

## 4 | The art of remembering

Memory is the foundation of all human activity – we remember events, people, facts, words and a thousand and one other things – but it is also decisive for various knowledge-forming processes. This section will focus on a special way of remembering that goes beyond the purely personal, one we have chosen to call memory practices.

Research in the history of science usually uses the term to denote more official celebratory events such as jubilees, statue unveilings and so on, and where the purpose of the occasion is to create and maintain the collective memory of a person, institution or, sometimes, discovery. However, the term can well be broadened to include more anonymous practices, ones that are not necessarily visible in public life and which can involve both individuals and groups of people. Writing a diary is one example, organising a photo album is another. If we look specifically at scientific activities, then researchers' observation journals, databases and research archives may serve as examples of memory practices – practices that are actually integrated in the process of knowledge formation. The common denominator in these examples is that they comprise active, more or less organised, efforts to remember. It is in the nature of things that memory practices, for obvious reasons, leave plenty of impressions in the archive, thus making them rewarding to study.

The first group of essays deal with more everyday memory practices, traces of which can often be found in personal archives. One example is scrapbooks, popular in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which contained newspaper clippings gathered and glued in by a scientist or sometimes a relative. Another example is the portrait collections found in many older personal archives, which testify to a culture in which people exchanged and collected these pictures as part of the social interaction between scientists. Yet another illuminating example is group photography, an easily recognisable genre in which the memory of some type of meeting is preserved for posterity by the participants being photographed. These practices – now mostly replaced by



digital platforms such as Facebook and Instagram – do not just deal with remembering the past, but have constituted different ways of cultivating community and identity, both of which are decisive for the researcher's role.

However, community and identity are also created at an institutional level and, for an organisation like the Academy of Sciences, memory practices have always been an important part of its activities. Even its very first charter established that important documents should be archived and late members honoured with eulogies, two very different ways of remembering. Over the years, a multitude of similar activities have been undertaken. Medals have been cast and commemorative coins awarded; anniversaries have been celebrated and the Academy has generally made great efforts to preserve the memory of its renowned members and the Academy itself. Activities like these play an important role in all knowledge organisations – they create and maintain traditions that can make internal contributions to a shared community and identity, while serving to fix the organisation and its activities in the public consciousness. For a scientific academy, memory practices have also been important for circulating conceptions of what science is and, not least, the image of the researcher. This type of memory practice is thus linked to knowledge-forming activities.

There are many examples of memory practices of a more official character; this section concludes with a collection of picture essays that focus on the production of symbols. The first of these is an essay about how the Academy, somewhat reluctantly, made Emanuel Swedenborg one of its figureheads. The subsequent essays deal with the Academy's Annual Meeting, founded for the public celebration of the previous year in science, and a medal struck to commemorate the work of the Academy work on issues of population and natural resources. The section on memory practices then concludes with a triptych of picture essays on the history of the Linnaeus jubilee. This was first celebrated in 1807, one hundred years after the birth of Linnaeus, and again in 1907 and 2007. As we will see, both the interest in and forms for this jubilee have changed considerably over the centuries.

#### VISITORS AT THE KRISTINEBERG ZOOLOGICAL STATION

drinking coffee on the veranda in the summer of 1935. Director Gunnar Gustafson sits in the middle.