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'The couple' by Louise Bourgeois. Ekeberg Sculpture Park.
Photo by Sybil Richrdson

Cover illustration: 'Marilyn Monroe'. Sculpture by Richard Hudson. Ekeberg Sculpture Park. Photo by Sybil Richardson

ANGLO-NORSE REVIEW

THE ANGLO-NORSE SOCIETY - LONDON

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Editorial

Earlier this year Tim Gilbert who had edited the *Anglo-Norse Review* for 8 years resigned as editor, believing that because of his wife's ill-health he could no longer give the job the time it needed. Eight years is a long stint and Tim did a great job not only finding cheaper and better printers for the *Review* so saving the Society a considerable amount of money, but also in finding interesting material to put in it. If you look back at the contents of earlier issues you can see that he contributed many articles himself, finding and translating items on the web. We owe him a great debt of thanks and wish him and his family well.

In taking over as editor I aim to continue making the *Review* a lively and informative read for Anglo-Norwegian readers, but as I said to many who complimented me on the winter 2014-2015 issue **the *Review* is only as good as the material submitted, so please keep it coming.** I am also be interested in using photos readers have taken for the cover, especially when they link to an article in the magazine, as is the case in this issue. If I have to find too much of the material myself readers are likely to have a rather, a one-sided literary and arts-based diet as the field of Norwegian literature and culture is the one I am most familiar with and where I know possible contributors. That said, I do intend to continue with the series of translator profiles that I have started in this issue, as translators are the vital link in making Norwegian literature accessible to an English-speaking public. I also intend to start a series of 'Glimpses from the past...' vignettes of life in the past, and the first (by a former Norwegian sea captain) will appear in the next issue.

2018 will mark the centenary of the Society and the Council is already considering ways to celebrate the event, and there will be much more about this in future issues. Meanwhile if you have memories of particularly interesting past members or meetings, please send them to me.

Fortsatt god sommer!
Marie Wells (Ed.)

Online interview with The Norwegian Ambassador Mona Juul

By The Editor

Ed. To be appointed ambassador to the Court of St James is an honour and you have acknowledged that, but your job in London must seem quieter and more constrained than many you have had before, not least those in the Middle East?

MJ Yes in many ways, but it is very busy here too.

Ed. To go back bit. You came from a farming community in North Trøndelag. Do you still feel any attachment to that part of Norway?

MJ Absolutely, I am still a "trønder" at heart and the people and the landscape are still with me. I have only lost a little of my dialect, but it comes back when I am there.

Ed. You eventually went to Oslo to study Political Science and International Politics and from 1985 to 1986 you studied at the LSE, in London. You then applied, and were accepted for, training in Utenriksdepartementet – the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and on completion of that were given your first posting. According to an interview you gave to Dagbladet's Magasinet in 2002 you evidently hoped it would be somewhere in Africa but it turned out to be Egypt, where you were political attaché and Second Secretary. You were newly married to Terje Rød-Larsen and he took a year's sabbatical from FAFO (Fagbevegelsens senter for forskning) to accompany you. Somehow it is hard to imagine Terje being just a home-husband especially as you had no children at that stage. Was he already involved in the study of living conditions in Palestine and making contacts that would later be central to the peace negotiations?

MJ Not in the beginning, but he is a very active man so he got bored being 'only' a spouse. Since his institute FAFO had been conducting studies of living conditions other places, he came up with the idea of doing such a study in Gaza, after we had both visited Gaza and for the first time saw for ourselves how people were living there.

Ed. The UN website of 12 September 2006 (announcing your appointment as Chairperson of the First Committee (Disarmament and International Security) states

that from 1990 to 1992 you were Executive Officer for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and from 1990-1993 Executive Officer for the Secretariat. Where were you based then, or were doing so much commuting that it is hard to say you were based anywhere?

MJ I was based in Oslo, MFA

Ed. In 1992 all the sources say you were a member of the small Norwegian team that facilitated the secret negotiations between Israel and the PLO that eventually resulted in the Oslo Accords. Terje who was perhaps the prime mover in the negotiations was at the time the Director of FAFO which was undertaking research into the living conditions of the Palestinians in the Palestinian areas of Israel. These functioned as a platform for setting up contacts between the Israelis and the Palestinians. Could he be more of a free agent dealing with the Palestinians than you could be as a direct employee of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs?

MJ Yes, because these were secret contacts and talks and it was a precondition both by the Israelis and the Palestinians that they should not be official.

