



# INTERNATIONAL FORUM OSLO

## NEWSLETTER

May 2023  
Issue No. 485

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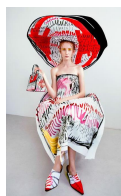
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## **INTERNATIONAL FORUM**

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If you wish to become a member of International Forum, please contact us by email.



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## DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING ARTICLES

For the **June Newsletter** is **May 16**. Please send your contribution to Elizabeth S. Rasmussen by email and to [int.forum@online.no](mailto:int.forum@online.no). The Editor and the Editorial Team reserve the right to edit *all* material.



### *From the President*

Sitting kills. Too much sitting increases the risk of premature death by 19%. Loneliness kills. It's as bad as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. Sugar kills. It damages your heart, liver, kidney and organs that you didn't even know you had. So, what gives life? Fresh air, good sleep, healthy diet, exercise? But too much sitting kills even if you exercise.

Amidst all this conflicting information, how does one go about the journey of living? Most of us are blessed with freedom of choice. But sometimes, it is not clear what to choose.

When in doubt, choose friends. All scientific research shows that good friendships help you live longer. Friends are those you can call for help, who wait outside while you undergo surgery, with whom you can laugh, cry, sulk and talk about anything under the sun. Research also shows that the ideal number of friends is three or four. Facebook friends don't count.

It's well-known that people live longer in close-knit communities. Dr. Nir Barzilai was the first to discover the 'longevity gene' in humans. He pioneered research on ageing at New York's Albert Einstein College of Medicine. He says that most people aren't blessed with this gene. So, his advice is – have good habits and be social.

International Forum is an active community of diverse, widely travelled members who by birth, marriage or career are anchored in Oslo. Our outlooks and personalities differ, but we share the ideals of the Forum, of wanting to experience life in all its variety – and above all valuing friendship.

The AGM is for organizational matters. It is also the annual moment to raise a toast to Forum Friendship. Looking very much forward to seeing you there.

Best regards

*Anita Pratap*  
President



## NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

In accordance with the Statutes of the International Forum, formal notification is hereby given of the Annual General Meeting to be held this year on **Monday, June 5**.

*The AGM is only for members.*

## GRETHE FRYDENLUND AWARD 2023

### Elspeth Walseth

One of the first things that Grethe Frydenlund did after IF was formed in 1979 was to enlist Inger Malterud to set up and administer the Office. This was a masterstroke as this important and central function couldn't have been placed in more capable hands. Inger organised how the Forum was run and was very clever at finding the right person for the many tasks which needed doing. I remember going into the Office one day to be greeted by a very happy and smiling Inger, who said with great enthusiasm 'I've found just the person to be our new Editor! She's a lovely Scottish lady and she'll be perfect!' This lovely Scottish lady was Elspeth, who by then had already been on the Music Committee for seven years and as a result was a 'dab hand' at making canapés.

Elspeth (Elizabeth Kean Fraser) Walseth was born and grew up in Ayr, South-West Scotland. Looking back, she remembers a happy early childhood with family visiting, enjoying music and singing against a background of war and family illness. Family has always been an important part of her life and even though they are spread to different countries, Elspeth does her share in arranging the family reunions often in her beloved Scotland.



*Relaxing on the terrace*

From the age of five she attended Ayr Academy, a traditional Scottish Academy founded in 1233 (as a monastery school for boys). She enjoyed all that the school offered including some excellent teachers, music, sports, and a debating society. Elspeth was rather musical, she particularly enjoyed playing the piano and singing, so that taking part in the school's annual presentation of a Gilbert and Sullivan Opera was a source of much pleasure and enjoyment.



*From a performance of Iolanthe in 1955. Elspeth is fifth from the left on the second row. (The 'shepherdess' in the front row is Moira Anderson, (OBE), who went on to be one of Scotland's most well-known singers.*

She obviously enjoyed her time at school, taking the school motto: *Respice, Prospice* ('Look backwards, Look forwards') as a motto for her own life. She



remembers that her mother constantly encouraged education and women working, something that she has tried to continue.



