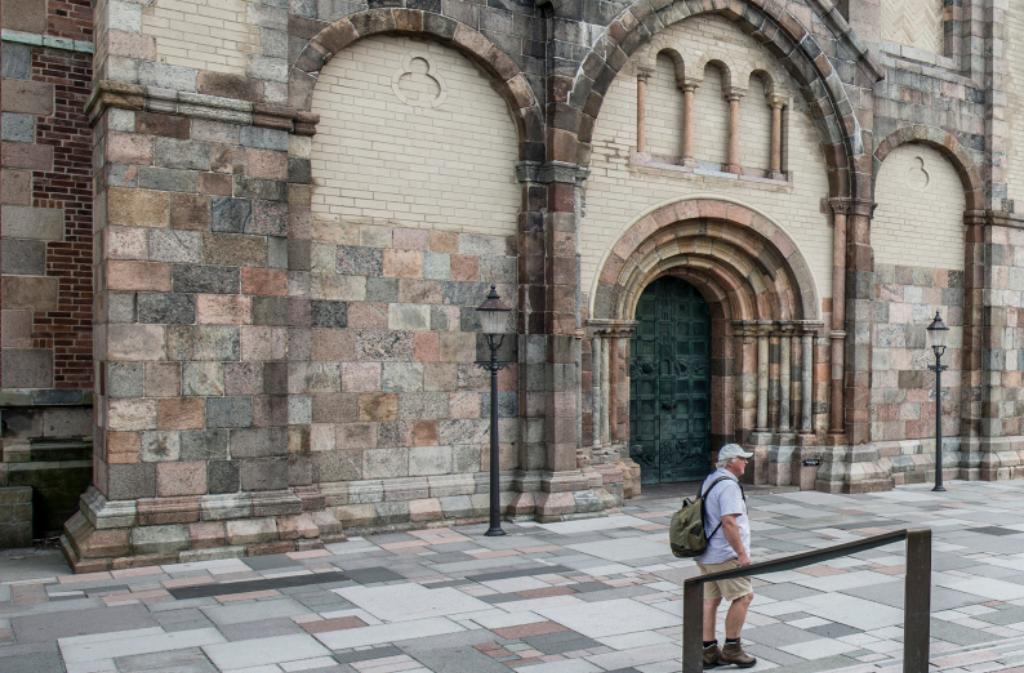




# TOWN WALK

QUIRKY STORIES ON A TOWN  
WALK THROUGH RIBE

EN 



## 1 - THE TOWN SQUARE

The tourist office (The Welcome Centre) has on its premises the distinguished "Porsborg" building from 1582. Its neighbour building is the hotel-with-restaurant Hotel Dagmar with its watchman's basement - a splendid stone house from 1581. Note the rainfall dripping between them. This was a necessity as gutters were not available back then (the opening originally also exited at the other end). Both buildings were built by merchants right after the great fire of 1580. On the other side of the pedestrian street is Weis Stue, a timbered building dating back to approximately 1600. It is one of Denmark's oldest hotels and contains a tap room dating to 1704, with, among other things, a decorated beamed ceiling, wooden panels, an old oven and Dutch tiles.

## 2 - CATHEDRAL SQUARE

Was restored in 2012 and now the Cathedral is visible. During the restoration work, it was discovered that the square has served as a cemetery and contains graves dated from the Viking Age to the High Middle Ages, including some pagan and some Christian graves. Christian graves from the late 800s were found. Ansgar was allowed to build the church in approximately 860, and he built it on the area's highest point. His church lies safely under the current church which is Denmark's oldest cathedral. Construction on the building started in approximately 1150.

In the cathedral gallery which contains an entrance from the tower, there is a museum that presents the cathedral's construction history.



### 3 - THE CATHEDRAL

It was built with tufa stone from Rhineland, sandstone from the Weser area, and with granite from Jutland. When it was first built it had two towers made of tufa stone that were of the same size, on Christmas morning in 1283, the north tower plunged down and destroyed some of the church (including three vaults in the northern side aisle) and killed many people who were in the church. The current borgertårn (commoner's tower) was finished in 1311. From the 50 m high tower, there is a fantastic view over Ribe's red roofs, over the marshes to the west with Wadden Sea and the islands of Fanø, Mandø and Rømø, and over the low marshes to the east.

