

Anglo-Norse Review



Joachim H. Rønneberg

Fred og frihet er ingen selvfølge

OPERASJON GUNNERSIDE

Natt til 28. februar 1943 ledet Rønneberg angrepet mot Jørgenfabrikken på Vamork, ett av de viktigste og mest vellykkede allierte sabotasjeaksjoner under andre verdenskrig.

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Cover photo: Statue of Joachim Rønneberg in his home town of Ålesund.
Photo courtesy of bente.saxon@VISITALESUND.COM>

Editorial

To look for bright spots in this past year, what with the American election result, the British Brexit vote, war in the Middle East, and what seems like a nationalist trend in several European countries, may seem like looking for a needle in a haystack. And yet there were bright spots and one was the speech given by King Harald of Norway to the 1,500 guests from all over Norway who attended the Royal Garden Party on 1 September. It was a speech that quickly went viral on the internet. What the King emphasised was that Norway was first and foremost its people - not only people from all parts of Norway, but immigrants from all parts of the world, people of all sorts of faith and none, people of all ages, abilities and sexual orientation. All, he said, are Norwegians, and what he hoped was that the Norwegians would take care of each other, and together build a future based on trust, community and generosity. So, a large bright spot and exhortation to Norwegians to lead the way in tolerance and understanding.

Given the times we are living in, I wonder whether it can count as a 'bright spot', that books on *hygge* have now replaced Scandi-Noir crime novels on the promotional stands. (I saw five piled on top of each other in my local bookshop). It is just a pity that the focus seems to be all on Denmark, but then *hygge* in Norwegian is a weaker word, and where Danes would use it Norwegian might tend to use the word *kos* and *koselig*.

In the Editorial of the last issue I said I hope that this issue would contain more contemporary, political and social material. Well this proved harder to source than I had reckoned with. Trying to find someone who would write on immigration in Norway today, I tried 6 people and received 6 different answers for why they could not write such an article. So if anyone is burning to write something or knows anyone who might, please get in touch.

In the past there was the occasional article in Norwegian, and I have been asked if this tradition could be restarted. Well, it can and the article is Ingunn Tennøe's about the Norwegian cultural school initiative called 'Den kulturelle skolesekken' - the cultural satchel. Those of you who attended the Musical Evening at the Ambassador's Residence in October will remember what a charming presence she was and will have no difficulty imagining her enthusing young people about classical music!

Interview in 2106 with 98 year old Joachim Rønneberg - the last remaining of the Norwegian heroes of Telemark

By Dr Janet Voke

It has been described by historians as "the most daring sabotage raid of the whole of WW2", so daring that it was later recreated by Hollywood in the 1965 film "The Heroes of Telemark".

Churchill sanctioned this most secret of missions and afterwards personally thanked the eight young Norwegians just out of their teens who had parachuted back into one of the harshest winters in central Norway. Following the February 1943 raid their leader, Joachim Rønneberg was awarded the British Distinguished Service Order and received the War Cross with sword from the Norwegian king.

Like so many others, nineteen-year old Joachim had fled Norway in a small fishing boat by cover of darkness to Scotland to enrol in the free Norwegian army in 1941 following Norway's surprise invasion the previous year. He was selected to lead the top-secret raid to prevent the Nazis from developing an atom bomb. Earlier this year it was a great honour and privilege to meet the now 98-year old, Mr Rønneberg for the second time in a decade, this time with my 90-year old father who had first introduced me almost 40 years ago to the daring raid carried out by the Norwegian saboteurs. Together we visited the scene of this drama in a Rjukan after many decades of research into the raid and we both found our meeting with Mr Rønneberg in his home town of Alesund profoundly moving and were pleased to see him in good health at such an advanced age and able to chat with us freely in English.

Now this tall, articulate and humble Norwegian is the only surviving team member. "I knew exactly where I was" he explained "when I was dropped at dead of night by a Halifax plane in the whiteout conditions of Europe's most remote and inhospitable mountain terrain, the Hardanger vidda. We tracked eighteen miles to a small stone hut at 1200 metres. Our equipment was very basic, mostly made of wool, "not like the wonderful kit youngsters have today with their padded waterproof suits" he explained with a smile. "Inside we could light a fire but it was seldom above 0°C which was good in a sense because the damp in our clothing was never dripping."

Dragging two toboggans of heavy equipment, explosives and dried rations and relying on their ability to hunt reindeer and bore through ice to fish in frozen lakes the group endured one of the harshest winters in living memory in isolation. "We gave no thought to the risks" he confided. "In fact being in action in Norway was a great privilege and at times quite splendid up there when the sun emerged from cloud. Our greatest problem was to cover our



Joachim Rønneberg photographed with Janet Voke's father, Emeritus Professor Robert Fletcher, in Ålesund in 2016. Photo by Bente Saxon of Ålesund Tourist Office.

tracks in the snow. Of course our families had no idea we were back in Norway, despite being just a few kilometres away down in the valley. You see we were chosen for our local knowledge of the mountains and we had

practised our raid on the heavy water plant at Vemork in a full-scale mock up at a stately house in Hertfordshire. The concept of an atom bomb was as alien to us as to everyone in 1942." "So what was your greatest challenge?" I ask. "Well in fact it was a moral dilemma I faced as leader. Suddenly out of the blue, having seen no-one for days, a lone Norwegian hunter appeared. He was carrying more than a year's pay in cash in his rucksack and we surmised that he might be a Nazi informer. Our training had prepared us for such an eventuality and we had been given instructions to shoot anyone who came across us in hiding. Of course we had been taught in Scotland how to kill silently and how to use firearms. The hut had a prominent radio aerial outside and the Germans knew that the Vemork plant was in the Allies' sights for destruction. It was the most difficult moment of all," he went on "we kept him hostage for a while, while we agonised what to do. As the leader, the decision fell to me and the others sensed my discomfort. One of them offered to shoot him for me but then understood that it was the moral dilemma which was making me hesitant. Eventually we took a chance and released him just as we set out for the raid. We gambled that it would all be over before he reached any settlement. It was a cold clear night as we set off in our British uniforms. We had instructions to fight openly because, if caught, the Germans needed to know that we had come from the UK. Although they showed no mercy to the Norwegians who had been captured near Stavanger when the previous glider raid to destroy the Vemork plant had failed, it might have given us some protection."