Ed.. You were present on the White House lawn on 13 September 1993 when the Oslo Agreement was signed by Bill Clinton, Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin. You played a part in bringing it about, and have said that 'it will forever be the peak of my diplomatic career'. Can you still feel that or does disappointment at the failure of the Agreement to lead anywhere outweigh the sense of achievement? Also has it ever struck you what a meteoric rise you had five years after your first posting?

MJ It is still the peak, because the Oslo-agreement was a major breakthrough, the first ever agreement between Israel and the PLO. The fact that it has not been fully implemented and there is still no Palestinian state, is not because of the agreement, but lack of political decisions to follow up the agreement. But of course we all share the disappointment. I did not at the time think of it as personal achievement, but we were incredibly proud on behalf of our Israeli and Palestinian friends whom we had got to know so well.

Ed. After the signing of the Agreement you continued working in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and also in the Norwegian Embassy in Tel Aviv from 1994 to 1997. You were then Special Adviser/Ambassador/Middle East Coordinator at the Ministry from 1997 to 2000. That seems rather a complicated title. Is it one that had to be

devised specially for you to cover the complexity of your job?

MJ No, this position was established right after the signing of the Oslo-agreement and was held by a colleague of mine before I took over in 1997. But it was designed to follow-up on the Norwegian engagement in the peace-process and also with economic assistance to the Palestinians.

Ed. In 2001 you were appointed Ambassador to both Cyprus and Israel. Is it always joint posting and did you spend any time in Cyprus?

MJ It's not a joint posting anymore. Now we are accredited to Cyprus from Athens. I tried to spend as much time as I could in Cyprus, but must admit I was kept very busy in Tel Aviv.

Ed. You have said that Israel was the most challenging posting in many ways, but also the most interesting place to be an Ambassador, and you've also said it is the best training ground for a diplomat. Why?

MJ Because you are living in a conflict zone, and need to balance what you say and do in order not to fall out with either side. Israel in a unique country with an unique history and you have to take that into account.

Ed. You arrived there with your twin children. That must certainly have added to the challenge? How did you cope?

MJ It was quite demanding, but I managed with help from very good colleagues at the Embassy. I am a strong believer in teamwork, and some help at home. And you have to prioritize. I probably dropped out of quite a few functions among my ambassadorial colleagues in order to be with my kids.

Ed. You were Ambassador to Israel until 2004, you then moved to New York as Norway's Deputy Ambassador at the United Nations where you stayed for 5 years. In January 2005, your husband became President of the International Peace institute. Did this mean that more or less for the first time you were both based in the same place and could have more time together as a family?

MJ During my time as Ambassador in Israel my husband was UN special

envoy to the Middle East based in Gaza and Jerusalem, so at least we were in the same region. But moving to New York made it easier.

Ed. If I have my dates correct, after your New York posting you took a well-deserved year's leave to spend more time with your children, after which you returned to Norway where you were Director General in the Department for Security Policy and the High North in Oslo from 2011-14. That must have meant mastering a very different brief from all the others you had had?

MJ Yes I had a very good year being on leave and being a mother full time.

Ed. Now you are in London and have been quoted as saying 'Norway and the UK have close cultural ties: 'for us London is the capital of arts and culture, so we are eager to promote Norway and Norwegian arts, culture and music here'. How do you hope to promote Norwegian culture, now that the post of Minister Counsellor for Culture and Communication is being discontinued when the present incumbent leaves?

MJ That will hopefully not make any difference. We will continue to promote Norway, and Norwegian arts and culture in the same professional way.

Ed. Finally women's issues have always been close to your heart. Can you say a bit about some of the areas where you have worked to promote the rights of women?

MJ I think fundamentally by doing my work properly in the different positions I have had, and for most of them I have been the first female to occupy them. I think I have shown that we are equally as good as men, in some instances even better.

Ekeberg Sculpture Park in Oslo

By Sybil Richardson

The Ekeberg Sculpture Park opened on September 26th in 2013 and has rapidly become one of Oslo's most popular attractions. The park is situated south east of Oslo city centre and lies in a thickly wooded area covering 64 acres, rich in vegetation and with magnificent trees.

The idea of creating a National Heritage park as a 'Homage to

Femininity' with female sculptures was suggested by the real estate investor and art collector Christian Ringnes in 2006. It expressed his wish to establish a Foundation, and to sponsor the construction of the park in collaboration with the municipal authorities with a personal donation of 350.000.000 Norwegian kroner, on the understanding that the sculptures and other works of art would remain in his possession.

