



# **INTERNATIONAL FORUM**

**OSLO, NORWAY**

**January  
NEWSLETTER  
01/2021**

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**Number 461**



## INTERNATIONAL FORUM

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### Special Events

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### Activities

Gunnel Anita Solheim

### Forum Diary

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Page</i>
February 1	Monthly Meeting: A life in Photography	18:45	4

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### LAST MINUTE UNAVOIDABLE CANCELLATION

To avoid unnecessary delays at events due to waiting for members who do not turn up, please telephone the contact person directly. No-shows will be charged.



## From the President



Dear Members,

We may be fooling ourselves, but humankind has a tendency to regard every new year as a new beginning. This year, more so than ever. Globally, there is hope that after the painful pandemic, life will bloom to a new start.

A ship in harbour is safe. But, as they say, that's not what ships are built for. Human beings are safe at home. But that's not what humans are created for. People have a 'passion for roaming,' said Baudelaire. As soon as it is safe, human beings venture out, surviving and socialising, labouring and lazing, intriguing and inventing. The constant striving to improve the human condition is one of the many struggles that has contributed to the history of civilisation. Perhaps this explains humankind's epic 'journey of optimism', progressing from isolated caves to interactive cities.

Huge global threats lie ahead regarding political stability, economic viability, health safety, social cohesion and climate change. Hopefully, humans are resilient and inventive enough to tackle these challenges. As we enter 2021, a Harvard study on hope brings hope. It found that people who are hopeful are those who are engaged – with their community, work or other activities. Those who imagine a brighter future actively try to make their vision a reality. The study found youngsters who work to improve the environment are more hopeful than those who worry but are disengaged.

We are a Forum of engagement through lectures and activities that connect us and that bring the world to us; we are enjoying experiences that linger in our memories long after the day is done. The pandemic has disrupted our activities, but with vaccines and new knowledge, we begin a journey of optimism in 2021.

Happy New Year!

*Anita Pratap*

President

## *NEW MEMBER*



This month the Board is very happy to welcome:

Anne Randi Dyrseth – GM – NOR

## *COMING EVENTS*

**All events and activities will be organised in compliance with the applicable Corona restrictions.**

### **FEBRUARY MONTHLY MEETING**

**Sidsel Jakheln Semb**

A life in Photography



Forum member and photographer Sidsel Jakheln Semb was born in Bodø, where her fascination for looking at the world through a camera lens was born.

She moved to Oslo after her A-levels, and to Paris in 1961, where she spent one year, attending the Académie Julian. Afterwards, she studied two years in Munich at the Bayerische Staatslehranstalt für Photographie.

Sidsel has travelled the world with her camera, photographing the High and Mighty, as well as everyday life.

DATE/TIME: **Monday, February 01** at 18:45 (for 19:00)

*For more information, please contact IF Office.*

## ACTIVITY GROUPS AND COURSES – SPRING 2021

*All activities and courses will be organised in compliance with the applicable Corona restrictions. This means that group leaders must ensure that the rules for social distancing and other Corona restrictions are followed to the letter. Leaders may limit the number of participants for certain groups and activities.*

### **Activities:**

International Forum Activity Groups are formed when one member or a group of members get together and organise an activity. No payment is required, and the activities are open to all members depending on availability. Are you interested? See the contact information below.

If you are interested in an activity that is full, sign up anyway, as there may be cancellations. If you have problems joining an activity because it is full, please contact Gunnel Anita Solheim, as we might consider forming new groups.

*For more information, please contact IF Office.*

## ACTIVITY GROUPS

### **The Norwegian Conversation Group** (norsk samtalegruppe).

Because of the pandemic, there are no Norwegian Conversation gatherings for the time being.

This is a group of twenty ladies from India, Colombia, Indonesia, Russia, Peru, Germany, Canada, China, Taiwan, Hungary and Norway. We meet once a month in each other's homes. The intention of the group is to practise speaking Norwegian in an informal setting and to share experiences and interests in our daily life. We have all levels of proficiency.