"Our greatest physical challenge was to climb the vertical gorge deemed so impossible to scale by the Germans. There were only German guards on the access foot suspension bridge to the plant, and it was icy and treacherous. As four of the team set guard, Rønneberg and the other three headed for the cellar but it was locked. Their only hope of access now lay through a narrow cable shaft through which high voltage electricity powered the plant. They had been warned of this possibility by the local Norwegian scientific manager who had previously been spirited out of the country to advise on the raid, and who would later lose his life undertaking resistance activities in the Norwegian mountains. Rønneberg and his team crawled its length, "and of course once we had started there was physically no room for retreat" he explained with a chuckle. The Norwegian night caretaker inside was totally surprised by Norwegian speakers in British uniforms with guns, but naturally gave us his full co-operation. I don't know how long we were

there but the explosive charges were all ready and fitted perfectly, primed with a 2 minute delay fuse” he continued. “But in the confusion the caretaker had mislaid his spectacles and was very reluctant to leave them behind as it would not have been easy to replace them in wartime, and of course they were very expensive, so we helped him find them before setting the charges. It was a bizarre moment. We were not far away when the 18 heavy water cells, 1000lb of heavy water and a further production stock of 880lbs were destroyed, setting back the Germans’ raw materials for an atom bomb by many years.” “Was it deafening?” I ask. “Well actually not, because the wind was howling anyway and hydro power stations were very noisy in those days so it was in fact some minutes before the Germans realised what had happened. We scaled the gorge for the second time that night and were quickly on our way. The sun came out at 6 am and it was a wonderful sunrise with a mackerel sky and we sat tired but very happy high on the mountain range taking it in; no-one said a word as we pondered such a special moment.” He smiled as if reliving the feeling of satisfaction. “Did you understand the significance of what you had done?” I ask in awe. “Well we knew it had to be a successful mission as forty Norwegians had lost their lives in the previous glider mission and bombing raids would only take more Norwegian lives.”

The Germans did rebuild the plant and the Americans had no choice but to bomb it. Later a Norwegian ferry with its passengers would have to be blown up as the remaining stocks were being transported across a nearby lake towards the sea to evacuate them to Germany for safekeeping. Some of the old metal heavy water cells recovered from the lake depths are now on view in the Oslo Resistance museum. But Rønneberg has not finished his tale.

“We were extremely lucky in our escape on skis across mountain and forest to Sweden,” he continues. “It was an eighteen-day hike, we were still in our uniforms, and it was a great occasion when we could burn one of the twenty five maps we carried in sheets.” Yes, course they were cold and hungry for they had to avoid any human contact, but at last they arrived at the Swedish border “and presented ourselves in our woollen underwear. By then the woollen uniforms were not in their best state” he added. “But we were tremendously well received by the British” he was keen to emphasize as the story neared completion. “They had been expecting us. Our training in Scotland, and at various clandestine places in the UK (requisitioned stately homes including the Beaulieu estate in the New Forest) for parachute and arms training had been first class, even though we complained that the

Scottish terrain was no match for the Norwegian fells.” He paused and smiled again before adding his last shot to the story. “The British Embassy diplomats decided we needed a treat in Stockholm and so they took us to the opera, *La Traviata* by Verdi – it was amazing,” he said grinning now. “We were almost knocking each other in disbelief to be so warm, well fed, clothed and even entertained and chauffeured round, for Sweden suffered few privations of wartime.

Rønneberg sits back as he quietly relives the memories once again, and yet he offers no thoughts on any of the many atrocities that befell Norway during those five terrible years of occupation. It is difficult to prise even a final overview as he looks back, for like most Norwegians he is a quiet, unassuming man, slow to anger and without a need to blame. “Well – we must fight for freedom every day” is all he will add when prompted to leave some words of wisdom for us all.

In fact Joachim and his brother, Erling continued with many courageous acts of bravery throughout the war, as did so many of Norway’s youth. In 1945 Joachim led a three-man unit to destroy an important railway supply line with 290lb explosives and disrupted many German supply lines before that. His brother, Erling endured many months monitoring German shipping from a bleak coastal mountain peak, sending details of German naval movements via radio and thus facilitating attacks by the British. They are both remembered prominently in the local museum of Alesund where the equipment used by both brothers in arms can be viewed today; and a town street in Alesund is also named in their honour.

Footnote

Dr Janet Voke was one of only two invited British guests at a select seminar “Allied in War” held in mid-May at Windsor castle when thirty Norwegian historians, diplomats and serving military personnel met with the Chief of Defence of Norway and the Minister of Defence to hear recollections of four of the most highly decorated Norwegian veterans from WW2 as guests of Her Majesty the Queen.

A Political, Economic and Environmental Issue

By Wenche Cumming

In the run-up to the Norwegian general election in 2017, the debate about the opening of the continental shelf off Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja (the latter are areas to the north of the Lofoten Islands) for oil and gas production has already come to the fore. This article aims to explain some of the background to the debate, though will inevitably be somewhat coloured by the fact that the author is the leader of the organization opposed to petroleum activity in these areas.

When exploitation of petroleum resources in Norwegian waters began in the 1960s the activity was restricted to areas south of latitude 62°N. Since then areas further north in the Norwegian Sea and the Barents Sea have been opened up and there is now oil and gas production here. However, the continental shelf off Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja (LoVeSe) has remained closed to such activity. The three largest political parties in Norway all support a policy of opening these areas for exploration and possible production, but the minor parties in separate coalition governments have prevented this. They hope to do so again after the next election, or succeed in gaining a permanent ban on petroleum activity in LoVeSe.

In essence, the debate centres on possible conflict between petroleum production on the one hand and fisheries and tourism on the other. However, more general views on the environment and more recently the Paris Agreement on Climate Change are also relevant.

A good deal of time and money has been spent in surveying the continental shelf off LoVeSe and the oil companies are convinced that significant amounts of oil and gas are present. The decline in the price of oil has resulted in a fall in investment in Norway and a major reduction in the number of jobs in firms supplying the petroleum industry. The Stavanger region is now experiencing unemployment levels not seen for decades, and the argument is that new investment is required and that opening LoVeSe will play a role in giving the industry new opportunities and a predictable future. Development of LoVeSe will, it is claimed, provide employment in the area and continue the country's exploitation of its natural resources. Interestingly, the supporters of petroleum activity always emphasise that if it is shown that petroleum activity will have negative consequences for the fisheries, they will not go ahead. Their opponents argue that there is already

sufficient evidence that such negative effects are inevitable and thus the debate can be concluded.