The proposal caused an uproar among many groups such as The Nature Conservation Association, which feared that the ancient forest of Ekeberg would be destroyed. The issue became a huge media affair with demonstrations and debates.

The project consisted not only of the sculpture park, but also the restoration of the Ekeberg Cemetery and ceremonial area situated on the Ekeberg plateau, which was built by the Germans during the occupation of Norway during World War II and has a magnificent view over Oslo Fjord and the city.

The park is only 10 minutes from Oslo centre by car or tramcar and is free to the public and open all year. There is a café and restaurant on the premises, and a special area for small children.

At present there are 32 works on display, consisting of sculptures and installation art by world-renowned artists. Thus one can see Auguste Renoir's 'Venus Victrix', Auguste Rodin's 'Cariatide tombee a l'urne', Salvador Dali's 'Venus Milo aux tiroirs' (left), James Turrell's 'Ekeberg Skyspace' - an underground installation, Richard Hudson's 'Marilyn', (see cover) Louise Bourgeois's 'The Couple', and Sean Henry's 'Walking Woman', a popular piece which stands 2.70 meters high.

An estimated 80 more works of art will be added to the collection in the near future. Christian Ringnes also plans on building a gondola lift stretching from the city base up to the park.



Ekeberg Sculpture Park was given the following write up in the New York Times: *For those whose impressions of Norway are limited to gravlax, skiing and Edvard Munch, Oslo's vibrant contemporary art scene, which has been garnering an international buzz lately, will still come as some surprise. The latest chapter in the Norwegian capital's development is the ambitious new Ekeberg Sculpture Park, the passion project of Christian Ringnes, a local real estate tycoon who bought the adjacent Ekeberg Restaurant and donated tens of millions to create the park*".

Those who wish to visit the park will find more information on the website including a list over all the sculptures and installations and where they are located. You can also download the "Ekerbergparken" App from the iTunes App store or Google Play. To make direct contact ring: (47) 21421919 or mail: info@ekebergparken.com.

Visitors are guaranteed a delightful and unique experience plus a lot of surprises by being met by something new around every corner and tree, almost like being in Alice's Wonderland, although alas, there is no female White Rabbit to guide you around.

'Tusen tråder – en historiefortelling i tekstil'. Lillehammer Art Museum and Maihaugen Open Air Museum, Norway, 23 November 2013 1 June 2014

By Catherine Corbet-Milward

Kitty is a PhD student working on 'The Representation of Norwegian Women in Visual Culture around 1900' and between March and May this year she was in Norway on an Anglo-Norse Bursary doing research.

One of Mrs Gunvor Ingstad Trætteberg's most challenging responsibilities as costume historian and first female employee of Norway's Maihaugen Open Air Museum between 1917 and 1921 was to collect, catalogue and display seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth century handicrafts. A substantial proportion of these were textiles, which last year formed the first half of an extensive collaborative exhibition organised by Maihaugen and Lillehammer's Art Museum. The exhibition, *Tusen tråder - en historiefortelling i tekstil* (A Thousand Threads: A Story Told in Textiles), brought together functional objects and pieces of textile art from the near and distant past to illustrate the cultural history of textile expression in Norway. Maihaugen's

basement galleries opened the show with delicate fragments dating back to the Viking Age, Flemish-inspired tapestries and colourful garments created predominantly in Gudbrandsdalen around 1900. Further down the valley in the bustling centre of Lillehammer, the bright white spaces of the Art Museum were adorned with exceptional artwork by twenty-three Norwegian textile artists working between c. 1900 and the present day. The changing status attributed to utilitarian and aesthetically valuable textiles was aptly conveyed by block coloured woollen panels, delicately embroidered silk boleros, dainty dolls lovingly dressed in tiny outfits, ladies slippers and starched cotton pillow cases. Such smaller items, belonging predominantly to the home, soon gave way to immense wall hangings, all knotted, spun, pulled and cast with