At 8:00 AM and 6:00 PM every day, the Cathedral's carillon plays the melody to Brorson's hymn "Den yndigste rose er funden" (The loveliest rose has been found), at 12:00 and 3:00 PM, the ballad "Dronning Dagmar ligger udi Ribe syg" (Queen Dagmar is ill in Ribe) is played. These have been passed down through Anders Sørensen Vedel's publication of 100 Danish folk songs from 1591, printed on Vedel's own print shop, Liliebjerget, located just west of the Cathedral.

The tufa stone church has three naves, through the extension of the brick chapels along both sides of the church, it ended up with five naves, making it the only five-nave church in Northern Europe. On the church's south side, one first notes the massive cat's head door on the transept's south side. It was made by sculptor Anna Marie Carl-Nielsen during the Cathedral's major restoration in approximately 1900. It got its name from the lion head in the middle with a ring in its mouth, which is from approximately 1308. If a refugee managed to reach the church



door and get hold of the ring, he was given asylum in the church. Over the door, one can see Denmark's largest medieval stone-mason work. In the semi-circular area, a descent from the cross is carved in granite, and above this, since then, the so-called triangular relief has been added in sandstone. It shows the heavenly Jerusalem, to which humans aspire. Among them are the royal persons in direct contact with the Virgin Mary and Christ. It is often interpreted as an epitaph, a mausoleum of Christopher the First or Valdemar the Victorious.

#### **4 - BRORSON**

Brorson was a bishop in Ribe from 1741 to 1764, and he wrote more than 100 hymns which can be found in the Danish hymn book. His hymn "Den yndigste rose er funden" (The loveliest rose has been found) is played every day at 8:00 AM and 6:00 PM from the The Commoners' Tower.

The statue of Brorson has been situated in the same location since 1913, and in December 2015 it was moved to its current location next to Tausen.

#### **5 - HANS TAUSEN**

Who also was a bishop in Ribe, shortly after the reformation. Hans Tavsen was very significant in the implementation of the Reformation in Denmark, which is also reflected in the museum in the South Gallery in Ribe Cathedral.

#### **6 - ANSGAR**

The sculpture of Ansgar is made by the artist Hein Heinsen. It was unveiled on 10 December 2015. Ansgar was a missiona-

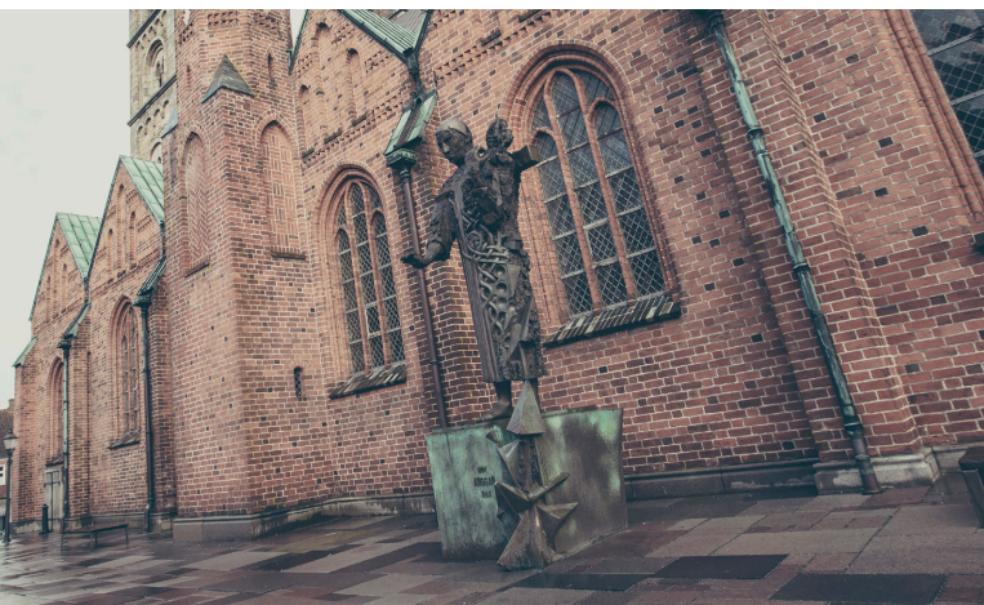
ry bishop who built the first Danish church, in Ribe around the year 860 on the highest point in the area, on which King Horik allowed him to build a church and let a priest reside there. At that time, Ribe was located on the other side of the creek where the Ribe Art Museum and the Ribe Viking Museum are now located, but King Horik wanted to see running water between the town and the church, as this was the symbol of the new religion of Christianity.

