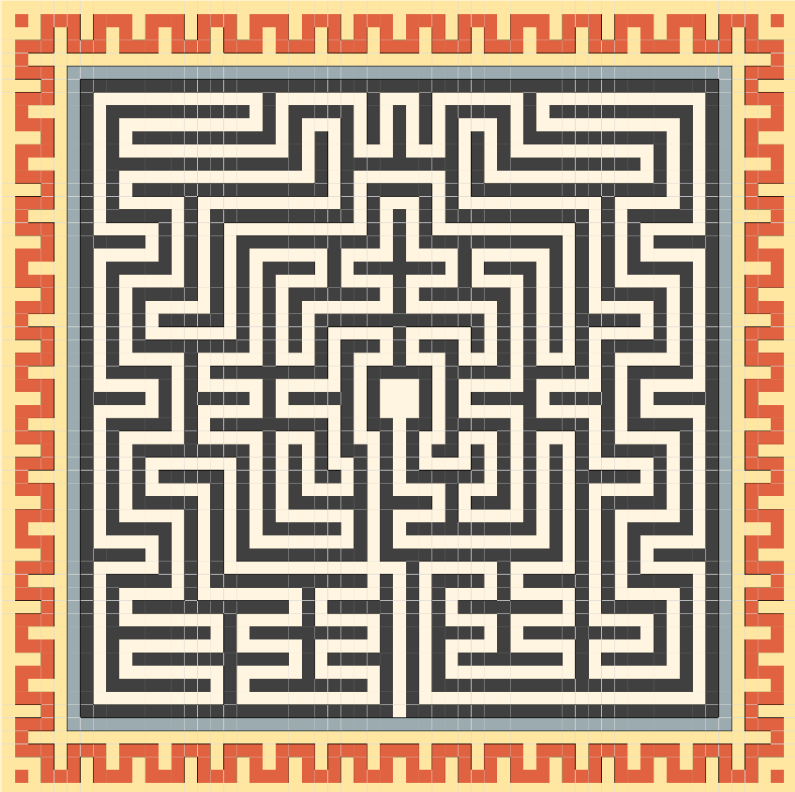


CAERDROIA

THE JOURNAL OF
MAZES & LABYRINTHS



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CAERDROIA 51

CAERDROIA

The Journal of Mazes & Labyrinths

51st Edition



*The mosaic labyrinth, dating from the early 3rd century CE, preserved in the House of the Fountains at the Roman ruins of Conimbriga, Portugal.
Photo: Jeff Seward, May 2022*

CAERDROIA 51

The Journal of Mazes & Labyrinths

Contents

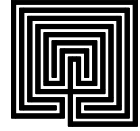
- Cover** : the paved labyrinth in the church of St. Martinus in Voorburg, The Netherlands, constructed by E.J. Margry in 1893; artwork by Jeff Saward
- 1 **Frontis** : the mosaic labyrinth at Conimbriga, Portugal. Photo: Jeff Saward, May 2022
- 3 **Editorial** : a note from the editor, Jeff Saward
- 4 **Maßmann's Labyrinth Catalogue** : Richard Myers Shelton investigates a series of labyrinth designs published in Germany in 1844
- 22 **The Quest for a Circular St. Omer Labyrinth** : Thorn Steafel circles the square
- 28 **The First Multi-Connected Maze** : Ettore Sellì looks at the design of a lost hedge maze in Padua, Italy and reaches a surprising conclusion
- 30 **Rating the Complexity of Mazes** : Ettore Sellì, Tommaso Polonelli and Enrica Santolini propose a system for defining the complexity of mazes
- 39 **Stockholm's Mazes and Labyrinths** : Rolf Johansson surveys the labyrinths and mazes still surviving in the Swedish capital
- 46 **The Labyrinth Figures of Zurla** : Hans-Georg Gusek studies a pair of simple labyrinthine petroglyphs in Italy
- 51 **University and College Labyrinths: a New International Index** : Jan Sellers introduces her online catalogue of labyrinths installed in higher education settings
- 55 **Obituary** : the passing of labyrinth builder extraordinaire Alex Champion
- 56 **Notes & Queries** : a Swedish pine chest decorated with a labyrinth, a labyrinth graffito in Portugal, the centenary of W.H. Matthews' *Mazes and Labyrinths*, another labyrinth on an 18th century English sampler and the Labyrinth Society & Labyrinth Locator
- 59 **Labyrinth Reviews** : a review of *Trojas murar* by John Kraft
- 61 **Caerdroia** : submission details, subscriptions, etc.
- 62 **Labyrinthos** : who we are and what we do, etc.