Wenche Cumming campaigning against the opening of the continental shelf off Lofoten for oil and gas production. Photo supplied by the author.

For opponents of petroleum activity the consequences for the fishing industry in the area are central. This is a conflict between renewable and non-renewable resources. The winter spawning cod fishery has for centuries been vital to the economy of LoVeSe. Today cod and other fish, plus fish-farming, play a major role in the economy of these regions and products range from stockfish to enzymes. Much of the sales presentation of these products stresses their origin in an unpolluted natural environment.

It is interesting to note that north Norwegian firms supplying the petroleum industry had a turnover of 4.7 billion NOK in 2015, while firms in the fishing industry at Myre (now the the main fishing harbour in LoVeSe) had a turnover of 5.5 billion NOK. Recent improvements to the harbour at Myre include a 1460m breakwater and the provision of new areas for industrial development.

The likelihood of conflict between oil and fish in LoVeSe is far greater than in the North Sea or the Barents Sea because the continental shelf along this stretch of the Norwegian coast is so narrow. Much of it is less than 50km

wide before the plunge to the abyssal deep, and at its narrowest its width it is barely 15km. Thus the area available for different activities is very restricted, and any pollution from petroleum activity would be washed ashore very quickly as well as drift north with the sea current. During the winter fishing season the sea is so crowded with fishing boats and their tackle that complex formal and informal agreements are in place to separate the different types of fishing boat and indeed the boats themselves. The introduction of oil rigs and other installations would further complicate the situation. Seismic surveys already carried out have led to complaints from fishermen that fish disappear and there is a major risk of fish fry being killed.

The promise of new employment opportunities is always a carrot for relatively thinly-populated areas and LoVeSe is no exception. There is, however, a good deal of disagreement about numbers. Initially promising thousands of jobs, supporters of petroleum activity have reduced their claims to a few hundred. Opponents claim that given the unemployment among experienced workers in the south, it is likely that much of the new employment will result in workers commuting from the south and will not provide opportunities for local people. In addition, there is the possibility of an adverse effect on employment in both the fishing and tourist industries. 'Lofoten' is a global brand and is associated with magnificent scenery, but also with an unspoilt environment. Whether this brand can be combined with petroleum activity is open to question. This will particularly be the case if major installations are located on land. Today, many places in Lofoten are more dependent on tourism than the fishing industry. Though less well-known both Vesterålen and Senja also have significant tourist activity.

Apart from the major questions concerning resources, jobs etc. the question of LoVeSe has more generally been seen as an environmental problem and has recently been specifically linked to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. It is argued by those who oppose petroleum development in LoVeSe that in order to comply with the requirements of the agreement, Norway must gradually reduce its petroleum industry. Given this position, it seems that a permanent ban on petroleum activity in LoVeSe is a small and easy first step in the right direction. The oil companies argue that oil and gas will be important for decades to come, that Norwegian gas can replace coal in electricity generation and that production of gas is environmentally friendly compared to the production of other fossil fuels. It is further claimed that Norway's production is among the most environmentally friendly in the

world. These arguments are disputed by opponents of petroleum activity in LoVeSe.

Since 2014 the opening sentences of Article 112 of the Norwegian Constitution are:

Every person has the right to an environment that is conducive to health and to a natural environment whose productivity and diversity are maintained. Natural resources shall be managed on the basis of comprehensive long-term considerations which will safeguard this right for future generations as well.

Basing their argument on this Article, the two organisations Greenpeace and Nature and Youth have initiated a court case against the government following the latter's decision to offer new blocks for petroleum exploration in the Barents Sea. Whether this is a wise tactic is open to discussion. However, the action does serve to highlight the increasing awareness of environmental issues in addition to economic and social arguments as regards the oil and gas industry in Norway.

At present local, regional and national polls suggest there is a majority against petroleum activity in Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja.



The fishing community of Stø . Photo by the author

The Willoch era in Norwegian politics: a view from inside

by Erik Nessheim

At 88, former Prime Minister Kåre Willoch still holds a unique position in Norwegian public life, not as a *Landsfader* but rather as a highly respected elder statesman whose views always carry great weight. The esteem in which he is held is second to none (the only possible exception being another former PM, Gro Harlem Brundtland, who no longer appears in public and has receded into the background).

For more than 40 years, Kåre Willoch has set his stamp on Norwegian politics, and it has been my good fortune to hold positions from which I have been able to view his progress from the inside, as it were. In 1970, when he left the Borten Government (in which he held office as Minister of Trade) and came back to the *Storting*, he became leader of *Høyre's* parliamentary party, of which I was then chief secretary. Eleven years later, when he became Prime Minister, he picked me as one of the three political secretaries – *statssekretærer*¹ – attached to the Prime Minister's office.

When he became leader of the parliamentary party I must confess that I viewed my new boss with a certain apprehension. I knew that he expected his colleagues and political staff to meet his own high standards of excellence, and tended to take a dim view of those who did not. To my great relief, he proved to be far less autocratic, far more disposed to listen to opposing views and counter-arguments than I had been led to believe. He was also very kind, attentive, and mindful of the needs of his team.

He immediately demonstrated his grasp of every aspect of parliamentary business. Initially, this probably came as a bit of a shock to colleagues who were used to looking after their areas of responsibility without interference from above, but it did not take them long to discover that firm leadership inspired confidence and brought order in the ranks. It was reassuring to feel that everybody was pulling in the same direction. Kåre Willoch soon came to be regarded as the (unofficial) Leader of the Opposition and it was widely predicted that he would be at the helm of a future non-socialist government. This prediction was based on the fact that by the mid-

In the Norwegian political system, *statssekretærer* are political secretaries serving the Prime Minister and the heads of government departments. They are appointed, not elected, but otherwise have much the same functions as British junior ministers.

70s, *Høyre* had become by far the biggest of the non-socialist parties.

Nobody would deny that Willoch was an eminently capable politician, a man blessed with a superior intellect and great debating skills, but he had acquired a reputation for being unapproachable and lacking compassion. Inside as well as outside the party, people who did not know him well tended to be a little afraid of him. But they came to view him in a different light when TV and broadcasting made him known to a wider audience. Especially the televised debate between the two main adversaries which came to be dubbed "Gro versus Kåre" constituted Willoch's breakthrough as a political communicator, a popular figure in more than one sense of the word.