The statue was made in 2015. It symbolises the conflict between Christianity and the ancient Norse religion (a belief in the Viking's many gods). Therefore, it is split in two, with one side the calm Christianity and the other side the Vikings' intertwined patterns forming the ancient Norse religion. We see the split in the gap next to Ansgar's left shoulder.

At the same time, one sees a difference between the right hand which blesses with Christ's stigmatisation (he was wounded by a nail in his hand) and the left hand which holds a demon back on the shoulder. The feet are Ansgar's most important body part. They are carefully modelled and polished. It was them that carried Ansgar on all his journeys from Bremen, to Birka near Stockholm, as well as to Ribe. The head, in contrast, is much more coarsely cut and full of scabs and scars.

## 7 - THE INTERIOR OF THE CATHEDRAL

The entrance to the Cathedral is through the Tourist entrance. The tower can be accessed through the kiosk at which one must pay for access to the tower. 63 steps up, in the South Gallery, a museum was decorated in 2013. It includes the Cathedral's construction history and displays on the reformation with particular reference to Ribe. There are an additional 185





steps to the top. The entrance to the church is to the right through the kiosk. The church's main entrance is under the grand organ (façade from 1633-1639). On the north side there are paintings on the first two columns, oil paintings on granite, of the Virgin mary with the baby Jesus and the apostles Bartholomew and Andrew.

A special remain from the church's past is a line on the pillar behind the pulpit. This is how high the water was during the great storm surge of 1634.

The church pews were made by a local carpenter called Hans Dau during the major restoration in the 1900s. All the pews have different carvings in the gables, and no two decorations are the same.

The choir stalls on both sides of the altar, a baptism fountain and a five-armed candlestick are from the Middle Ages, as are the patterns and decorations in the main nave's vaults.

The church contains countless mausoleums and epitaphs for kings and prominent citizens in Ribe, including the royals historians Anders Sørensen Vedel and Bishop Hans Adolf Brorson. Between 1982-1987, the church's apse was decorated with frescoes, stained glass windows and

rigid mosaics created by the world-famous Danish artist Carl-Henning Pedersen. In the kiosk, one can purchase a booklet containing proposed interpretations of these works of art.

## **8 - KANNIKEGÅRDEN**

Built in 2015 on the location where the old cotton factory stood until it burned down in 2000. It was inaugurated on 21 January 2016. The building was designed by the architectural firm

Lundgaard & Tranberg of Copenhagen, and is built by Jorton A/S of Esbjerg. The roof and walls are covered with tiles made of volcanic clay fired at 1,100 degrees Celsius (clinker bricks are fired at 600 degrees Celsius).

Behind the glass on the lowest floor lie the ruins of probably the oldest brick building in Denmark, a Kannike Monastery dating back to before 1145. The bricks are about the same size as those used today. The building was an eating hall (refectory) for the Kannikes who lived in "the Kannike Monastery" that the bishop had built for them. The Kannikes were the Cathedral's priests. Over the Cathedral's west end lies the Latin School.

## **9 - LATIN SCHOOL**

At the corner of Skolegade and Grydergade. This is where the school was located in the early 1500s until 1956 when it was moved to its current location on Puggårdsgade. The Latin School (later the Ribe Cathedral School) has been in existence since 1145. On its wall there are memorial plaques of a number of the Latin School's prominent students. Towards the south on Skolegade, on the left side we pass Hans Tausen's House.

## **10 - HANS TAUSEN'S HOUSE**

Which was built in the 1500s and which is the last remains of the bishop's palace where the Lutheran bishops, including Hans Tausen, lived.

## **11 - STOPPESTEDET (the stopping place)**

Located at the corner of Skolegade and Sønderportsgade. It is a small timbered building which in 1932 was moved about 3





meters back and 2 meters to the side so that a city bus could swing around the corner onto the newly refurbished bus station on the current parking lot. The city bus station was moved in 1952 to the railway station where it is still located. We continue across Sønderportsgade into Puggårdsgade.

## **12 - PUGGÅRDSGADE**

At the corner there is a beautiful old timbered building from 1597. The street's curvature dates all the way back to its construction in around 1200 and provides a good idea about old Ribe. Longer down the road on the left side is Tårnborg.