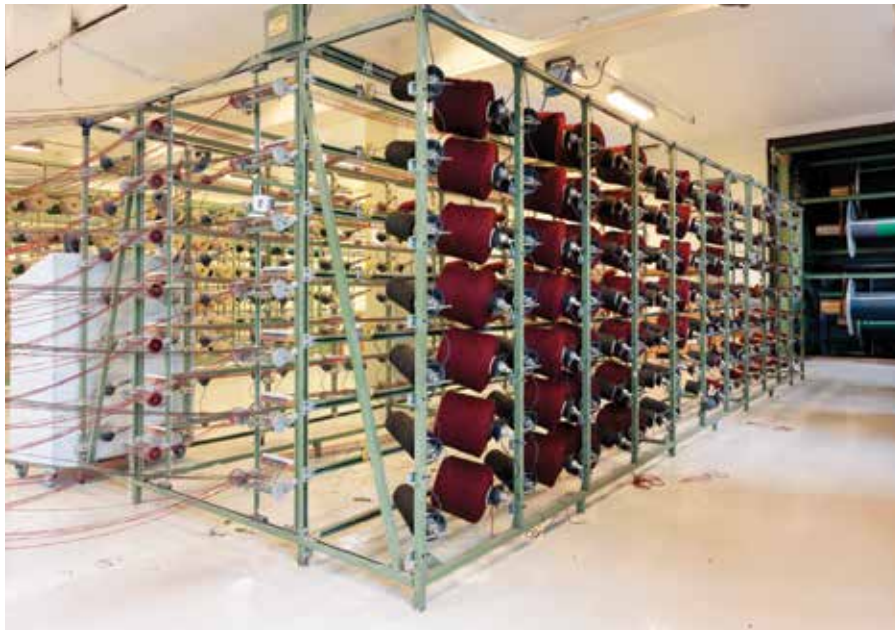


Embroidered bonnets for ladies and children, 1700-1900. Installation shot from the exhibition. Photo by the the author.

denim, silver thread or synthetic fibres. Whether displayed pieces were hand-crafted, industrially produced, stitched with tiny needle, or woven on the upright manual loom, the pursuit of using material culture to communicate political, religious or social sentiments was shown to have as much currency today as yesterday.

The impact of the nineteenth century's industrial revolution on the making and meaning of textiles was represented by three thought-provoking site-specific artworks by two contemporary artists. Franz Schmidt's

anthropological *Gudbrandsdalens Uldvarefabrik* (2013) was shown in the middle of the exhibition, a visual comment on the advances made possible by the mechanical loom on the creation and availability of household cloth for the benefit of an expanding population. Oversized photographs of Gudbrandsdalens Uldvarefabrik's gleaming machinery, one of Norway's oldest and largest manufacturers of upholstery fabric, rose high over compact glass cabinets holding company log and swatch books. The implication being that, while robotic arms have since replaced human hands in many instances, the pride invested in the making, selecting and using of textiles on a daily basis remains very much alive in a country of practicing craftsmen and craftswomen.



Gudbrandsdalens Uldvarefabrik (2013) Courtesy of the artist Franz Petter Schmidt. Photo by Fin Serck-Hanssen.

Kari Steihaug's artwork *Magasin Maihaugen* (2013) also employed a photograph of original and constructed garments (some of which had originally been used as wall insulation) to address the extent to which memory has historically been intertwined with what we wear. Kari



Kari Steihaug *Magasin Maihaugen*. Photo courtesy of the artist.

Steihaug's additional artwork, *Det rommet du sier vi ikke har* (2013), was presented alongside *Gudbrandsdalens Uldvarefabrik*, and gently reminded us that, while our own lives are shaped by mass production and wastage, we



Kari Steihaug, *Det rommet du sier vi ikke har*. Photo courtesy of the artist.

might still try to discover new ways of putting discarded clothing to good use in the way that our forebears once did. The unravelled, pastel-coloured fabric

tentacles of Steihaug's wall hanging were strewn, draped and bundled across one large white wall like the tentacles of a jellyfish: tightly constructed items that were once a jacket or jumper becoming an eloquent artwork that reached out and captured the attention of viewers in an entirely novel way.

The exhibition made much of the fact that Norwegian textiles have been as deeply associated with the history of women as they have with the history of Gudbrandsdalen. Gunvor Ingstad Trætteberg's rusty bicycle, which she used to collect textiles in the surrounding area during her research trips, was propped up at the entrance to the first half of the show, and subtly emphasised such a historic connection. As textile historians have frequently shown, in the far north of Europe women were not only traditionally accountable for the creation and care of domestic goods in an agricultural society, but since the Middle Ages, often used complicated tapestry work to assume positions of higher status. While older embroideries, bedspreads and carpets reproduced powerful Biblical motifs in double weave, it became more common during the 1800s and 1900s to imbue the woven panel with more