In the run-up to the 1981 general election, it was on the cards that *Høyre* would do well. Whether they would gain enough seats to bring about a non-socialist majority and a change of government, was another matter. In the event, there was a clear swing to the right, and after a round of negotiations it was agreed that *Høyre* was to form a single-party government and that parliamentary support would be forthcoming from *Kristelig Folkeparti* and *Senterpartiet*.



Kåre Willoch (second from the left) with his three political secretaries: Erling Norvik, Erik Nessheim and Kjell Colding (later Ambassador to the UK 1996-2000) Photo VG 30 May 1983.

Kåre Willoch thus took office as head of the first *Høyre* government since 1928

and after consulting his closest colleagues and party officials, handpicked the members of his cabinet. And when he moved – literally – from the *Storting* premises to the 15th floor of *Regjeringsbygget*, I went with him as one of his three *statssekretærer*. In the 1980s, the PM's political staff was tiny: he had one personal secretary in addition to the three of us. Erling Norvik, former party leader, towered above us and was *de facto* deputy prime minister.

My tasks were pretty varied, depending on what the PM required. I saw myself as a sort of traffic controller, insofar as the bulk of his correspondence, e.g. letters from organisations and private persons requesting meetings with the Prime Minister, was initially dealt with by me. I also had to make sure that notes for his political speeches, or draft manuscripts, were ready when he wanted them. My main areas of responsibility were domestic politics and Nordic co-operation, but at the staff meeting which was held every morning, any important issue or aspect of current affairs could be on the agenda. I also greatly enjoyed accompanying the Prime Minister on his official visits in Norway and the other Nordic countries.

The Willoch Government was doing well, considering that its freedom of action was somewhat restricted by its dependence on two other parliamentary parties. There were nonetheless signs that frustration was mounting in the *KrF* and *SP* camps: no longer content to play a supporting role, the two parties now wanted to become full members of the government. This they achieved in the summer of 1983. Kåre Willoch continued as PM; it was also agreed that *KrF* and *SP* ministers could be appointed subject to his personal approval, since he was adamant that he did not want to work with people who were “thrust upon him”. Fortunately, the new team also proved capable of pulling together, largely thanks to Willoch's willingness to listen to his cabinet colleagues, and his understanding of their need to achieve their own political goals.

Willoch was a consummate politician who always proved capable of thinking several moves ahead. Invariably bearing in mind the greater good of the country, he was never tempted to go for quick, populist solutions. Not content to be managing director of Norway plc, his aim was to achieve permanent, thoroughgoing change in key areas. In 1981, four issues in particular were given priority:

- curbing the growth of public expenditure and of the public sector in general;
- bringing about the deregulation of certain industries; modernising public services and making them more effective;

- checking the political and economic influence of Statoil and preventing it from becoming a state within a state.
- keeping a steady course in defence matters, and ensuring that co-operation within NATO was not jeopardised.

Kåre Willoch fully understood the need to keep the other parties on side if Høyre was to gain acceptance for its own policies. As head of government he frequently demonstrated willingness to compromise, and proved that compromise solutions often paved the way for more right-of-centre policies. During his time in office, important and lasting change was brought about in many areas, as greater emphasis was put on market forces than on state intervention. This applied to price regulation, the housing market and opening hours. It was also in this period that the monopoly of broadcasting so far enjoyed by the NRK was broken. Today these examples of deregulation are taken for granted, but it is worth remembering that they were fiercely opposed in the *Storting*, not only by *Arbeiderpartiet* and *Sosialistisk Venstreparti* but also by the other non-socialist parties.

When Kåre Willoch stood down from national politics he became *fylkesmann* – chief administrative officer – of Oslo and Akershus. Holders of this non-political office traditionally do not engage in debates about current affairs, but Willoch did not see himself as bound by this convention. He pointed out that it was the duty of a *fylkesmann* to state his views on any issue affecting the inhabitants of the fylke and, by extension, the Norwegian people. Though he wisely avoided making party-political statements, there were nonetheless those in central government who thought that the *fylkesmann* was playing an overly political role.

Now in retirement, Kåre Willoch remains an active participant in the public debate, and has not refrained from expressing controversial views, e.g. on conservation and on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This has been taken as signifying a shift towards the left, a charge which he does not accept. From his point of view, international society is in a state of flux, and new problems call for new solutions. His words carry great weight, the more so now that he is above politics and has become a sort of national treasure. In the words of former AP leader Reiulf Steen, writing in the festschrift presented to Willoch on his 80th birthday, “People have come to appreciate the happy interplay of opposing forces which characterise Kåre Willoch: the cool brilliance of his intellect and the kindness of his heart. He is a civilised human being.

He was my boss for twenty years, and I heartily concur.

Interview with Britt Boutros Ghali

By Sybil Richardson

Britt Boutros Ghali is an internationally renowned artist born in Svolvær in the north of Norway. She made her debut in “Galerie de L’Universite” in Paris in 1965 and has since exhibited in the UK, Germany, France, Spain, USA, Switzerland, Norway, Slovakia and the Middle East. Her art is presented in international galleries, hotels, public buildings and in private homes all over the world.

She was a part of the Abstract Art Expressionist Movement in Europe in the 60’s and 70’s and still considers herself a part of this school. She has lived in Egypt for over 40 years and the expression of both her European heritage and Egyptian influence echoes in her art.



Britt Boutros Ghali (left) in her studio with one of her ‘ladies’ paintings prior to an exhibition at Nyksund in August 2016. Photo: Svein Erik Tøien

In recent years she has also painted a vast series of female portraits called “Women of My World” which have become extremely popular. The portraits are often decorated with beads of every hue and colour, gold leaf

and glass fragments. She is an active cultural ambassador in encouraging and promoting visiting Norwegian artists in Egypt. In 1996 she received the Norwegian Order of St.Olav for her achievements as a contemporary Norwegian artist.

SR: *You mentioned at the beginning of the interview that it was your father who gave you the confidence to believe in yourself and encouraged you to create a world of your own. Can you tell us a little more about him and how he influenced you to move from a small remote community to eventually embrace the world.*

BBG: My father was a sea captain and travelled all over the world. He would spin stories in a great “Peer Gynt” fashion to my brother and I whenever he returned and I think this motivated me more than anything else to want to explore the world for myself, plus the fact that the long winters and the isolated location where we lived made me even more curious about what was going on in other places.