Caerdroia 51 was produced during September 2022 by Jeff and Kimberly Saward at Labyrinthos HQ. Opinions stated by contributors are not always those of the editors, but *Caerdroia* welcomes open discussion and endeavours to provide a forum for all who are lured by the labyrinth.

Editor & Publisher: Jeff Saward – Associate Editor: Kimberly Lowelle Saward, Ph.D.
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Stockholm's Mazes and Labyrinths



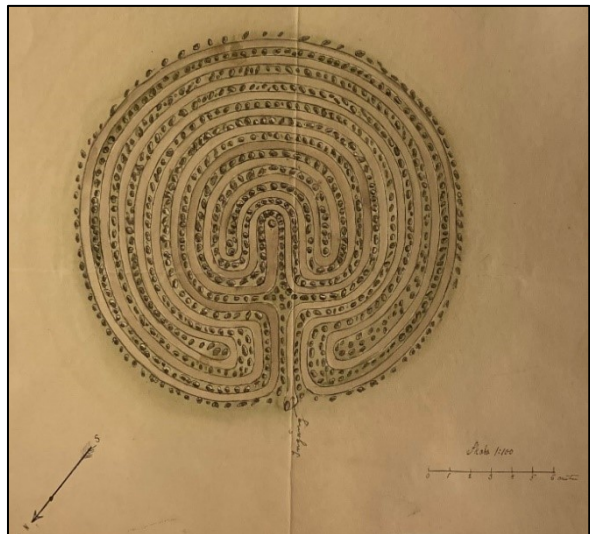
Rolf Johansson

Three separate articles on labyrinths in Stockholm by Frithjof Hallman and John Kraft were published in *Caerdroia* 22 and 23. Together they identified four labyrinths in the city of Stockholm and its surroundings. The four labyrinths were situated by the children's ward at Karolinska hospital [Hallman 1989, 22], in the Hansta nature area [Kraft 1990, 39], in the Skansen open-air museum [Hallman 1989, 22] and in the suburb of Gubbängen [Hallman 1990, 38]. The purpose of this article is to find out what condition those labyrinths are in today and add labyrinths and mazes which were not mentioned in those articles, or have been constructed or reconstructed during the last 32 years.

Two of the labyrinths have disappeared. The labyrinth by the Karolinska hospital was built in 1939, with a diameter of approximately 16 meters its design was not an angle-type labyrinth, but a spiral. [Hallman 1989, 22]. It has now been destroyed by building activities on the site. The labyrinth in Hansta, reported by Kraft [1990, 39], was a turf labyrinth constructed by a historical society in the late 1980s. I have not found any traces of it today and it has probably disappeared due to lack of maintenance.

The labyrinth in Skansen that Hallman refers to was constructed in the autumn of 1922. The open-air museum was founded by Artur Hazelius and opened to the public in 1891. In 1896 Hazelius requested that an accurate drawing be made of the stone labyrinth at Galgbacken outside Visby on the island of Gotland. His ambition was to build a copy at the museum [SvD 1922a], but his plan was not realised until 26 years later. In newspaper articles [DN 1922 and SvD 1922b] it is reported that the labyrinth was under construction in late October of that year. DN writes that it will "of course be made of earth stones to be as much like the original as possible" and "that the Trojeborg at Visby was chosen as a pattern, mainly since detailed drawings already exist of it."¹ There is no doubt that the labyrinth was a true replica,² but unfortunately, it is not there anymore.

Figure 1: Drawing of the Visby Trojeborg, probably by Artur Hazelius, courtesy of the Nordiska Museet, Stockholm



In 2016 Skansen decided to change the labyrinth. The walls were reduced from 12 to 8 to make the paths wider, the direction of the first path was changed to clockwise, and the central cross was deformed.³ It is no longer a copy of the well-known Visby labyrinth, but a new design.