Frida Hansen *I rosenhaven* (In the Rose garden) 1904. Image courtesy of Lillehammer Museum

personal ideas or opinions otherwise too controversial if conveyed in pen and ink. Thus the upstairs and downstairs galleries of the Art Museum were decorated with a range of tapestry art by talented professionals. Among them, Frida Hansen, Hannah Ryggen, Else Marie Jacobsen and Brit Fuglevaag, a few of the many who embraced an ancient medium to express their hopes and fears in a modern world where women struggled to locate their sense of self. Hansen's exquisite tapestry, *I rosenhaven* (1904) was exhibited in the older part of the art gallery, with few barriers, thereby allowing the viewer to observe closely the artist's freer, less restrained approach towards the soft, delicate and volatile quality of thread. As part of the 'second women's movement' of the



Detail of *I rosenhaven*, showing open weave. Photo by the Author

1970s, Brit Fugle Brit Fuglevaag's tapestry reproducing giant female genitalia clearly demonstrated that the art of tapestry could be a means of communication, commenting as it does on the ever-pressing issue of women's sexual rights.

In this rich, sometimes humorous, and broadly appealing exhibition, a spectator with even the most rudimentary knowledge of the making and meaning of textiles was encouraged to enjoy the tale of a thousand threads without the diversion of extensive documentation. An informative leaflet in English and labels in Norwegian available in the first half provided a foundation from which one could progress and look more closely at the artworks of the latter half without the distraction of cumbersome text panels. A chronology, terminology and handout with biographical data would have been useful, but online searching can always provide answers to lingering questions about place and person. In essence, this sensuous and

rich exhibition gave a highly complicated, contentious subject the space and attention it fully deserved. If we consider textiles as a continuously changing and exciting medium for artistic expression, even the less obviously striking items become fascinatingly informative.

The Lillehammer exhibition was also the first of several exhibitions showing the resurgence of interest in material culture. From February till May this year *Nåleens øye. Samtidsbroderi* (The Needle's Eye. Contemporary Embroidery) was shown at The Museum of Decorative Arts and Design in Oslo. This extensive display focused on Norwegian and international contemporary embroidery, with context added through the exhibition of older examples of embroidery alongside the more recently made. It is clear that some living artists, such as Synnøve Øyen, Åse Ljones and Siri Ensrud find the applied and decorative arts just as effective as the fine arts when commenting on social issues, power structures and ways of looking.

June this year saw the opening of two seminal exhibitions dedicated to two of Norway's most celebrated textile artists: Frida Hansen and Hannah Ryggen and both will run till October. Hansen, who had her breakthrough in 1900 at the World Exhibition in Paris, and whose waning reputation was resurrected in the 1970s by Anniken Thue, will be given a long overdue exhibition at the Stavanger Art Museum. Meanwhile, Norway's National Gallery has dedicated spaces usually reserved for painting to the woven art of Hannah Ryggen, one of the most controversial tapestry artists of the 1930s and 1940s. As visceral and boldly visual responses to major and minor historical events, Ryggen's pieces contrast with softer, floral and somewhat cosmopolitan 'transparencies' created and patented by Hansen. Nevertheless, few can doubt that each of these women were instrumental in ensuring that textile craft continued as a personal and communal artistic narrative which continues to command ample respect in the twenty first century.

1945 – 2015. The 70th Anniversary of the Liberation of Norway from German occupation.

By Sybil Richardson

The unveiling of triple portraits of H.M. King Harald V, King Olav V and King Haakon VII took place at Akershus Fortress on March 26th this year. All three monarchs were deeply affected by the fate of Norway during the war years.



Ross Kolby talking to King Harald. Photo courtesy of Kongebloggen/tv2/Norway

The portraits bear the title 'The Liberation Kings' and portray all three monarchs at the age of 78, which is King Harald's present age. His Majesty gave his approval for the triple portrait project and stood model for the artist Ross Kolby at the Royal Palace. The portraits are now on permanent display at the Norwegian Resistance Museum in Oslo, which received the portraits as a gift from the Norwegian-owned Samlerhuset Group and Friends of the Resistance Museum..

H.M. King Harald was present at the unveiling together with Government officials, military, political and foreign embassy representatives and war veterans. The Mayor of Oslo and other dignitaries were also present. The British Embassy was represented by their Cultural attaché and The Anglo-Norse Society by its Chairman Michael Brooks and myself. The versatile artist Ross Kolby works both as a painter, author and actor. He expressed his feelings whilst working on the three portraits as:

It is indeed a very great honour for me as an artist to portray such

historically important people as the three liberation Kings of Norway, who meant so much for the country during the dark years of occupation during the war. I hope the portraits have captured my intention in creating an air of great leadership, strength and dignity which they have all shown throughout their respective reigns as Norwegian monarchs.