SR: *Do you feel your style and choice of colours has changed somewhat throughout the years?.*

BBG: All colours are important as they represent energy. It really isn’t about colour, but about letting the painting flow and blossom like a flower.

SR: *Can you describe how you approach your art when standing in front of an empty canvas.*

BBG: I always go into a meditative state before taking up my brush. In this way I set aside problems and stress and elevate my thoughts onto a higher level. I never play music and always work in silence. The first paint stroke determines the character of the painting and the colours and form seem to appear on their own accord. I have to follow the flow until the picture is finished. Time just stands still whilst in this process.

SR: *As an artist with so many years of experience, what advice would you give to the younger generation of artists of today as to how to survive in the ever expanding art world jungle which has changed so drastically since the 60’s ?.*

BBG: Put your ego to the side. Trust in yourself and what you are doing. Don't fall into the net of commercial motives in what you are doing as this will interfere with the creation of your work and hinder your true development.

SR: *You seem always to have not only filled many empty canvasses with amazing colour and energy, but have also done the same in your personal fairy tale life in your beloved Egypt.*



One of Britt's vibrant paintings. Image reproduced from an online sequence in connection with an exhibition at Montecosaro in Italy in November 2008

BBG: Many times my life has seemed like being in a bubble and as an artist I feel very privileged to have this feeling of freedom which I have always cherished. I retire into my private sphere and like to be outside looking in and have the need to feel solitude.

SR *Thank you so much for allowing this interview to take place in your breathtakingly beautiful Sanctuary on the outskirts of Alexandria.*

Ed. More of Britt's paintings may be seen by going online and entering 'Britt Boutros Ghali images' in your browser.

Innovative Incentive Scheme makes Norway's Coastal Shipping an Environmental Frontrunner

By Tommy Johnson

The Environmental Agreement on NOx (nitrogen oxides) is an Agreement between several Norwegian business organisations and the Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment on behalf of the Norwegian state. As a result, over 5 billion NOK has been granted in support of emission reduction measures since 2008, a large share to coastal shipping. The Business Sector's NOx Fund is the administration working to achieve the business organisations' obligations according to the Agreement, including ensuring income to the Fund and providing support for emission reduction projects. The income of the Fund is based on exemption from fiscal tax on NOx emissions. Instead of paying the tax to the Authorities, companies affiliated to the Agreement pay a lower rate to the NOx Fund.

The Agreement involves major Norwegian businesses such as the petroleum sector, domestic shipping and land-based industry. Today, the majority of these companies are affiliated (approximately 1000 companies). This is driven by the tax exemption and the possibility of receiving financial support to reduce emissions (and consequently cost saving) investments. Together these drivers form the "carrot" of the emission reduction scheme. The "whip" is that collective quantified emission reduction targets must be achieved. If these targets are not met, the fiscal tax is re-introduced.

The NOx Fund has an income of more than 600 million NOK annually. The Agreement is currently valid for the period 2008 - 2017, and all income over the years is channelled back to the affiliated companies as investment support. Since 2008, the NOx Fund has annually brought about a reduction of approximately 30 000 tonnes of NOx and 500 000 tonnes CO₂. The NOx-reduction is equivalent to removal of emissions from approximately 6.5 million cars. The NOx Fund scheme has been a big success in Norway and work is in progress to extend the Agreement period beyond 2017.

The majority of emission reduction measures are carried out on the coastal shipping fleet, including fishing vessels, as these are the most cost efficient measures. The NOx Fund has supported a whole range of technologies including conversion to gas fuelled ships, battery powered ships, grid power when ships are at the quayside, fuel saving technologies, and

exhaust gas cleaning systems.

There is a Green Coastal Shipping Program in Norway, which aims to create the most environmentally friendly fleet in the world using low and non-emission technology. The NOx Fund is a central funding scheme to secure this development in Norway, together with the other national incentive schemes.

The NOx Fund has fostered and stimulated the use of new emission reducing technologies. An important motivation for the Environmental Agreement was to develop new and improved environmental technologies in shipping and fishing vessels, as well as to support the market base for such environmental solutions. Norway has approximately 50% of the LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas-fuelled) ships in the fleet worldwide. The NOx Fund has so far granted support to 74 ships to convert to LNG propulsion. This brings Norway to the forefront of such environmental development in the shipping sector worldwide, and 42 of the ships supported by the Fund, with approximately 1 Billion NOK, are delivered and operational. Fjord Lines, one of many supported shipping lines received about 180 million NOK from the NOx Fund to build two LNG passenger ships.



Color Line Superspeed I docked in Kristiansand

The NOx Fund has recently had a great request for support to battery-powered vessels, which allows ships to be fully or partly powered with energy from the national electricity grid. The Fund has received 17 applications for support for electrification on ferries, of which 10 are fully electric, while the

rest are converting to hybrid. The Norwegian ferry operator Norled won the contract for the world's first battery-driven ferry on the route between Lavik and Oppedal. The NOx Fund contributed 9 million NOK to cover additional vessel costs to the Ampere.

The NOx Fund has supported shore power both on land and on ships, and has included support for docks, fishing vessels and ferries. Color Line Superspeed I docked in Kristiansand, Norway (see image on previous page) is an example. The ship has been customized for use of onshore electricity in harbour. SuperSpeed II has also received support. The NOx Fund has granted support worth 15 million for the two vessels.

The NOx fund's success has supported companies with up to 80% coverage of their additional investment costs due to environmental friendly technologies and has demonstrated a method for "whip and carrot" incentive schemes, which can be counted a success in the shift to a more sustainable green economy without damaging the competitiveness of the companies.

Life as a Literary Translator

By Charlotte Barslund

I was one of those children who read voraciously and at school my strengths were definitely for languages rather than for science. I initially wanted to work in the theatre and my first degree was in English and Drama, after which I worked in an administrative capacity at various London theatres and for an Oscar-winning film producer, before going on to produce plays on the London fringe.