*Elspeth in her old brownie uniform – helping to raise money for charity*



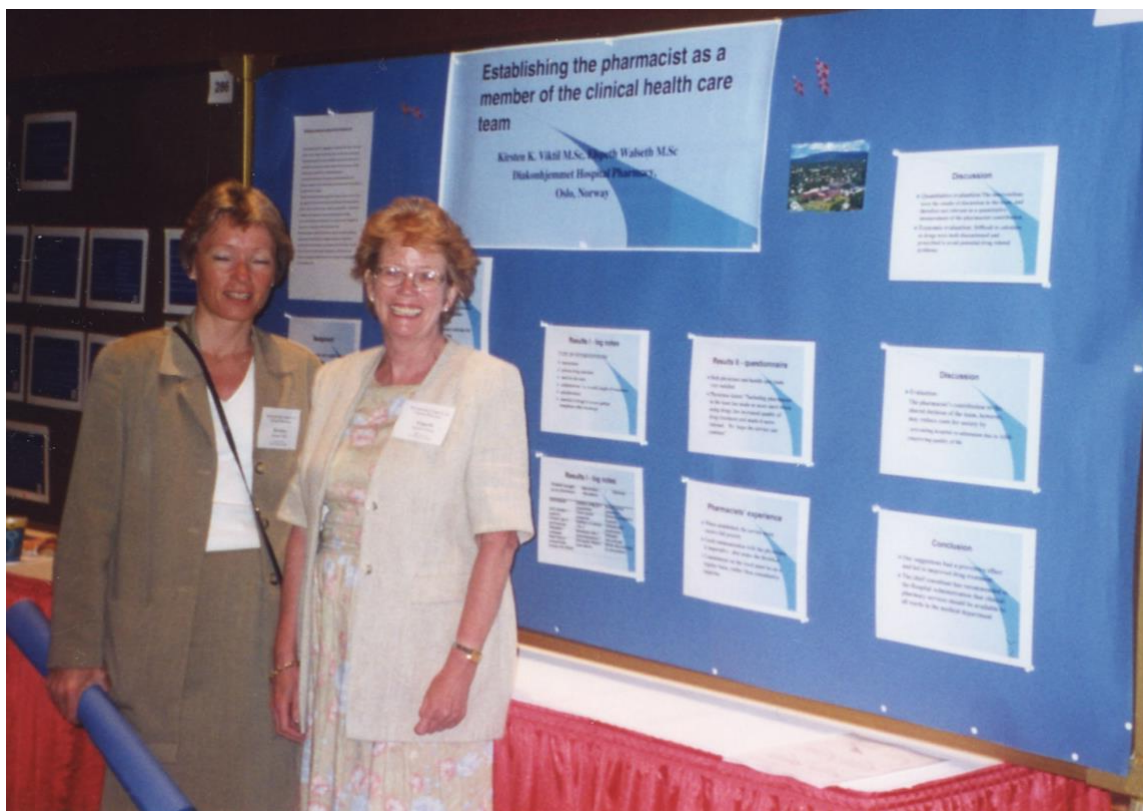
*At the top of Snøhetta*

Following school, she spent four happy years studying Pharmacy at Glasgow University. It wasn't just hard work, as being a student had its fun side too – such as enjoying a record of Bill Haley's *Rock around the Clock*, in the Women's Union, smuggled in from the U.S. in 1956! or dressing up for the students' annual Charities Day.

Elspeth was able to follow her love of music by sitting in the Gods when the Royal Opera visited Glasgow or during the Scottish National Orchestra's series of concerts and proms. Outdoor sports such as hill walking and 'attempted skiing' in Glencoe and around Aviemore were also activities to enjoy, not to mention tennis, swimming and dancing.