## **13 - TÅRNborg**

Which was built in approximately 1520 by nobleman Oluf Munk. Tårnborg was a bishop's house when H. A. Brorson was bishop in 1741 and it was a bishop's house until 1868. Right up to the building there is a pair of low "stalls" that previously belonged to Tårnborg. The building following this one is a former diocese director's building. Between 1882-1894, the diocese director Finsen lived here. His son Niels R. Finsen was Denmark's first Nobel prize winner for his invention of skin treatment for skin diseases. He is known by name from, among other places, the "Finsen Institute".

A bit further along on the right side is Ribe Cathedral School.

## **14 - RIBE CATHEDRAL SCHOOL**

Which got a new main building in 1856 when it moved from Skolegade to here. The crenellated building to the left is called "Puggård", originally "Pogegården", which is the oldest building

from approximately 1400. In 1298, bishop Christian donated a farmhouse to the Latin school so that the rector and 20 poor disciples could live and eat here, hence the name pogegården (pog=boy).

### **Art in the Ribe Cathedral School's courtyard**

During the period of 2013-2015, Ribe Cathedral School's courtyard with an entrance from Puggårdsgade got an aesthetic boost. Under the direction of landscape architect Torben Schønherr, new linden trees were planted, and in a rectangular area enclosing them, a diverse covering in Nordic granite was set up. In the middle of the area artist Laila Westergaard created a decoration which is a road leading up to the school's main entrance.

The road consists of 112 blue Rønne granite tiles. Laila Westergaard carved small texts in each of the tiles. The texts are as a starting point drawn from some of the personalities that attended the school. An example is "Come my dove let yourself be seen". "Time runs like a river". "Lead it into my veins" and "The whole world is an arena". Some texts, however, are taken from a world larger than that which makes up Ribe Cathedral School's long history.

Almost like a stele, the shining stone sentences written with the sculptor's chisel stretch at our feet where they inspire, amaze, disturb and maybe challenge us when we move about in the courtyard. Ribe received a beautiful new piece of artwork which is certainly worth a visit.

Today, the Ribe Cathedral School is a regular secondary school with higher education preparatory examination course load, which through the past several years has grown and gotten



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many new extensions. One can walk through the courtyard behind Puggård and notice how well new and old buildings can interact. From here, we continue to Gravsgade.

## 15 - GRAVSGADE

Named after "Holy Sepulchre Parish", which was moved to here from its previous location outside of the city so that the residents could be taxed. The cemetery at the other side of the cemetery path was built in 1805 when it was forbidden to bury people inside the city, including at the churches. At that time, it lay outside the city. From the cemetery path one can cross a bridge and come to Damvej, where Ribe Byferie is located. It was built in traditional style in 1995.

The tour goes on towards the right onto Gravsgade to Sviergade. At the corner of Sviergade and Sønderportsgade lies an old merchant's farmhouse, Husted Knutzen's Farm, which has not been rebuilt since its construction in about 1600. Note the two round holes at the top of the gable. This is where the owls who protected the house from mice lived. There were mice because the merchant's customers came via horse carriages, and the merchant had grain and hay for the horses.

From here, we go to the right onto Sønderportsgade.

## 16 - SØNDERPORTSGADE

The street contains several of Ribe's finest timbered buildings, including terraced houses from around the year 1600. At the corner of Sønderportsgade and Bispegade was the house where the tailor Laurids Spliid lived. A board commemorates his wife Maren who on 9 November 1641 was burned for

witchcraft between the gallows hills north of the city. We continue to The Old Town Hall.

## **17 - THE OLD TOWN HALL**

At the corner of Sønderportsgade and von Støckens Plads. The building was built before 1496 as two rental stalls (where one lived), and the poet Anders Bording was born here in 1619. He published Denmark's first newspaper in 1666 called The Danish Mercurius. In 1709, the city bought the building and designed it to be the Town Hall.

Over 300 weddings each year still take place in the commoner's hall. In the former debtor's prison there is a museum, City Hall collection. In 1892, the building was restored and received its current appearance, and the wing along Sønderportsgade was added.

