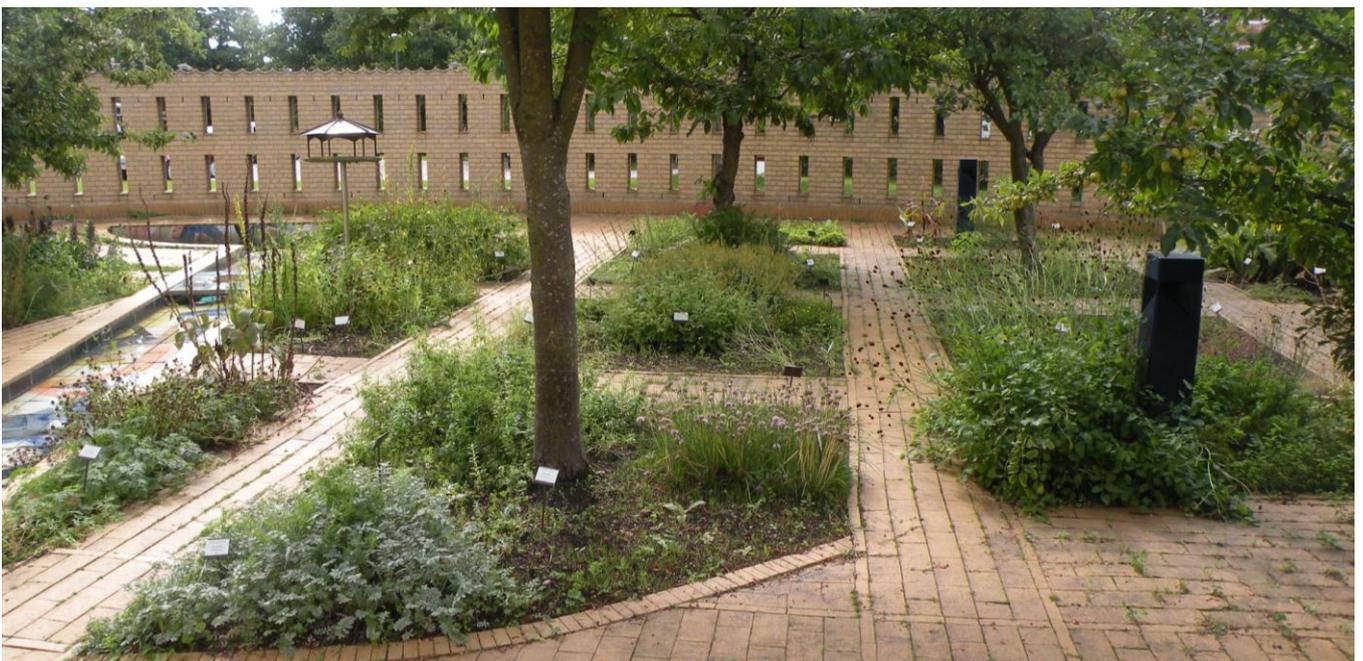
Tuesday – Friday: 9 am – 4 pm

Saturday-Sunday: 11 am – 4 pm

Monday closed



Sea holly (Eryngium planum)



Central medicinal herb garden