There is no homework, since the main point is to come together and have fun. The hostess decides if she wants to serve a light lunch or just coffee and biscuits (or cake) after the practice session. We usually meet on Fridays at 11:00. You are very welcome to join us!

*For more information, please contact IF Office.*

## **DRAMA READING GROUP**

The drama readings are held once a month in a member's home. The plays chosen are both old and new. The dates for the readings are flexible and usually decided a month in advance depending on how many can attend on a certain date. A light lunch will be served between acts.

*For more information, please contact IF Office.*

## **INTERNATIONAL BOOK GROUP I**

We meet on the third Wednesday of the month in members' homes to discuss a book, usually a novel from worldwide literature, chosen by the group. The hostess serves a light lunch. The Group has not been meeting recently because of the Corona restrictions.

Our reading list for spring 2021:

*Shadowplay* by Joseph O'Connor.

*Breasts and Eggs* by Mieko Kawakami

*The Enigma of Arrival* by V.S. Naipaul

*Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens

*For more information, please contact IF Office.*

## **INTERNATIONAL BOOK CLUB II**

The same objectives as those of the International Book Club I. The gatherings take place once a month and now we meet on Zoom. Heidi Høivik is the Zoom organiser.

*For more information, please contact IF Office.*

## **COOKING GROUP I**

Cooking Group 1 has been up and running for many years, I have notes dating from 1996. Some ladies have been in the group since then. We are an international group, so there are always some leaving and new ones joining us. As we rotate between each other's private homes, there will be a limit to how many members can join at any given time.

Despite covid-19 we have been able to meet a few times. Towards the end of the spring season, we enjoyed lunch at Frognerseteren and to wish the ladies a Merry Christmas we treated ourselves to a three-course lunch at Værtshuset, Bærums Verk. We are looking forward to a happy new cooking year!

*For more information, please contact IF Office.*



## COOKING GROUP II

Cooking Group II is a smaller group of maximum eight persons. We meet once a month, preferably on a Wednesday, at 13:30. Meetings are held at the home of one of the participants on a rotation basis. The hostess decides on the menu and buys the ingredients and beverages, and the cost of the ingredients is shared between the participants.

With regard to the next cooking session, we will wait for the authorities' recommendations before deciding upon a date. We will keep you informed.

*For more information, please contact IF Office.*

## PHOTO GROUP



*Fornebu Senter Photo : Elizabeth Groth Kolby*

This is a group for amateur photographers. No special qualifications are required, just an interest in learning about digital photography. We organise 6-8 workshops annually. For the time being, we have the workshops online, on Zoom.

In October, we arranged our first 'Photo Safari' at the Fornebu Senter. The photos we took, were then discussed at a Zoom meeting.

Creating Greeting Cards in Word  
Folded or not folded, as you like it. Be creative!  
Use your own photos to evoke fond memories.



24-25/12 2020



In November and December, we had Zoom meetings to explore how to make Christmas cards using our own pictures.

In January, we will arrange a new 'Photo Safari' to Fornebu, this time focusing on modern architecture.

*For more information, please contact IF Office.*

## WALKING GROUP

Kerstin Pettersen will send an e-mail to the group members and inform them of the first walk of spring 2021. If it isn't too slippery there might be a couple of walks during the winter, if not, the walks will start when spring comes.

Walking is great exercise and fun for those who like the outdoors. If you are interested, please send Kerstin your mobile number and email address.

*For more information, please contact IF Office.*

## **MONDAY DUPLICATE BRIDGE**

Ris Church is closed due to the pandemic, so we have decided to put the Monday Duplicate Bridge on hold until further notice.

*For more information, please contact IF Office.*

## **MONTHLY WEDNESDAY BRIDGE GROUP**

We generally meet on the second or third Wednesday of the month, depending on the holidays. We are usually 8 or 12 players, on occasion 16. We play duplicate bridge and enjoy a light lunch afterwards.