## **18 - DAGMARGADE**

From von Støcken's Plads we go straight to Dagmarsgade to the railway station as a result of a street breakthrough in the 1870s. On the right side lies the city's old water tower from 1887, today it is privately owned and has been restored as an office building. To the left lies Sortebrødregade with the picturesque Peter Dovn's Slippe, Kølholt Slippe and Vægtergade, we turn right onto Badstuegade to Klostergade.

## **19 - KLOSTERGADE**

On the right side of the street are a number of small buildings - the "Almisseboderne" stalls from the 1600s that were constructed as housing for poor people. The building on no. 26 in the street is privately owned and totals 26.5 m<sup>2</sup>. It has under-



gone changes and is known as "Ribe's smallest house" to give an idea of how many of Ribe's poor families lived in the 1700s. When one walks through the monastery garden, towards Ribe's smallest house, one experiences Black Friars monastery large south wing and the convent garden's tranquillity.

## **20 - ST. CATHERINE'S CHURCH AND MONESTARY**

Built by the Dominicans (called the Black Friars due to their black caps they wore outside of the monastery). This magnificent complex is, together with the Cathedral, the only building that is left of Ribe's medieval churches, monasteries, chapels and hospitals. The current church is from the 1400s and is the third church at this site. After the Reformation in 1536, the church became the parish church, while the monastery wing served as a hospital.

In 1920, the church's north side sunk by 60 cm but it was saved by a daring effort in which the old foundations were removed and new concrete foundations were cast, and afterwards the church was tipped in place by lowering the south side and raising the north side. One of the lifting jacks remains at its place at the end of the staircase in the church's right side leading down to the basement under the choir.

Through the church, one can access the beautiful monastery courtyard by paying a fee in the locker by the door. Enjoy the tranquil atmosphere completely cut off from the outside world. This is how it must have been when the monks of their time were here. Today it houses the "Ribe Monastery" housing for single seniors.





## 21 - AMBROSIUS STUB

### Memorial plaque on Sønderportsgade

Lived in Ribe from 1752 to 1758, earning his living as a school-master. In 2003, a tomb was made for him in the grass immediately west of St. Catherine's Church.

## 22 - ST. CATHERINE'S SQUARE

Has at its centre a well installed with St. Catherine of Alexandria, the church's patron saint, in front of the well's east side there is a swastika - this was Carlsberg's trademark since 1933 when the Carlsberg Foundation installed a city fire system in Ribe (made by the sculptor Anders Bundgård).

## 23 - THE RIBE VIKING MUSEUM

Located at the train station at the end of Dagsmarsgade. It is a museum about the Viking times and the Middle Ages and tells Ribe's history from 710 to approximately 1600. The Tooth of Time sculpture is located in the middle of Odin's Square. It is made by artist John Olsen, modelled on a mammoth tooth that was found at the Wadden Sea.

From Vedel's Plant at the other side of Dagsmarsgade there is a path "Å-stien", which along the river looks through the Ribelund area's gardens, past greenhouses, animal pens and aviaries out to the bird sanctuary at Ribe Østerå with a bird tower - a trip that takes about half an hour. Between the current St. Nicolaigade and the river, in 710 a marketplace was built. Through its 1300 year long history, this marketplace has developed into today's Ribe, Denmark's oldest city.



## 24 - THE RIBE ART MUSEUM

At the cotton factory there is Balthazar Gjørtz' villa from 1864 showing Danish art, and it has several paintings from the Danish Golden Age as well as a beautiful collection of paintings with motifs from Ribe.

The building was thoroughly restored in 2010 and now stands in all its 1864 splendour. We now go further along St. Nicolai-gade, past the water wheel at the corner - it is the last remnant of Ribe's many mills and was in operation as a flour mill until almost 1960. We enter Ribe's pedestrian street.

## 25 - NEDER-, MELLEM AND OVERDAMMEN

Running on a dam over Ribe Å was built in 1250 by King Christopher the First who wanted the river water power to run the mills. The dam divides the river into three small cascading streams which allow for just three mills, the outer mill, middle mill and the King's mill. The middle mill was converted to produce electricity in 1903. In 1975, the electric turbine was demolished to open the area for greater water flow. Today, only the outer mill has a water wheel.