This led to my first translation job: producing literal versions of plays by Ibsen and Strindberg for writers and theatres in the UK. As well as being a good language and research exercise, it was also a superb opportunity to look into the engine room of great plays. To understand their structure, appreciate speech patterns and translation problems, without being responsible for the finished version. As my translation experience grew, I took on plays by modern Scandinavian playwrights, in addition to Ibsen and Strindberg and I translated *The Pelican* by Strindberg, which was produced and broadcast by BBC Radio 3. At this point I had done an MA in Scandinavian Studies and had started to translate novels as well. This was something I had wanted to do for a long time; I was attracted to the idea of spending months immersing myself in a much longer piece of text. I began by translating crime novels, and they remain my first love, but I also translate literary fiction, children's books and

plays.

Like translating plays, translating crime fiction is a great way to learn about internal consistency, plot mechanics and narrative. Good crime fiction is like *Tales from the Arabian Nights*, compelling storytelling that leaves the reader wanting more. My crime fiction translation skills have been boosted by working as a court and police interpreter, though this has only ever been an occasional occupation as Scandinavians in the UK must either be very law-abiding or clever enough not to get caught. This has given me an understanding of real life procedures and terminology, which has come in handy in my fiction work. As many of my fellow translators have observed, any translation you undertake often requires a great deal of research, if only to work out what is part of the author's imagination and what turns out to exist in real life. I have become a compulsive fact checker to ensure my work is accurate. So much so that I now regard learning about topics I might not otherwise have come across as a perk of my job.

Recently I have translated the Danish writer Lene Kaaberbøl's series for young adults, *Wildwitch*, a wonderful story about growing up and working out what is and is not your responsibility. A very creative aspect of the translation process was discussing and inventing new terms in English with the writer to match the neologisms she had created in Danish.

In addition to crime fiction and children's literature, I also translate literary fiction such as *A Fairy Tale* by Jonas T Bengtsson and *A House in Norway* by Vigdis Hjorth. Hjorth's book is written without chapters and with few paragraphs, which can make it hard to read. The structure, however, is chosen deliberately to illustrate the main character's obsessive thinking and her fluctuating emotions. It was quite a challenge to express the main character's increasing loss of perspective while producing a text that made sense to the reader. At the same time I had a great deal of sympathy for the main character, especially in her need to be understood. It was one of those occasions when I was especially grateful for editorial feedback, for external confirmation that my sentences really did make sense.

A Fairy Tale is told from the perspective of a boy who is six years old at the start of the book, and has reached his late teens at the end. He is an extremely insightful boy who is interesting enough to hold the attention of an adult reader, and I chose his language carefully so that it was realistic for a child of that age, but also allowed it to evolve, so it was appropriate for the young man he is at the end.

By now I have learned the importance of making contact with the author as soon as possible and to warn them that it is the nature of my work to ask them questions about things which are unclear and may need changing so non-natives readers will understand the book. It can't be much fun for the author to get emails highlighting problems and suggesting changes to their work, but I stress early on that I am delighted to be working on their book, and that my comments spring from a desire to give their book the best possible chance in the UK in what is a highly competitive market. As someone who translates from Danish and Norwegian into English, I'm conscious that my translation may well be read by more people than read the book in its original language, and that is a great responsibility.



Charlotte Barslund. Photo supplied by the author

I work most days. On some I feel more inspired than others, and have

discovered that certain days are great for a first draft, while others are perfect for editing. I get very involved in the internal universe of the books I translate, and they become so real to me that snapping out of them because dinner is ready can seem very hard.

I enjoy my work enormously, it is varied and stimulating, and over the years I have grown in confidence. With the benefit of hindsight, I can see how all the different jobs and experiences I have had have taught me what I needed to know to become a literary translator – though they may not have made sense at the time. Some of the best moments are when I know I have nailed a particular expression or see a book I have translated in a bookshop. Maybe it goes back to my time working in theatre, but being part of a creative process is really important to me, doing my bit to help pass on a great story.

Ibsen Festival Oslo, 2016

By Paul Binding



Laila Goody as Ella Rentheim and Marika Enstad as Gunhild fighting over Erhard, played by John Emil Jørgensrud. Photo Øyvind Eidte

After the 2016 Ibsen Festival at the National Theatre, Oslo (8-25 September) I for one will never view *John Gabriel Borkman* – a play I know well and indeed have written about – as I used to. The German-born director Jan

Bosse gave us a fresh, profoundly pondered, theatrically vital realisation of a work in which liberation was the dominant theme. We saw how imperative it was for Borkman's son, Erhart consciously, as well as psychologically, to effect escape from the claustrophobic, tentacular past. Why accord the restoration of the family name such importance? It was the older not the younger man who had disgraced it. Why should Erhart's mother and aunt, those power-hungry twin sisters, hold his emotional life back? Never have they given his own personal development the significance it deserves? And the varieties of love, the complexities of the external world are awaiting him.

Bosse's *John Gabriel Borkman*, to which I shall return, was totally consonant with this festival's ambition to honour Ibsen as an international (more, an internationalist) writer whose works repay and often invite transposition to other milieus, other cultures. Motifs, situations and characters so often now seem pointers to a time and society at a distance from the composition date.

Perhaps no play in the Ibsen Festival drew more controversial attention than the bold attempt to fuse *The Wild Duck* with *An Enemy of the People* to become *An Enemy of the Duck* directed by Icelander Thorleifur Örn Arnarsson, with, as dramaturg, the Icelandic novelist Mikael Torfarson. In this creation Gregers Werle of *The Wild Duck* (1884) and Tomas Stockmann of *An Enemy of the People* (1882), both men compelled into action by a relentless, uncompromising devotion to truth, with disruptive effects on their own and on others' lives, were one and the same person.

Visually this was a dazzling bravura production, the attic-storey so integral to *The Wild Duck* undergoing provocative transformations, front stage hosting balletic interludes expressive of the emotional tensions common to both plays. Unsurprisingly (to me) *The Wild Duck* – surely the superior, the deeper-reaching play – prevailed over *An Enemy of the People*. Moved as I was by Mads Ousdal's passionate performance, I persisted in my thought that the two plays' quests for truth – Tomas's, and Gregers's – are very differently driven. Tomas Stockmann is in incontrovertible possession of factual knowledge of the contamination of his spa's water; neither he nor we can have any doubts about what course moral duty demands of him. What happens to him and his family shows up the timidity, selfishness and value relativism of conventional folk. In *The Wild Duck* on the other hand it is highly debatable whether Gregers is morally justified in what he sets out to expose; the lives of others would have been far better had he not done so, and one life, Hedvig's,

would have been spared. Also there are intricate psychological factors at play here: Gregers's complex relation to his father, Old Werle with his amorous life, and his ambivalent feelings for his gullible, pliable friend, Hjalmar Ekdal. Though both these last made themselves felt in this Festival production, they seem to me inconsistent with Tomas Stockmann's essentially purist dedication to truth.