Figure 2: The new labyrinth at Skansen. Designed in 2016

The only labyrinth of the four presented by Hallman and Kraft that is still in place and unchanged is the one at a playground in Gubbängen. This is a large Trojeborg with a diameter of 16 meters that was designed by the architect Britt Hagblom in 1965. The labyrinth is well preserved and still much appreciated by the children in the neighbourhood.



Figure 3: The labyrinth in Gubbängen

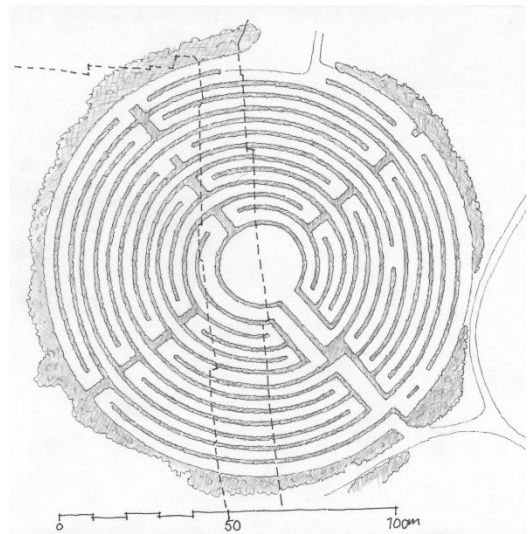
However, I am pleased to announce that today there are more labyrinths and mazes to report in Stockholm.

Labyrinth and mazes at Drottningholm

A plan for a labyrinth in the park at the Royal Palace in Drottningholm was made in 1777 by the architect C. F. Adelcrantz. It was designed as a replica of the garden labyrinth at Villa Altieri in Rome. After King Gustav III's return from Italy, where he visited Villa Altieri following Adelcrantz' advice, the construction started in mid 1780s. [Olausson 1993:433-434].⁴ It was a Chartres-type labyrinth, about 120 meters in diameter, and the pathways were bordered by hedges, three meters high. Just as in the garden labyrinth at Villa Altieri there was a tall tree in the centre. The hedges are now gone, but the form of the labyrinth is visible as a circular lawn with a group of trees in the middle. When the path through the labyrinth was recently reconstructed, it was marked only by short cut grass.⁵

In 1791 the land surveyor Anton Ulrik Berndes made a scale drawing of the labyrinth as it appeared at the time. By then it had started to deteriorate and later after the King's death in 1792 the decay of the labyrinth accelerated. In Figure 4 the labyrinth is shown in the state it was in 1791, based on Berndes' measurement. His drawing is damaged in the middle and it is not possible to interpret whether he drew a tree there or not.⁶

Figure 4: The labyrinth at Drottningholm in 1791. Based on a measured drawing by the land surveyor Anton Ulrik Berndes. The part of the drawing between the dashed lines is missing on the original and has been reconstructed in this figure by the author.



Close to the labyrinth, in the far end of the baroque garden, there are hedge mazes with paths in network patterns. The oldest was designed by Nicodemus Tessin the younger.⁷ It appears on his plan for the park from 1681 and is modelled after Le Nôtre's garden at the Château de Clagny in France.⁸ Tessin describes the maze as designed with many crossing paths like a "labyrinth or irrgarten," which leads to a square in the middle.⁹ The maze had hornbeam hedges about six meters high and was not landscaped until around 1700 [Wollin 1927, 33-51]. Today the paths are much simplified, the hedges are not clipped and instead are free growing large trees. Next to Tessin's "irrgarten" there are two hedge mazes landscaped in the 1780s. They have paths in network patterns and one of them accommodates a hedge theatre [Wollin 1927, 124-132 and 168]. These two mazes are still maintained in their original layouts.