Then, after Elspeth met and married Ivar, they came to Norway: Sunndalsøra, to be precise, for the first six months. She continued to pursue her lifelong pleasure in walking by exploring Trollheimen and even struggled up Innerdalshorn. Then some years later, she walked to the top of Snøhetta. Due to the local dialect, she had virtually to re-learn Norwegian when they relocated to Oslo.

For the first few years in Norway, the focus was on family-life and children. Then, encouraged by Ivar, Elspeth started working, first as a hospital pharmacist at Ullevål, and then for many years (until retirement in fact) at Diakonhjemmet Hospital. As well as being a clinical pharmacist on the wards, she focused on quality assurance at the hospital and nursing homes. These were fulfilling years with good colleagues, many of whom she still keeps in touch with.



*Elspeth giving a presentation of Norwegian Clinical Pharmacy at an International Congress in Florida*

Perhaps Elspeth's love of travelling started back in 1952, when the school organised a two-weeks trip to Switzerland (in school uniform). She recalls what a wonderful experience it was to travel from the Alps to Lugano – quite a contrast to the meagre times of post-war Scotland. Now, together with Ivar, they set out to visit many different countries. First journeying by car to France, Italy and Austria, then further afield with the children. It was natural to visit family settled in California and explore that part of North America. There followed journeys to Marrakech, Greece, Bavaria, Latin America and not to mention the Far East, including Thailand and a visit to Rangoon. It was a real adventure to go ballooning in Burma, but perhaps the most exciting trip was sailing round Cape Horn and on to the Falkland Islands.





*In Burma (Myanmar)*



*The Golden Triangle*

Nowadays Elspeth and Ivar enjoy spending a month in Madeira each spring, catching up with friends and appreciating the climate, flowers, and wonderful fish and fruits – a welcome change from winter in Norway.

She says that meeting regularly with Scottish friends for a good ‘blether’ and laugh during these many, many years has been a great ballast in her life.

Elspeth has been a member of International Forum since 1989. She quickly became involved in the different aspects of Forum Life. After being a member of the Music Committee (as mentioned already), she joined the Monthly Meeting Committee and then for several years took on the work of Editor, before moving on to the Editorial Team.



*Behind a Greek urn*

For many years, she also organised the Dispatch Group, which ensured that everyone was sent the *Newsletter* on time every month. (This task is now handled digitally.) All members of the group really appreciated the delicious lunch which Elspeth invited us all to at the end of each Forum year.

It's many years since she took over the post of Secretary. Not only does she take the minutes at Executive Committee meetings and the AGM, but she also compiles the Annual Report, which in itself is no small task. Another one of those jobs which no-one notices until it isn't attended too.

Elsbeth is not the person to push herself forward, but she is very competent and almost always has a good suggestion to make if applied to. You might be surprised at how observant she is. This has led to a major revision of the Statutes almost ten years ago. Following that, the development of a set of guidelines concerning the different aspects of running International Forum. In both of these, Elsbeth played a major part.

Elsbeth is a warm and caring person with a great sense of humour, and we are lucky and very grateful that she is so generous in sharing her considerable skills. She is indeed a very worthy recipient of the Grethe Frydenlund Award.

Patricia A. Blackwell

## *FROM THE OFFICE*



### **NEW MEMBER**

This month the Board is very happy to welcome one new member.



# COMING EVENTS

## DIPLOMATIC SALON

### ‘Art, Resilience and Psychology’

at the Residence of the Ambassador of the United States to Norway

**May 4 at 12 noon**



**Ed Ruscha:** *Hollywood*



**Jane Nathanson**, wife of the American Ambassador in Norway, is a psychologist by profession and an art collector by passion. She is a licensed clinical marriage and family therapist. She also has a degree in fine arts and has held several positions in the art world in their hometown, Los Angeles.

Ms Nathanson is a member of International Forum. At this

Diplomatic Salon, Mrs. Nathanson talks on ‘Art, Resilience and Psychology,’ followed by a discussion on psychology.



