

Newsletter

26 November 2001

Vilhelm Lauritzen's old airport terminal receives award

The Association for the Beautification of the Capital today awarded its 2001 diploma to Copenhagen Airport's Vilhelm Lauritzen Terminal, which was built in 1939. The diploma was awarded for both the relocation and reconstruction of the terminal.

In its explanation why it awarded the diploma for the Lauritzen Terminal, the Association said about the reconstruction of the old modernistic building:

"It was talented in thought, action and quality. It is a unique building whose values of beauty enrich us and are of irreplaceable value, architecturally and in our cultural history. It is a wonderful story of an exquisitely daring project, wholly in the spirit of flying – which especially enjoyed the admiration of the functionalists and was a major inspiration to them. They would have loved this mechanical engineering achievement. We at the Association for the Beautification of the Capital certainly do."

"I am happy and proud to receive the Association's diploma for the relocation and reconstruction of Vilhelm Lauritzen's beautiful airport terminal," says Niels Boserup, President and CEO of Copenhagen Airports A/S. "When we decided to relocate the building, we also decided to make a detailed and gentle restoration to give the mistreated building its former beauty and pride back. During this process, we considered it very important to uphold Vilhelm Lauritzen's basic functionalistic ideas and adhere to the architectural principles that characterise his works. I believe that if Lauritzen were here today, he would nod his approval of what we achieved, not least because we decided that we want the terminal to 'live' an everyday life – not just be a museum. A number of our employees work at the terminal every day, and even the large hall is often used for festive occasions."

In May, Boserup published a book – *A Modernistic Masterpiece* – as a tribute to the old terminal. The book was published by Copenhagen Airports A/S and is sold through Danish publishers Arkitektens Forlag.

Additional information is available from Copenhagen Airport's Communication Department on telephone number +45 3231 2800.

Motivation for awarding the diploma

Below is the full text explaining why the Association for the Beautification of the Capital awarded the diploma for the Vilhelm Lauritzen Terminal:

“This diploma is awarded for the courage and will to move one of the major works of modernism to a new location in Maglebylille, an achievement of historic dimensions. The diploma is awarded very much for the completion of the 3.8-kilometre-long daring and dangerous journey of relocation to a new foundation at the airport, a journey in history and a heroic rescue.

In addition, the diploma is awarded for the exquisite reconstruction of the terminal, for the consistent recreation and restoration of the airport building – as a whole as well as in detail. The outcome is beautiful in its spaces, form and fittings, all carried out with great respect for the original architecture of this functionalist building and the ideas of its architect, Vilhelm Lauritzen. It was talented in thought, action and quality. It is a unique building whose values of beauty enrich us and are of irreplaceable value, architecturally and in our cultural history. It is a wonderful story of an exquisitely daring project, wholly in the spirit of flying – which especially enjoyed the admiration of the functionalists and was a major inspiration to them. They would have loved this mechanical engineering achievement. We at the Association for the Beautification of the Capital certainly do.”

The Association for the Beautification of the Capital was founded by Carl Jacobsen, son of the founder of Carlsberg Breweries and a patron of the arts, and Mr. Bissen, a sculptor, with the aim of “contributing to the beautification of the capital”. Each year, diplomas are awarded for buildings which make “Copenhagen more beautiful – in detail and as a whole.”

The relocation of the Vilhelm Lauritzen terminal

The Vilhelm Lauritzen terminal was in a location slated for Copenhagen Airport’s expansion towards the east. For this reason, the airport management decided to move the terminal to the western area of the airport, near the village of Maglebylille, 3.8 kilometres away. The Lauritzen terminal became a listed building on 21 July 2000.

On the night between 18 and 19 September 1999, Danish contractors Monberg & Thorsen moved the building to its new location at the other end of the airport on two huge flatbed trucks. The airport was not closed down during the relocation, but the move was carried out during the time of the week with the lowest traffic. Still, 20 air transport movements took place during the relocation process.

One of the major tasks prior to the relocation was to ensure that all original parts of the building from 1937 were preserved and that all extensions were removed. Before relocation, the area of the terminal was 8000 square metres. However, Copenhagen Airports A/S only wanted to keep the original Vilhelm Lauritzen terminal, which is half that size.

The relocation itself received a great deal of media attention and was recorded in the Guinness Book of Records as a European moving record. The total cost of relocating and reconstructing the terminal was DKK 100 million.



The photo above shows the spiral staircase of the old Vilhelm Lauritzen terminal. It can be used freely for editorial use with articles on the above mentioned diploma and against accreditation of the photographer, Jens Lindhe.