Yet when Mads Ousdal addressed the audience about our own first world's exploitative irresponsibility towards the undeveloped world, especially Africa, it reacted as though it felt rightly rebuked, and that he was the proper vehicle for this ethical reminder.

All three of Ibsen's last plays received thought-provoking treatment at this Ibsen Festival, not only *John Gabriel Borkman* (1896) but the plays that chronologically flank it, *Little Eyolf* (1894, retitled *Little Europa* (sic) and *When We Dead Awaken*, 1899). *LittleEuropa* was concerned with nothing less than our continent's moral health. An Italian production, director Gabriel Paolocà, it gave us a Southern European Alfred Almers and his all-Scandinavian wife Rita, confronting their progeny, not the eponymous boy cripple but a monster, 'Europa', impossible to deal with or even look at sustainedly, craving affection sometimes of a gross, embarrassing kind, always needing attention and prone to aggression. No parental attention could meet his requirements, and when her combination of enlightenment and charming Nordic-style sweetness failed to work on him, Rita herself became violent, taking it out on her offspring in scenes painful to witness. Moving far from the original, the performance nevertheless used its dominant symbols to ask a question latent in the play: in our sophistications have we Europeans, if in different cultural ways, moved too far from attentiveness to basic life, thus engendering a strong travestying deformity which will exert pressures on our own existence.

By contrast *When We Dead Awaken* by Dimitris Karantzas of Art Theater, Greece, kept to the Ibsen text but made of this most enigmatic of Ibsen's works an inclusive ritual. Watching its sequence of events – the ascent, after doomed attentions to bodily matters on the coast and up by the sanatorium, into the high mountain region where Rubek and Irene will die – was like participating in a ceremony with irrevocable choice as its culmination.

And so back to *John Gabriel Borkman* to which audience participation was absolutely integral. We all sat in the National Theatre's Amfiscenen in two opposing banks of seats with a narrow floor-strip between them. As the lights



Laila Goody as Ella Rentheim and Jan Sælid as Borkman. Photo Øyvind Eide

went out, we found the play's twin sisters sitting among us, women far younger than in Ibsen's text. In the searing Second Act, Borkman, superbly played by Jan Sælid, gave vent to despair at his imprisonment by berating audience members before turving them out of the theatre. This was not improvisation, of course, but imaginative choreography; those expelled were in fact co-opted from a local choir. And, after the shattering close of the play, with the sisters surveying Borkman's dead body, back into the theatre trooped all those who had been tured out of it, singing Irving Berlin's 'Cheek to Cheek,' an earnest perhaps of sensual delights young Erhart was enjoying – and possibly even his resurrected father!

Subsequently I had the pleasure of talking to Jan Sælid. The interpretation being offered, he revealed, had been arrived at only after intense immersion in the characters' lives, surely the only true way of serving a great dramatist

Jens Stoltenberg at the Oxford Union

By Tom Gould

I am a second-year student studying History at Oxford, where one of the internationally-renowned jewels is the Oxford Union, founded in 1823 as a student-run debating society. Often controversial, over the years it has hosted many speakers from Winston Churchill, Albert Einstein, Yasser Arafat to Michael Jackson.

When I heard that Jens Stoltenberg was billed to speak there, I instinctively grabbed my phone to tell my grandmother, Gudveig Jones, who I knew would be excited by the news. Despite immigrating to England in the 1950's, where she continues to live for most of the year, I sometimes get the impression that she never really left Norway. Her dogged loyalty to her motherland was made especially clear to me over the course of that phone call as she begged me with incoherent enthusiasm to take her along. With my bestemor's hopes at stake I knew had to get her into the talk one way or another.

The next day she cleared her diary and made the trek up to the City of Dreaming Spires, and after some persistent haggling, we found ourselves in the hallowed space of the Oxford Union debating chamber. It was not long before we were on our feet, applauding as the main attraction arrived. Jens Stoltenberg began with a short address to the Union members in which he spoke in eloquent English about his ongoing work with NATO, neglecting to talk about his important previous responsibilities as Prime Minister of Norway, no doubt to my grandmother's disappointment. In his address, Jens was particularly emphatic in affirming the solidarity and unity of NATO members, all of which, he assures, remain committed to upholding the imperative Article 5 of NATO's constitution which states that an attack on one member is an attack on all.

The question and answer segment was predictably concerned with the latest controversies and headlines in current affairs. Jens was at his most diplomatic when asked for his thoughts on Donald Trump's lukewarm commitment to NATO. Apparently the two enjoyed a constructive phone call after the election and Jens was keen to reassure the Union that the United States would continue to honour its obligations to the Alliance. Similarly, he proffered no opinion on Brexit but was adamant that as long as NATO members were still committed to collective defence the Organisation's

integrity would not be undermined. Of course, the audience was also eager to probe the Secretary General on Europe's bogeyman du jour, Russia. Although Jens was clear that he foresaw no immediate threat to NATO members, he did express his worries that Russia would attempt to follow through on its controversial annexation of the Crimea and further expand its sphere of influence to the detriment of the sovereignty of European states. He nonetheless remained optimistic that dialogue would ultimately prevail. It was here that Jens alluded to his work as Prime Minister when he was required to regularly negotiate with Russia on matters of energy and defence. Ultimately, Jens argued, Norway is able to engage in dialogue with Russia because it is backed by the strength of NATO.

As the talk came to a close, there was no way he would be allowed to leave before my *bestemor* had a word with him. 'Jens, Jens!' she cried in Norwegian, tugging on his sleeve as she ambushed him in the lobby, 'you must meet my grandson!' I have always been fascinated by the way in which Norwegians treat all of their fellow patriots as extended family. Apparently this familial lack of deference even applies to the Secretary General of NATO!

Det første møtet med levende musikk

By Ingunn Tennøe,



Jeg var bare syv år gammel da jeg hørte min første pianokonsert. Jeg husker så godt hvordan pianistens fingre trillet så lett og raskt over de hvite og svarte tangentene, og fargerike melodier som strømmet ut fra instrumentet. Instrumentet som jeg hadde sett så mange ganger før. Det brune, slitte pianoet som alltid hadde stått i samlingssalen på Slemdal skole. Det var bare det at instrumentet aldri hadde laget

slik vakker musikk før, og rommet hadde aldri vært fylt med slik stillhet og lyd på en gang.