With regard to the next meeting, we will wait for the authorities' recommendations before deciding upon a date.

*For more information, please contact IF Office.*

## **SWIMMING AT LYSEBU**

**The Danish Cultural Centre at Voksenkollen is for the time being closed due to the pandemic.**

When the Danish Cultural Centre reopens, members of the International Forum will be most welcome to swim at Lysebu and only have to show their IF membership card at the front desk. The fee is NOK 100.- per visit. This is not a group activity as such, but IF members can use this great, newly renovated facility as a group or individually. Any questions?

*For more information, please contact IF Office.*

## **COURSES**

The courses are activities for which the participants pay a fee to the teacher.

### **ENGLISH**

Individual courses tailored to your needs. Refresher courses for conversation – all *For more information, please contact IF Office.*

# TRIBUTE TO KARIN SKOGLUND

**‘Make the most of it’**

Karin Skoglund

The life and times of Karin Skoglund, who is honoured by the Board for her long and dedicated service to International Forum.



Karin Skoglund with Inger Malterud

‘I was born in Berlin in 1928.’

That sounds like Marlene Dietrich, but it’s our own dear Karin Skoglund. Karin is nearly 93, but continues to help the Forum with a range of office-related matters. Her legs are not so dependable any longer, but her mind, memory and eyes are as sharp as ever. She never ever misses a deadline; on the contrary, she is always ahead of time... as she has been, all her life.

Karin’s mother was Danish and her father was Northern German of Danish descent. The family surname is Asmussen. Karin was 11 years old when the Second World War began. She remembers aerial bombardments, burning vehicles, and ammunition exploding on the streets. ‘I cannot think of one positive thing happening to us,’ she says. After the constant bombing in the final years of the war, her mother decided to leave everything behind and join her father in Schleswig-Holstein. He was working there as an engineer. He was lucky not to be drafted.

‘The war ended, but everything was chaotic. There was no prospect of or means for an education’, remembers Karin. By the time she could continue school and take her last A-levels, she had turned 18. ‘Thereafter, I held several different jobs: you had to take what was offered to you.’ Eventually, she decided to go to Denmark and look for opportunities there. Whilst working in Copenhagen, she went to evening school and studied business correspondence.



Destiny brought her to Norway in 1956. She met her husband-to-be, whom she married in 1958, and then settled down in Oslo. She landed a job at Sydvaranger, a mining company, which exported iron ore to Germany.

‘I love cars,’ Karin admits. Not surprisingly, she got hired by Toyota, for which she worked as a bookkeeper until she retired.



‘I love cars!’

Karin met the late June Johnsen, who was a member, and who told her about International Forum. Karin joined IF in 1987. Around that time, the legendary Inger Malterud was doing all the work in the office, together with Gerd Berg-Jensen. When Inger decided to step down, IF needed an auditor, and Karin graciously stepped in and remained the auditor until 2018, when Anne-Lise Fasteland took on the bookkeeping responsibilities and Verena Krienke became the auditor.

‘The IF means a lot to me. Forum puts you in contact with many exciting ladies, and lets you learn about many interesting topics by knowledgeable people. You learn of things going on in this world. I love it and miss it, but I no longer have full control of my legs; however, my mind and head are still in top shape,’ says Karin.



Elizabeth Bøhn, Karin and Mina Strand at an IF Christmas party

The Board presented Karin with a special Pointsettia in recognition of her enduring commitment to IF. Originally, the Board had planned to honour Karin at the AGM in June 2020, which – because of the circumstances – was held electronically. On behalf of the Board, Patricia Blackwell delivered the Christmas flower in December.