**Frank Stella:** *The Symphony*

She will then guide us on a tour of their art collection in the Residence. After the tour, Mrs. Nathanson hosts a lunch.

**NB!** The Salon is fully booked.

Anita Pratap



## MAY MONTHLY MEETING

### Ms. Lisa Ann Cooper on her Work in Norway



In 1987, when Lisa Ann Cooper was 25, she met with explicit racism for the first time in her life. An incident on the apartment rental market was the beginning of a long career fighting racism and intolerance and promoting integration and equality.

Fluent in Norwegian, Lisa Cooper worked for the Norwegian Directorate of Integration and Diversity (DEI) for over 16 years. While working with the Integration and Diversity Directorate in 2006-2008, she oversaw the portfolio of diversity and integration strategy development for Norway.

Lisa is the founder and CEO of several enterprises in Norway that are focused on creating social change with an emphasis on diversity and inclusion, mentoring, arts, culture and youth. She will talk about her career in Norway and some of her projects that she established to promote diversity, counter racism and make Norway a more inclusive society.

DATE/TIME: Monday, **May 8** at 18:45 (for 19:00)

SIGN UP: To Anita Solheim, by email no later than Wednesday, **May 3**.

Guests are welcome.

For more information, see the April *Newsletter*.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### The Queen Sonja Art Stable *Craftmanship at the Royal Palace – 200 years of creations*

**May 11**



The Special Events Committee has the pleasure of inviting you to the exciting exhibition *Craftmanship at the Royal Palace – 200 years of creations* at Queen Sonja Art Stable.

The exhibition displays a selection of beautiful, handcrafted objects from the Royal Collections. It emphasises the importance of traditional crafts and explains how the objects on display were made, as well as how they are still used and cared for today.

The Art Stable was officially opened by the Queen on her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday on July 4, 2017. The opening marked the beginning of a new era for the building.

DATE/TIME: Thursday, **May 11** at 10:40 (for 11:00)

SIGN UP: To Mona Bækkelund Reinboth by email no later than **May 3**. Please sign up and pay only when you have received confirmation of your participation.

Maximum number of participants is **30**.

For more information, please see the April *Newsletter*.

## ART COMMITTEE

**Edda Gimnes: *From sketch to design***

Nitja Art Centre, Lillestrøm

**May 23**



Edda Gimnes is a Norwegian womenswear designer who graduated from the London College of Fashion in 2015. Her aim is to continue combining fashion and the arts in new and unexpected way, focusing on naïve cuts and visually striking graphic prints. She draws a lot with her non-dominant hand, which adds an element of unaffected innocence to her designs and illustrations. The core identity of her brand is naivety, playfulness, imperfection and quirkiness. She

has been featured in the *New York Times* as one of ten ‘Fresh out of Fashion School designers to watch’.

- DATE: Tuesday, **May 23** at 11:45 (for 12:00)
- SIGN UP: To Bente Brandt by email as soon as possible and no later than **May 16**. Please sign up first, then pay when you receive confirmation.
- PLACE: **Nitja Art Centre** [Nitja senter for samtidskunst], Lillestrøm
- PRICE: NOK 75.- for the guide, plus entrance at the door (NOK 20.- senior or NOK 40.- regular ticket). Make your payment **preferably by bank transfer** to the Forum account: 1600 40 36631 or by VIPPS 591747. No cash will be handled at the venue. Please **state the event and your name** in the transaction (in the KID-number box for bank payments and in the dialogue box for VIPPS).
- TRANSPORT: Train to Lillestrøm and a one-minute walk across from the station (left exit)
- LUNCH: Nitja has a small cafe, but there are other options close by.  
Maximum 20 participants.  
Guests are welcome if space is available.  
Cancellations after the deadline and no shows will be charged.  
For last-minute cancellation, please call Bente Brandt on mobile telephone.