Jeg var stum av fascinasjon.

Rikskonsertene er en kulturinstitusjon som ble etablert i 1967. Målet var å gjøre levende musikk av høy kunstnerisk kvalitet tilgjengelig for alle mennesker i hele landet. På slutten av 1990-tallet ble konseptet om Den Kulturelle Skolesekken (DKS) utviklet. Barn skulle ha samme mulighet som voksne til å oppleve musikk, kunst og kultur på høyt nivå. I dag omfatter dette opplevelse av visuell kunst, scenekunst, musikk, film, litteratur og kulturarv. Både Rikskonsertene og Den Kulturelle Skolesekken har vært underlagt kulturdepartementet, og i løpet av 2016 har Rikskonsertene og Den Kulturelle Skolesekken blitt sammenslått til Kulturtanken.

Hvert år sendes musikere, skuespillere og kunstnere ut på turné med Den Kulturelle Skolesekken og Rikskonsertene. Alle skoler i hele landet, både grunnskole og videregående får tilbudet om konserter, forestillinger eller workshops. Mange skoler har besøk flere ganger i året. Tilbudet er svært variert. Når det for eksempel kommer til musikk, får elevene oppleve alt i fra klassisk til jazz, folkemusikk, rock, world music og pop. Det er viktig for DKS og Rikskonsertene at produksjonene har stor variasjon, og at elevene får oppleve noe de nødvendigvis ikke har hørt eller sett mange ganger på radio,



Students in a school waiting for Ingunn and Kathrine

tv eller internett før.

En annen viktig side ved produksjonene er at konsertene og forestillingene gir rom for interaktivitet med elevene. Det skal være et møte mellom mennesker og musikk. Et møte mellom utøver og elev, der musikken og kunsten binder dem sammen. Norske skoler, som engelske skoler, har i dag et svært smalt musikk- og kunsttilbud, noe som gjør disse opplevelsene ekstra viktige for dagens elever. Viktig for deres utvikling av opplevelse, forståelse og kjennskap til musikk og kunst.

Fascinasjonen til pianoet og musikken startet i samlingsalen på Slemdal skole, og utviklet seg til noe mye større. I høst var det min tur til å la pianofingrene trille over tangentene i samlingsaler og gymsaler på norske skoler. Fiolinisten Kathrine Hvinden Hals og jeg reiste på turné i en måned og besøkte barneskoler i Lørenskog, Rælingen og Enebakk. Turnéen var i regi av Den Kulturelle Skolesekken. Vi spilte to til tre konserter om dagen og besøkte nye skoler hver dag.

Vår produksjon Venner er laget for første til syvende klasse og er en konsert for fiolin og piano, utviklet i samarbeid med produsent Einar Torbjørnsen. Konserten Venner inneholder ulik klassisk musikk, alt i fra Schubert til Brahms, Franck, Debussy, Gershwin og Piazzolla. Gjennom konserten deler vi historien om vårt vennskap som startet i en alder av ti år på Barratt Dues musikk institutt. Fortellingen fungerer som en rød tråd som bygger opp under musikken. Vi forteller om hvor godt det er å være to når det å være én kan være litt ensomt, spesielt som musiker. Vi forteller dem hvor viktig øving er for å kunne bli en god musiker: Vi har måttet øve før klokken seks om morgenen, på rare steder som i låver og under trær og foran folk som kommer og går. Vi deler også utfordringene ved det å både skulle være lekekamerater og kollegaer. Vi stiller spørsmål til barna underveis og snakker med dem. Slik blir de også en viktig del av både fortellingen og konserten.

Til våren skal vi ut på turné igjen, denne gangen i Bærum. Som musiker opplever jeg disse konsertene som veldig givende. Barn er ærlige og åpne mennesker, noe som gjør dem mottakelige for mer enn vi kanskje forestiller oss. Det viktige for oss som musikere er at barna får en opplevelse. Opplevelsen kommer først, deretter kommer læring og inspirasjon. Takk til Den Kulturelle Skolesekken og til de flotte barna for at jeg får ta del i slike unike møter!

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I/We would like to join the Anglo Norse Society in London and enclose the subscription Annual Rates from 1st Jan.

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Anglo-Norse Society Oslo, - Spring Programme

Tuesday MARCH 7th at Frogner Kirkestue 7pm.

The season starts with a talk about Richard Herrmann M.B.E., the famous London correspondent and popular author of many British related books. Senior Lecturer in British history and politics Øivind Bratberg will interview Anders Heger the well-known author and publisher for Cappelen about Richard Herrmann.

Tuesday MARCH 14th at Frogner Kirkestue 7pm

AGM -to be followed by a talk on the history of the English language. Our speaker will be Kristin Bech who is Associate Professor in the Dept.of Literature, Area studies and European languages at the University of Oslo. Kristin published a book on the subject last year: "Fra englisc til English- et språk blir til ". The author and journalist Karsten Alnæs wrote in the newspaper *Dag og Tid* - 'an entertaining and important book about English.'

Tuesday APRIL 25th at *NB 5 pm * Meeting point at Grønland T-bane station

A guided tour around the old city (Gamlebyen) learning new things about the history of this special part of Oslo. The popular Oslo Guide, Iori Roberts will be showing us around . A fee of kr.50,- per.person will be collected prior to the start of the tour. Please bring the exact amount.

Tuesday MAY 23rd at Frogner Kirkestue 7 pm

Eirik Brazier, Norwegian/ English historian, author, public speaker and advisor to The Norwegian Ministry of Defence. Eirik will give an illustrated talk on his book *Gale Britiske Generaler* - Mad British Generals.

Tuesday JUNE 13th at Vigelands Museum *5 pm (NB)

The Norwegian Sculpture Biennial 2017 in collaboration with the Vigeland Museum will be exhibiting over 35 Norwegian works chosen from 440 applicants. A guided tour around the exhibition has been arranged for us. A cover charge of kr.60,- per.person will be collected prior to the tour (exact amount please). Afterwards we will have our annual summer get together with the traditional sparkling wine & strawberries (free of charge), which will take place at a suitable location either in the museum area or across the street in Frogner Park. Please note- 5 pm



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