Greeting visitors at IF's 2010 UN Event with Hiroko Kimura

Blessed with a sharp mind and plenty of time, Karin has begun an exciting and absorbing project. She has resumed her mother's work to build a family tree. 'I have a lot of fun with it, discovering what my ancestors did and how they must have lived. My biggest surprise was the line of my father's mother. About the year 1100, I came upon figures such as Kings and Queens and Knights from the Northern countries, thereafter spreading down to Germany. Because, of course, these people had to marry someone of their own rank and status.

I am stunned, I never knew that there were people like that in my family. Conclusion: Heritage study is really interesting and surprising. But you must be patient and set off a lot of time to find all these people. It is quite satisfying if you have the time. I do not think I will have to take up any other project. Many genealogical lines remain for me to pursue.'

Karin considers herself blessed because, she says, 'I happen to be very interested in a lot of things.' She still takes on central IF office tasks in her characteristic timely and diligent fashion. She still does some bookkeeping for a friend. She is optimistic about the future. Says she 'We can start vaccinating now, so there is hope. You have to make the most of it. After all, you have only one life to live.'

Anita Pratap



# IMPRESSIONS OF NORWAY

## *Norway Through My Window*

**By H.E. Ambassador to Norway from Latvia, Judite Dobeles**

I would like to share with you the changing colours, patterns and moods of Nature in the Fjord of Oslo during the Time of Corona, captured from my window.