## *R E P O R T S*

### **SPECIAL EVENTS**

Lecture on the Northern Lights at the Norwegian Space Agency

**March 21, 2023**

An enthusiastic group of 30 IF members and 5 guests assembled at the Norwegian Space Agency's office in Oslo to learn about the Northern Lights, also known as the *aurora borealis*.



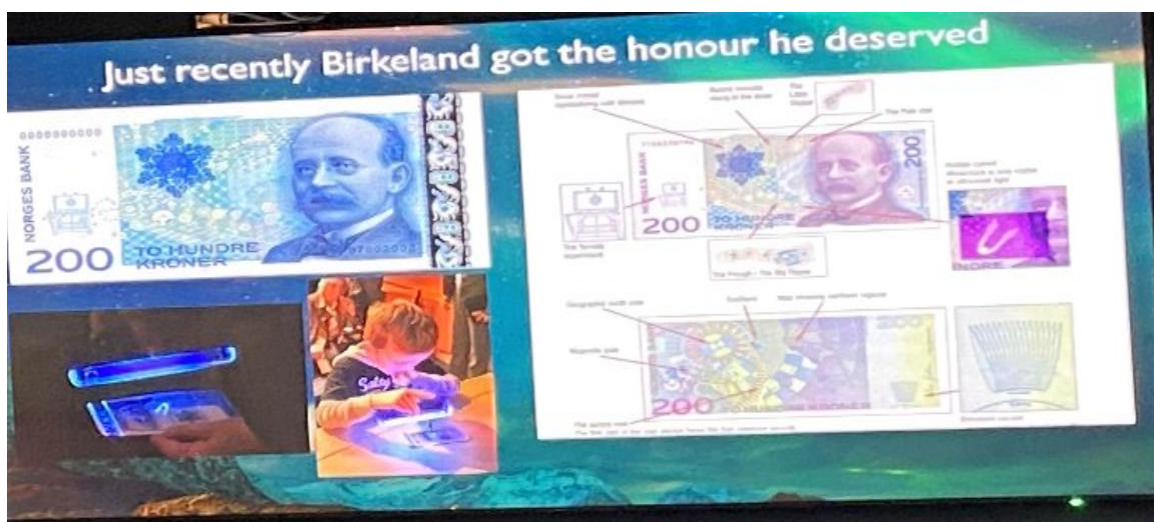
Dr Pål Brekke, Lead Space Scientist, positively confirmed his reputation as one of the world's leading experts on this subject when within a period of 45 minutes, he held a very inspiring and stimulating power-point presentation, showing a spectacular series of slides that covered a wide array of core aspects of the Northern Lights that are directly linked to the activities of the sun.

The *aurora* story starts with the sun that constantly spews out hot particles known as the Coronal Mass Injection into the atmosphere. Solar storms occur several times a day. When these are directed towards the earth, the particles are deflected by the earth's magnetic fields in which atoms collide and emit light, resulting in a dazzling dance of green, blue and white light, the night-time oval aurora that can be seen in Norway.

Kristian Birkeland (1867-1917), the first Norwegian space scientist and founder of Norsk Hydro, established the first permanent aurora observatory, proving that charged particles from the sun could ignite auroras.



He continually stressed the vital importance of science-based space exploration. In 1994, the primary motif on the Norwegian 200 kroner bank note had Birkeland's image of the oval aurora in the background. The Norwegian Central Norway Bank replaced this photo with a cod fish about five years ago!