An excellent video of the occupation of Norway and the Royal family was shown prior to the unveiling. View on: <https://vimeo.com/123327420>

Don Bartlett –translator extraordinaire

Online interview with the Editor

Since 2000 Don Bartlett has translated 30-40 Norwegian novels, both crime, particularly Jo Nesbø and K.O. Dahl, and works of general fiction by authors including Lars Saabye Christensen, Roy Jacobsen, Per Petterson and Karl Ove Knausgaard. In addition he has translated short stories, numerous samples for publishers' promotional purposes and he has been co-translator with others of about 10 novels. If anything Don's rate of output has even increased in recent years.

Ed. Don, how do you manage such a rate of production? Surely it is not possible to do an eight hour day as a translator?

DB I used to work the hours my children were at school, in other words from 8 to 3.30 with a break in between. Now they have left home I work from around 8 to 5 with a good lunch break. The best hours for working are in the morning and afterwards I go for a run, usually to clear my head and always for the pleasure of movement after a sedentary morning and of being outdoors. After a bath and lunch my head is clearer and I am ready for more. Generally I keep evenings and the weekend clear, but in stressful periods I might add a Saturday or a Sunday.

Ed. You have said that you do 3 or 4 drafts, and that the first draft is usually too close to the source language. Do you do the second and third drafts while still working on the novel you have just translated or do you start something else and come back to re-read your translation of the first work when you can re-read without having the source language in your head?

DB I do the first drafts one after the other. It can be five drafts, depending on what it is I am translating. I tend to let some time elapse before going to the last draft; I do something else, then try to read it with fresh eyes. I might switch from a digital version to paper, work in a different room or place, anything to be able to see what I have done from a new angle.

Ed. You have also done translations with others. How did that come about?

DB The first time was when an editor couldn't choose between my sample and a colleague's sample, so we said we would co-translate. She was happy with the suggestion, and that was the start. It was a good experience and gave me a taste for it. Another time, with some Danish detective novels I had been offered, I wanted a female voice and I found a colleague who was willing to work with me. I also have an old friend who works with me – that started because there was a tight deadline and we have always worked well together. Recently I have been running mentorships for budding translators and an editor offered me a book which I thought would be good practice for us. In the end we translated the whole book.

These working relationships have all been different - the process in each case has been different - but they have all been harmonious and enriching.

Ed. You are at the moment deeply engaged in translating Knausgaard. What are the main challenges of his style?

DB You won't be surprised to hear that one challenge is the long, involved sentences. You have to avoid the temptation to dig your way out with semi-colons and you need to find a way to make the sentences flow. Sometimes this style can last pages and it requires stamina and lateral thinking.

Another challenge is, as is usual in all translation, cultural references - words like *pålegg*, *ungdomskole*, *russefest*, *russebil* or figures / personalities who are well-known in Norwegian life but not here - and the first five novels are very closely tied to growing up in Norway of course.

A useful construction in Norwegian is *det* + an adjective, such as *det myke*, which sounds easy to translate, but you can't do that until you know precisely what the meaning is, and then you decide on a suitable noun. English demands precision in such cases where Norwegian doesn't. Of course

we have enough vagueness of our own.

This is not to mention a wide range of styles, a few killer puns, jokes, poems and songs and you have enough to keep the brow furrowed. In fact, I have found translating the *My Struggle* series pretty hard work.

Ed. Are you surprised by how successful he has been in the UK, and do you think his appeal is mainly to male readers?

DB We always knew that Karl Ove's writing would divide audiences, so we weren't surprised by the initial negative reaction, the articles criticising the amount of detail in his first novel. I think I was less well prepared for the acclaim that followed, maybe particularly in the US, although I have been told that in terms of population percentage he is more popular here. What is Karl Ove's appeal? Maybe his ability to evoke stages of our lives so unerringly? Definitely his willingness to sacrifice himself in the pursuit of realism, the level of self-criticism. His writing does draw readers in. Men of a certain age are indeed attracted, but when you go to readings and interviews with Karl Ove, women are well represented. I think he strikes a chord with both sexes.

Ed. What novels have you got waiting for you to translate?

DB I am busy with *My Struggle* 5 at the moment. Afterwards I have Roy Jacobsen's latest novel (co-translation), a great Gunnar Staalesen novel, a new (for me) Jon Michelet and possibly a Jo Nesbø.