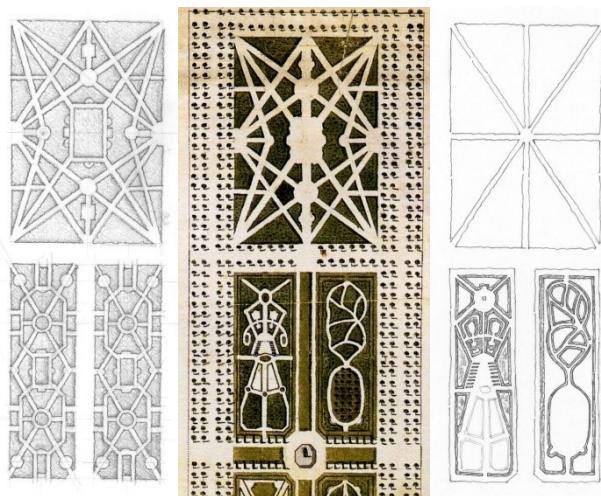


Figure 5: *The hedge mazes at Drottningholm - left: After Tessin's 1681 plan; centre: The hedge mazes in 1760 (Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons); right: The current appearance based on aerial photos*

The labyrinth at Glasbruksklippan

A small labyrinth with five walls was designed in the late 1940s, probably by the architect Erik Glemme, for a little hilltop at Glasbruksklippan on Södermalm.¹⁰ It was built in early 1950s together with an adjacent small public park, Glasbrukstappen, on the slope of the hill. The park and the labyrinth are situated at the east end of Sandbacksgatan street. The diameter of the labyrinth is less than four meters, and due to the limited space available for constructing the labyrinth, the design has a reduced number of walls, a shrunken Otfrid-type labyrinth, drawn with a compass and probably inspired by the scholarly tradition known from medieval church labyrinths and drawings in manuscripts. The labyrinth is at present in need of restoration since some of the boulders are missing.



Figure 6: *The labyrinth in Glasbruksklippan in its present condition (2022) and as originally designed*

The labyrinth at Rosendals trädgård

Rosendals trädgård on Djurgården is a foundation for the purpose of conducting biodynamic cultivation of vegetables and flowers. The foundation commissioned the artist Katarina Mark to construct an angle-type (classical) labyrinth with eight walls, with pathways between clipped hawthorn hedges. The hedges, now about two meters high, were planted in 2001 and in 2008 the labyrinth was consecrated [DN 2008]. The design is true to the ideal model for the angle-type labyrinth in its layout, but connects to the garden hedge labyrinth in its execution; a design that is burdened by the problem that explorers of the maze, once they reach the centre, do not want to walk all the way back, but force shortcuts through the hedges.

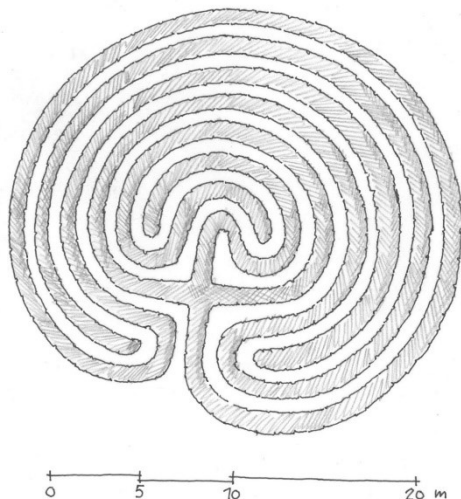


Figure 7: The hedge maze in Rosendals trädgård

Labyrinths and mazes in playgrounds

During the past 30 years a number of simple labyrinths, many of angle-type and built of rocks, have been created in children's playgrounds in Stockholm. Those which have come to my attention are situated in Prästgårdslandet in Älvsjö, built before 1995; at Västerholmsparken in Skärholmen, from late 1990s; at Kaknäsparken in Gärdet; at Svandamsparken in Midsommarkransen, built in 1995 and at Neptuniparken in Järfälla. The artist Tor Svae has also designed two playground mazes at Mulle Meckparken in Solna, 2008, and Bryggartäppan in Södermalm, 2012.

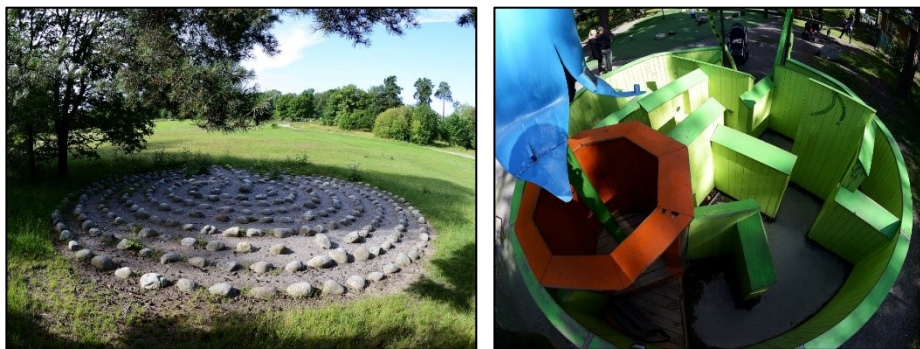


Figure 8: Left: the labyrinth in Kaknäsparken in Gärdet – Right: the simple wooden maze in the children's playground at Mulle Meckparken in Solna, created in 2008 by the artist Tor Svae, the park is named after a figure in children's books