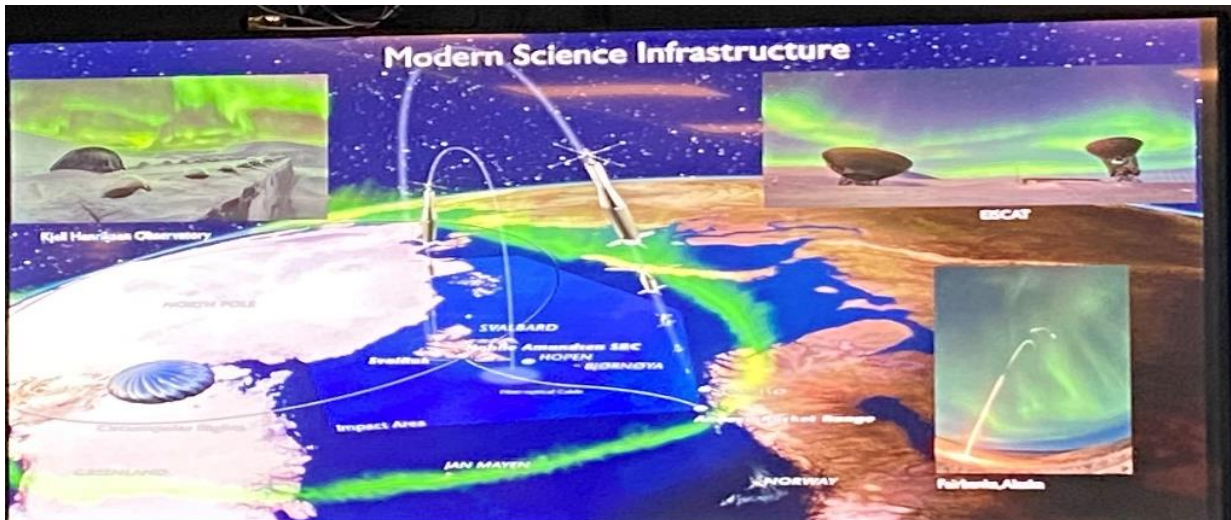


Other thematic highlights that Pål Brekke explained included the role of the Norwegian Space Agency (NOSA) in today's space industry: the strategic

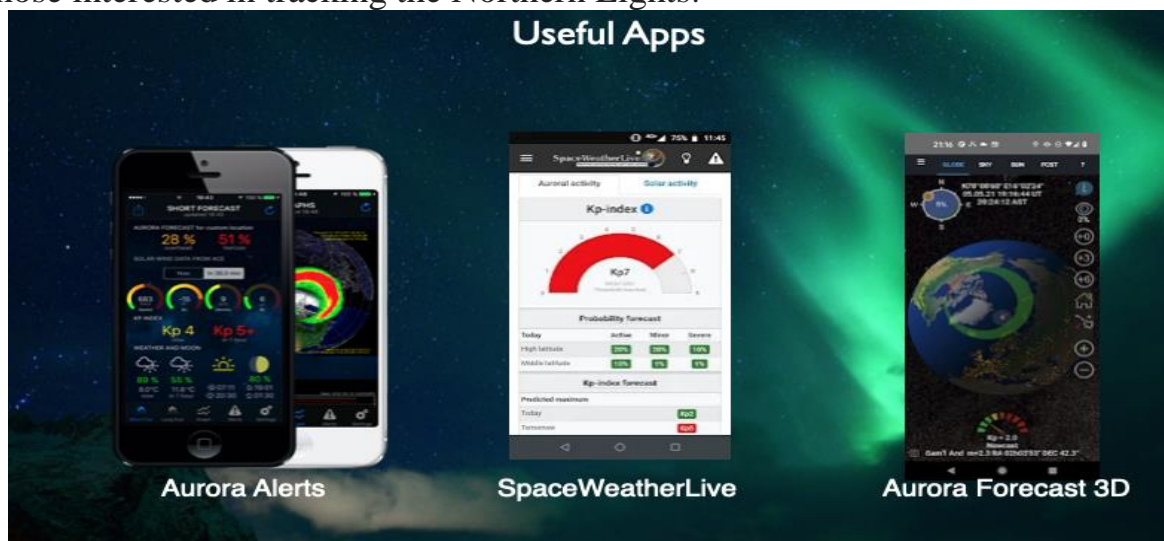


location of the Spaceport at Andøya, SvalSat (Kongsberg Svalbard Satellite Station) also called ‘the world’s umbilical cord to space’, the Arctic Satellite Broadband Mission (ASBM), and the EISCAT Svalbard Radars.