Ed. Given that you have translated so much, you must clearly enjoy the act of translating? What is it about it that you enjoy?

DB You deal with words, build characters, make dialogue flow, jump from one culture to another, tease away at the perhaps-not-quite-impossible (puns/ jokes etc), see the job from beginning to end, work from home, have the inestimable boon of the information highway, learn as you go along and you are in contact with Denmark and Norway. It is both enjoyable and challenging.



Don Bartlett. Photo taken by the editor at the London Book Fair dinner hosted by the Norwegian Ambassador at the Residence

The London Book Fair - a translator's guide

By Charlotte Barslund

The London Book Fair isn't for the fainthearted. If you're a translator and used to spending most of your days alone in front of a computer, entering the exhibition hall at Earls Court or Olympia can be daunting. It's like trying to work in a busy airport, noisy and disorienting. I admire the publishers, agents and promoters who are there all day for the whole of the book fair, and I have

no idea how they emerge with their sanity intact.

Planning your visit is essential and there will be much information available on the LBF website: www.londonbookfair.co.uk. Make sure to visit the Literary Translation Centre at the book fair, a stand which provides a hub for learning, debate and networking for anyone interested in the art and business of literary translation. The stand features a curated seminar programme and a dedicated meeting area. In 2014 all seminars at the Literary Translation Centre were filmed and are available to view on: www.londonbookfair.co.uk/en/Whats-On1/interest-area/literary-translation/. However, lots of other organisations host talks on a wide range of subjects which you might find useful. Some of these will inevitably clash, which is why you need to plan your visit.

Always visit the NORLA (Centre for Norwegian Literature Abroad) stand. Just do it. The lovely NORLA people will make you feel welcome and you will probably bump into a fellow translator happy to swap book recommendations and experiences. The Nordic countries tend to cluster their trade stands in the same area, which is very useful for translators as many of us work in more than one language, and the proximity allows us to mingle easily with representatives from all the Nordic countries.

If you want to meet with Scandinavian publishers and agents to learn about their authors and to try to convince them to hire you, email them in advance to make an appointment. However, be mindful that they come primarily to sell book rights, and most of them have back-to-back appointments every day of the book fair, so they may not have time to see you. It can be a good idea to specify that you just need fifteen minutes of their time. The international rights section isn't an area of the book fair where you can just meander around and chat to any agent or publisher you're interested in. It is strictly by appointment.

The main section of the book fair hosts stands for publishing houses from across the world. It can be fun to wander around, soak up the atmosphere and learn about new kinds of publishing you never knew existed. Or you may find it raucous and chaotic and prefer to limit your visit to specific appointments.

The undisputed highlight of the London Book Fair is the dinner held each year at the invitation of the Norwegian ambassador at their private residence. Here publishers, journalists, translators, Norla and embassy staff gather to celebrate, network and recharge after a long day of meetings. A

number of ingredients make this event so successful: the hospitality, the food, the wine and the mixture of guests. The size of the event - usually about fifty people - means it is intimate enough for longer conversations and there is the chance to mingle both before and after dinner. It's a great opportunity to meet people who might not have had time to see you during the day. Everybody you need to talk to will be at the dinner in the same room, relaxing and enjoying themselves after a hard day's work, and it can often prove to be more productive than an approach made during the day.

So, if by now you have made up your mind to go to the 2016 London Book Fair, you need to factor in a few negatives. If you don't live in London, and most translators don't, hotel accommodation for a couple of nights can easily set you back £200. You will also have travel costs and lose two or three days' earnings as you won't be at home translating. It's also fair to say that the London Book Fair is less important than it once was. In my straw poll of agents and publishers, there was a general acknowledgement that Skype, emails and PDF files mean that business is now spaced out more evenly throughout the year than was the case in earlier times when the big book fairs such as London and Frankfurt drove most sales. However, the value of putting a name to a face after email exchanges cannot be underestimated. Some Scandinavian publishers and agents say that turning up in London, year in year out, is how you convince British publishers that you are serious and that they might as well do business with you because you are never going to give up and go away. As for the translators, it's a great opportunity to meet your colleagues, go for a drink, swap war stories and tips.

And if you're lucky enough to be invited to dinner at the Norwegian Ambassador's residence, then go. The warm welcome and stimulating company will provide you with one of those evenings where being a translator is the most glamorous and delightful job in the world.