*Coming Home*



*Curtain*





*The Storm*



*Burning Sky*

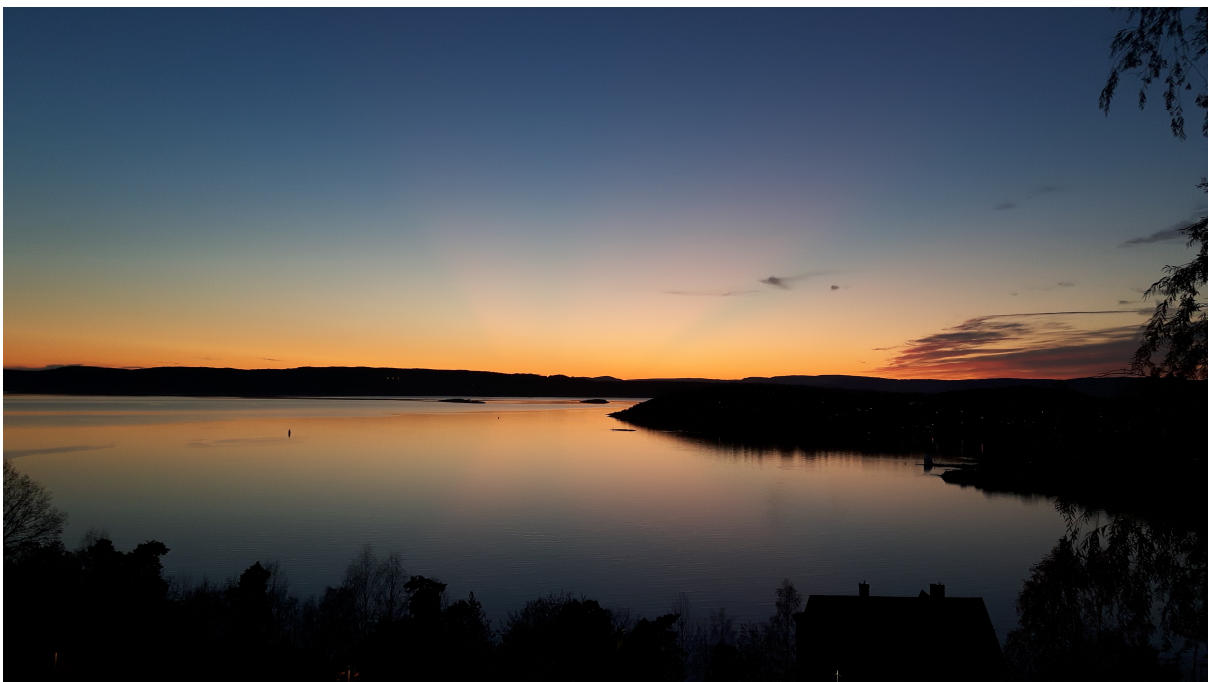




*Smoking Trolls*

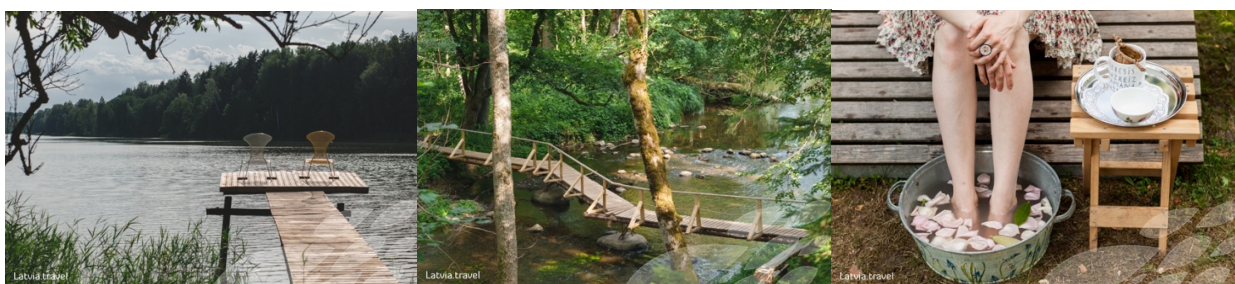


*The Regatta*



*Evening Mood*

## TWO NATIONS – THE SAME LOVE OF NATURE



As Ambassador of Latvia to Norway, I am delighted to reflect on a shared passion between Latvians and Norwegians: love for nature. Latvians and Norwegians are humble before the great outdoors. With every breath of fresh air, we look to be one with the earth and skies. We enjoy the long days and white nights of our summers and appreciate the mystique of the winter darkness. Our children are brought up to respect and care for a green, clean and safe environment.

There are many different ways to enjoy nature. You can climb the highest mountains like a Norwegian, looking for inspiration and strength generation after generation. It is a physical and mental challenge: in solitude one can reflect on the complicated relations between human and nature. The monumentality of the mountains and depth of the valleys make you think about eternity and your place in time. It makes you respect the power of nature. Or... reach for the horizon like a Latvian, filling your lungs with the scent of pine mixed with the salty air of the Baltic Sea.

Like a Latvian you can also take off your shoes and enjoy visiting the ‘Barefoot Paths’, laid with different materials and texture such as stones, round or sharp, cones, fine sand or clay, peat, reeds and running water nearby. Difficult surfaces, but magic sensations!



<https://www.latvia.travel/en/sight/valguma-world>

Photo by: Kristīne Neimane Barefoot Path

When you truly need a feast for your soul and your body, experience ‘The Tree Opera’, a perfect union of sound, light and nature. This work of art is a mystery of the forest, a deeply symbiotic system in which trees communicate among themselves and with other species. The combination invites a reflection on the complex interdependence of humans and nature. A relationship I hope to marvel upon together with you in 2021!



## *A R O U N D   O S L O*

### **A walk around Stovner Tower**

The Tower is an observation tower formed as an elevated footpath among the treetops at Stovner, in the northeastern part of the city. Stovner Tower is open to the public around the clock, and entry is free. Great for a Sunday excursion!



The tower is located at Fossumberget just behind Stovner Shopping Centre. To get there, follow the paths from the shopping centre, or walk along Karl Fossums vei or Olaus Fjørtofts vei. The closest metro station is Stovner, located approximately 600 m from the tower and 25 minutes from the city centre with T-bane 5. For more information in English, go to <http://stovnertarnet.no/home>.





## INTERNATIONAL FORUM

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The Editor and the Editorial Team reserve the right to edit ***all*** material.

Date: January 14, 2021