Norway’s unique strategic location in the north – near the Arctic – he convincingly explained, explains why Norway is the best place to experience the northern lights.



In conclusion, Pål Brekke talked about the various Aurora & Space Apps for those interested in tracking the Northern Lights.



His lecture triggered a very dynamic Q&A session, including several queries about where and when one can most likely see the aurora borealis.

Many thanks to the Special Events Committee for successfully arranging a very engaging meeting.

Jostein Mykletun

# *O B I T U A R Y*

**‘I Did it My Way’**

**Karin Skoglund**

15.08.1928 – 06.04.2023

*Rest in Peace Beloved Karin*



Karin Skoglund was a protector and custodian of International Forum. She watched out for the Forum, for its interests as well as its members. She was devoted, selfless and fearless in her service. For years, she had been confined to a wheelchair but that never stopped her razor-sharp brain from racing and her shrewd eyes from focusing on all that was going on. Nothing escaped her. Her legs had ‘gone on strike’, she used to tell me. But her mind, memory and eyesight were sharp. She never missed a deadline. She was ahead of her times.

After a brief illness, Karin passed away on April 6, on Maundy Thursday (Skjærtorsdag), at the age of 94. At her funeral at Grefsen Kapell, her family played her favourite song *I did it my way*. The song captures Karin’s spirit, especially the line ‘I’ve lived a life that’s full.’ She was active, always eager to work, typing away on her PC, attending to office matters, tracking memberships and payments. Determined and strong-willed, she insisted on high-quality



internet until the very end. She was the Queen of Excel. Her son Torben said ‘She enjoyed her work for International Forum. It gave her meaning.’

Karin joined the Forum in 1987 and took over book-keeping from the legendary Inger Malterud. She had good experience, having worked as Toyota’s accountant until her retirement. Former Forum Presidents remember her with affection and gratitude. Berit Lindstrøm says the ‘She was a lifesaver. She had everything in her memory.’ Karin had many Forum friends and was especially fond of Hiroko Kimura and Mina Sand.

In addition to the work she did for the Forum, Karin undertook a major task of identifying her family tree. Tracing her German grandmother’s lineage brought ‘exciting’ surprises. About the year 1100, she said, she came upon knights, kings and queens. Her emails about her discoveries read like thrillers; one could sense her excitement.

Karin’s mother was Danish. I was keen for her to attend the special screening of the film *Margrete, Queen of the North* that IF co-organized with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in March 2022. Despite assurances of full wheelchair assistance with a companion, Karin felt such outings were things of the past.

Even though she was unable to attend any of our recent events, she donated generously for all the causes, especially for the DCE’s Ukraine ambulance and our collection drive for Ukraine, which was donated to Leger Uten Grenser to support their work in the warzone. In keeping with Karin’s character, mourners were requested to donate to Leger Uten Grenser instead of bringing flowers for her funeral service. She was a true friend of those in need.



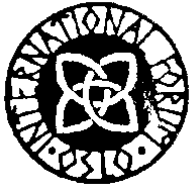
*Karin (centre) at an IF Christmas party with Elizabeth Bøhn to her right and Mina Sand to her left. Coincidentally, Karin and Elizabeth had their funeral services on the same day, April 21.*

*Photographs by Gunnel Anita Solheim*

In recognition of her loyal and dedicated service, Karin was awarded the Grete Frydenlund Award in 2020, the year the award was created. She is the first winner of our prestigious award, given in recognition of a member’s lifetime contribution to the Forum. In an article published in her

honour in the *Newsletter*, her advice was ‘You must make the most of it. After all, you have but one life to live.’ Karin certainly made the most of life. And she did it her way.

Anita Pratap



**INTERNATIONAL FORUM**

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**Dispatch:**

May 2, 2023