



April 2017, Pia selecting aDNA samples for the 'Rise II' project. (photo: A. Fischer).

Pia Bennike passed away on August 31 2017 from cancer.

Pia was a master of interdisciplinary and international cooperation. Educated in medical science, ethnography, and biological anthropology, she was a greatly appreciated teacher, researcher, manager of the national collection of earth-found human skeletons, cross-institutional cooperater, and professional source of inspiration. Numerous Danish archaeological field excavations, publications projects and museum exhibitions have prospered through her participation since the 1970s. Year after year, students in archaeology gathered in increasing numbers for her lectures in physical anthropology. Archaeological research projects outside Denmark and Europe also frequently enjoyed her scholarly and personal competences. Likewise, she was a highly esteemed figure within international biological anthropology, where, over the years, she served in roles including president of the European Anthropological Association and president of the Paleopathology Association. She also held an honorary doctorate from the University of Lund, Sweden.

The skeletons of Mesolithic and Neolithic humans from Denmark were always of central interest to Pia, and with the establishment of the project 'Towards a new European Prehistory. Integrating aDNA, isotopic investigations, language and archaeology to reinterpret key processes of change in the prehistory of Europe' she was an obvious and highly appreciated participant.

It was a pleasure and privilege to work with Pia. She participated bravely in the accumulation of human aDNA samples even until late in the course of her disease. We shall deeply miss her professional insight and overview as well as her cooperativeness and empathy.

(text by Anders Fischer)