Outside of Hotel Postgården (Vinoble) is Ribe Nørreport's foundation marked with black cobblestones in the street's surface. It was constructed in approximately 1280 and marked the city's limit, here one had to pay tax (excises) for the goods being taken into the city to sell. Nørreport was torn down in 1843 because it became too low and too narrow for a load of hay to pass through it. Along the main road were the merchants' gabled houses and farms and looked like they still do at Nederdammen 34 and 31 (which contains Denmark's oldest

timbered work still used on a daily basis, built in 1487) and at Nederdammen 28, Mellemdammen 18 and 16, and at Overdammen 10, 8, and 3.

## **26 - SKIBBROEN**

The river, "Ribe Å" opens to the Wadden Sea at Ribe Kammersluse, 6 km west of the city. Skibbroen was at that time the city's only harbour, and is now used only by yachts. Just down Skibbroen is Johanne Dan, an evert boat specially designed to sail on the Wadden Sea (Information Board). Across from it, there is the Restaurant Sælhunden, a timbered building from approximately 1600. The ring in the wall was used to bind the cow down when it was mated by the municipal bull.

On Skibbroen there is a flea market every Wednesday during the summer months. A little further along Skibbroen one finds the storm surge pillar.

## **27 - STORMFLODSSØJLEN (storm surge pillar)**

Farms and cities in the flat marshland were always prone to flooding when the water level in the North Sea rose during storms. Some of the floods are marked on the storm surge pillar, which was set up by the Tourism Association in 1923. The worst storm surge was in 1634 during which a water height of more than 6 m above normal caused flooding along the Wadden Sea coasts all the way down to Holland. A total of 16,000 people drowned during that storm surge. The last storm surge was in 1911, and afterwards the dike and locks towards the Wadden Sea were finished in 1912. As late as 1976, Ribe and Tønder were evacuated during a threatening storm surge and afterwards the dike was raised.



If you have time, it is a good idea to make an excursion to the protected area at Ribe Slotsbane (continue along Skibbroen, follow the road to the left and go down the first street to the right, Erik Mendsvej).

## **28 - RIBERHUS SLOTSBANKE**

The previous royal palace is now only a mound with a moat, ruins and a statue of Queen Dagmar who according to ballads came here from Bohemia as Valdemar the Victorius' queen in 1205. The statue is made by Anna Marie Carl-Nielsen and was erected in 1913.

Originally, the king traveled around the country and stayed at the royal palaces, of which Riberhus was one, and ruled from there. With the introduction of absolute monarchy in 1660, Riberhus lost its importance and was soon used as a "construction market" for the city. From the Stormflodssøjen, we continue to the left by Fiskergade.

## **29 - FISKERGADE**

Which today is one of the city's most picturesque streets. From the street from the narrow "Slipper" (streets) there is a view towards the harbour and opposite towards Grønnegade, the name of which reminds us that the Dutch merchant from Groningen lived here. We now cross the pedestrian street and arrive at Quedens Gård.

## **30 - QUEDENS GÅRD**

At the corner of Overdammen and Sortebrødregade. It is a four-winged merchant's farmhouse, the oldest part of which has timber work from 1583. The yellow main building facing





the street is from 1791. Go into the farmhouse and enjoy the beautiful courtyard interior.

Note the small protrusion to the left right before the gate. It was "the secret", which was a toilet room on the first floor in which one could relieve himself and the waste material fell down into the shaft below, from which it could be brought out as fertilizer in the garden. The Rose Garden which lies next to the farm, contains 24 historic roses and spreads down to the river.