Concluding comments

It is disappointing to note that out of the four labyrinths which could be visited 32 years ago, only one still exists in its original form. I hope someone will want to follow up on the condition of the labyrinths that exist today in 30 years and find that they have met a better fate, and maybe even multiplied in the meantime.

What worries me the most is what is going to happen to the small labyrinth on Glasbruksklippan, as the maintenance of this feature in the park is not currently a priority according to the park administration.

What surprises me most is that 120 years after Artur Hazelius decided that the Visby labyrinth should be included in the collections at the Skansen museum, it was decided to redesign it completely to make it accessible for children in wheelchairs. That's a good concern, but a new accessible labyrinth could have been built nearby. What happened illustrates that this labyrinth was not understood as a museum object anymore, just as a plaything among others. Its didactic power has been erased.

However, it is gratifying that labyrinths are recently often laid out in playgrounds, which can be seen as a sign that the labyrinthine patterns attract play and arouse the joy of discovery. This seems to be their main use and meaning in our time.

Acknowledgements

This article was written in dialogical and enlightening conversation with John Kraft. I am also grateful to the many persons in different parts of the City's organisations that have patiently engaged in answering all my unusual questions. Any mistake that may be made is the sole responsibility of the author. All photographs and drawings by the author unless stated otherwise.

Rolf Johansson, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences,
Uppsala, Sweden; July 2022
Email: Rolf.Johansson@slu.se

Notes

1. Translations from Swedish by the author.
2. The plan of the labyrinth in Visby has been published many times, see Kraft 2022, fig. 7:1, Kern 2000, fig. 573-574 and Krause 1893, fig. 1 & 23. An aerial photo is published in Fisher & Gerster 1990, 29.
3. Information through personal communication with Karin Ringholm, Director of the Park Department at Skansen, 2022-06-02.
4. A calotype photo image of the garden labyrinth in Villa Altieri was captured by Sir Coutts Lindsay 1852, just before the labyrinth was removed. It is in the collections of Det Kongelige Bibliotek in Copenhagen. Reproductions are published by Kern 2000, fig. 547 and Torvaldsens Museum 1978, fig. 200. The King himself made drawings of the labyrinth for another location within the park, see Olausson 1993, fig. 230.
5. The labyrinth at present can be seen in Google Earth: 59.320965° N, 17.874500° E.
6. The drawing in its damaged state is published in Olausson 1993, fig. 238.

7. Tessin the younger based his design of his father's earlier design.
8. Tessin's drawing is published in Lindahl 2000, 52; Olausson 1993, 411 and Wollin. 1927, 34. Available online at:
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Drottningholms_park_generalplan_Tessin_dy_1681.jpg
 The plan was copied by Martin Mijtens in 1695 for *Suecia antiqua*, online at:
https://regina.kb.se/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=46KBS_ALEPH_DS001924248&context=L&vid=46KBS_VU&lang=sv_SE&search_scope=ALL&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=default_tab&query=any,contains,suecia%20mijtens%20drottningholm&offset=0
9. In Tessin's own words: It is "ifrån alla hörnen och Sijdorne, med åthskillige korsgångar och Små Cabinetter såssom Labyrinthe eller Irregård igenom bruten, hwilka och änteligen Enda till en mitt uthi lemnad stoor fyrkantig platz ..." [Wollin 1927, 333].
10. Erik Glemme was architect in chief at the Parks Department in Stockholm and together with the city gardener Holger Blom, he introduced a new program for Stockholm's public parks – a manifesto of the Stockholm School in landscape architecture. The program is presented in an article by Holger Blom "Gröna ytor i Stockholm" published in *Arkitektur*, 1946, no.16, p. 296-304.

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