



Scandinavian countries have long been among Scotland's closest partners. We share rich and diverse ties that have had a lasting impact on the fabric of our nation, from Shetland to Galloway. Woven through centuries of economic, cultural, and social exchanges, these links continue to nourish a sense of affinity and interdependency that stretches far beyond mere geographical proximity.

People and ideas have shuttled back and forth across the North Sea for millennia, from Viking longboats to today's digital means of communication. Collectively, they have fashioned a vast and yet still developing Scottish-Scandinavian heritage, where intangible cultural connections are as important as the bountiful tangible testimonies of our common history.

Spanning over three decades, Dr Kruse's work has brought a crucial contribution to our understanding of the Scandinavian elements of Scotland's identity. His research on place-names and onomastics has shown us that a tour of Scottish towns and Scottish islands is also very often a metaphorical journey through Scottish-Scandinavian history. He has mapped and celebrated the power and significance of linguistic connections, of which my own family and professional background makes me a committed supporter.

This festschrift is published 550 years after Orkney and Shetland left the Danish-Norwegian kingdom and became

united with the rest of Scotland. In addition, 2022 has been designated as the Year of Scotland's Stories, to encourage our communities to share their tales and reflect on what nurtures our sense of place, history, and belonging. Dr Kruse's body of work and this festschrift stand in themselves as valued contributions to the celebrations for these anniversaries.

Both our history and our present-day international engagements show that Scotland's compass points firmly north. The Scottish Government is determined to build on existing connections and pursue ever closer collaboration with our Scandinavian neighbours around the many challenges and ambitions that we have in common. With similar population sizes, geographical features, and – crucially – similar outlooks, Scotland and Scandinavian countries continue to exchange knowledge and expertise in a wide range of sectors. To promote even greater cultural, trade, and policy cooperation, this year the Scottish Government opened an office in Copenhagen, whose remit encompasses all three Scandinavian countries.

It is a new and exciting chapter in the long history of Scottish-Scandinavian ties that Dr Kruse's research has helped us explore and appreciate. Thanks in no small measure to his work, we can cherish our rich Scandinavian legacies and look confidently north for our future journeys.

*Takk skal du ha, Arne.*

**Angus Robertson**

Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution,  
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Scottish Government  
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