### **30 - JACOB A. RIIS MUSEUM**

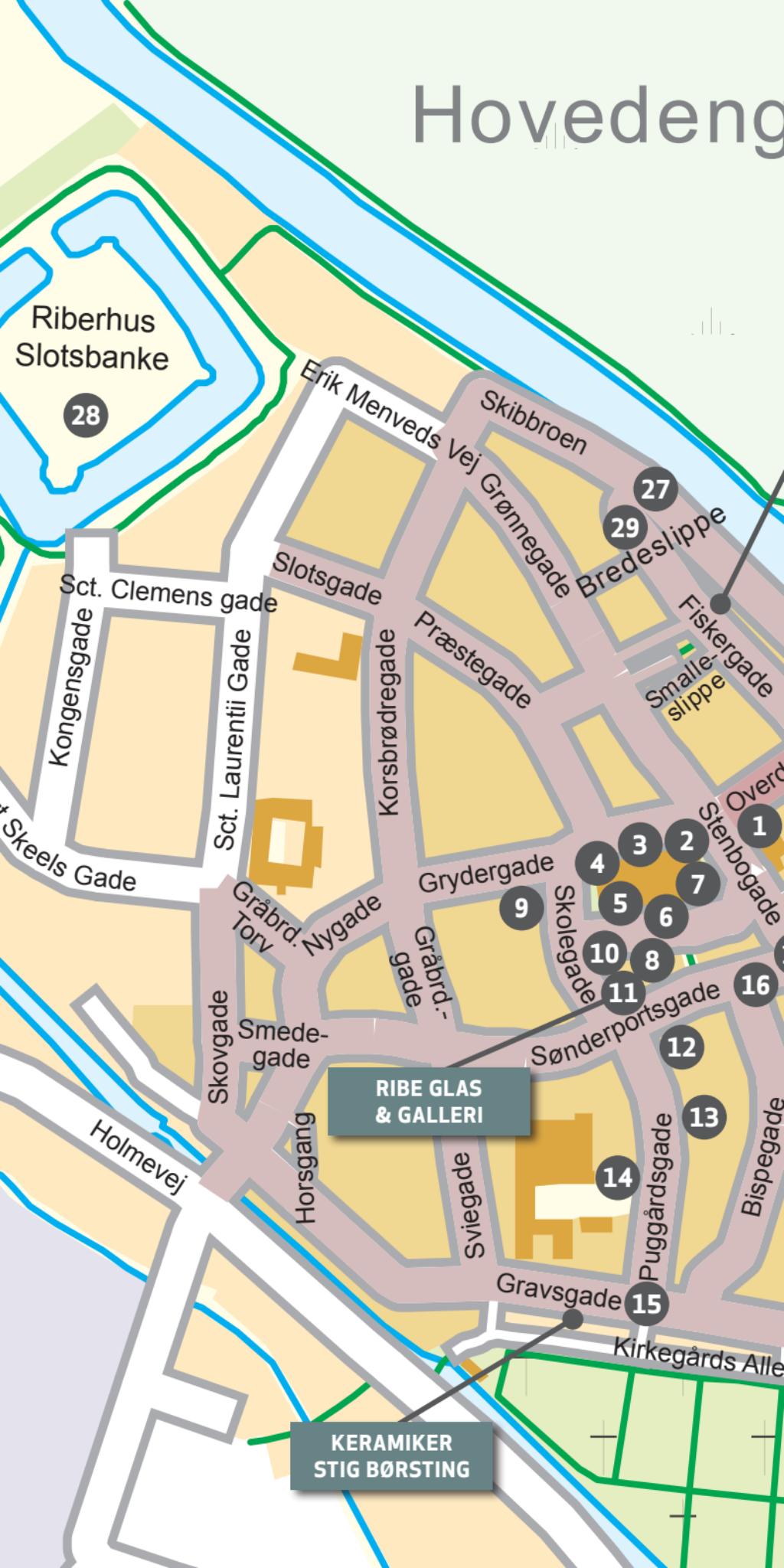
The Jacob A. Riis Museum is located in Quedens Gård with entrance from Sortebrødregade. The museum tells of the boy from Ribe, who emigrated to the United States because of unrequited love, and where he almost went to the dogs. He struggled to become a journalist, community reformer, speaker, and author. By President Th. Roosevelt he was called "New York's most useful citizen". He finally married the adored love of his youth, and now has his own museum. At long last, Jacob A. Riis has been accepted and valued in his native city.

### **30 - HEX ! MUSEUM OF WITCH HUNT**

Through the same entrance you find the Museum HEX!, which tells of witch-hunts in Denmark (Ribe) as well as in Europe, a phenomenon that we regard with disgust and wonder; but which may still exist.

Go back to the pedestrian street and follow it towards the left to the town square, where the tour ends.

# Hovedeng



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Sct. Peders Gade

Saltgade  
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Tømmergangen

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300 M FROM SALTGADE

25

26

30

18

24

23

Sammen Mellemdammen Nederdamme

Kolholts Slippe

17

Vægtergade

21

19

Støck Plads

22

20

**RIBES BRODERI  
& GARN**

Brorsonvej

Hundegade

Årsmølle Å

**QUEDENS GÅRD  
CAFÉ & KRAMBOD**

Kurveholmen

Giøtz  
Plads

Odins  
Plads

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Tvedgade

Sct. Nicolai Gade

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