Anglo-Norse Oslo - London excursion in February 2015

By Sybil Richardson

Our Committee members were simply delighted to have received an invitation from our sister society in London to attend a concert and dinner event in London on February 4th. We unanimously agreed that it was

important for us to use this excellent opportunity to meet up with our London colleagues and members of other Anglo-Societies from Sweden, Denmark, Iceland and Finland, especially as this was the very first time our Committee had ventured over the North Sea to join in on what sounded like a very interesting event. I can assure our readers that we were not disappointed



The Drawing Room. Image courtesy of the Drapers Hall

The event took place at the sumptuous Drapers' Hall in Throgmorton Street, near to the Bank of England. Dinner was served in the room usually used as the drawing room, followed by a concert in the livery hall in the 'Drapers' Hall 2015 Concert Series, in collaboration with Trinity Laban Conservatoire and The Royal College of Music. The programme consisted of works by Beethoven, Poulenc, Prokofiev and Liszt, all masterfully performed by three very talented young female musicians: Jade Bultitude, flute. Giulia Semerano, piano and Dinara Klinton, piano.

The history of the present Hall is both long and fascinating. It was originally the home of Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex and Chief Minister to King Henry VIII up until his execution in 1540. It was purchased from the King by The Worshipful Company of Drapers in 1543. The Hall was later destroyed during the Great Fire in 1666 and was rebuilt between 1667 - 1671 by Edward Jarman, only to yet again suffer the same fate in another fire in 1772. The last alterations were made in 1898 by Sir Thomas Graham Jackson.



The Livery Hall. Image courtesy of the Drapers Hall

The Worshipful Company of Drapers, known as The Drapers Company is one of the historic 'Great Twelve Livery Companies' which have existed since 1180. Both our present Monarchs and Anglo-Norse Patrons: H.M. Queen Elizabeth II and H.M. King Harald V are members of the Drapers Company.

Drapers' Hall boasts many finely decorated rooms and glorious Victorian chandeliers. Peering through the window on a cold February evening, we could only imagine how beautiful the garden and courtyard must look during the summer months. The endearing atmosphere provides the perfect setting for banquets, parties, weddings and concerts. We were told that the Hall is often used for filming and it was interesting to learn that sequences from the film 'The King's Speech' and 'Golden Eye' had been filmed there.

Today the Company exists as a charitable, ceremonial, educational and cultural institution. Grants are awarded in the areas of education, relief of need, heritage and the arts. We can highly recommend a visit to this historical oasis, tucked away in the middle of the city should any of our members and friends be visiting London. Information and opening hours are on the internet.

To conclude we would like to thank the Chairman of ANS-London:

Sir Richard Dales and Secretary, Irene Garland for making all the necessary arrangements for this memorable trip and for giving us such a warm welcome and a comfortable stay at the KFUK Student House in Holland Park, where the Norwegian flag was proudly flying.

200 Years of The Quakers in Norway

A Brief History of the Quakers in Norway

By Judith Nilsen

There has been a close relationship between Norway and the UK for centuries. One of the less discussed areas has been religion – with the development of congregations of The Salvation Army, the Methodists, and the Religious Society of Friends in Norway, but strangely no groups of Haugianers in the UK.

In 2014 the Norwegian Quakers celebrated 200 years of continuous activity – the longest continuously existing yearly meeting in Europe, after the UK.

In the 17th century when the Quaker movement began George Fox had at least one Norwegian convert, Christopher Meidel, a minister in a Danish/Norwegian church in London. He travelled to Norway in 1702, to Skien, but was arrested and deported, though his writings continued to be distributed in Norway. He translated important Quaker texts by William Penn, William Dell and Robert Barclay. There were a few converts scattered in the country but no regular records were kept.

Norway was ruled from Denmark until 1814 and during the Napoleonic wars Norwegian sailors from the West coast were taken prisoner and held in British prisons. There they were visited by Quakers, who used the existing Danish translations, notably Robert Barclay's 'Apology' and several of the sailors were converted. On their return home to Norway, 10 of them to Stavanger, they continued in their new faith. There was an attempt to join with the followers of Hans Nielsen Hauge, but this did not succeed. There was also close contact with the Quakers in Britain which continues to this day.

This was before the Dissenter Law of 1845, so they suffered persecution because they would not pay a religious tax to support the Norwegian established church. Their form of registering births, marriages and

deaths was also not recognized, and they refused to register young men for military service. They were not many, and some gave up.

The early meetings were in Kristiania, Holmestrand, Kristiansand, and Rogaland. The strongest Quaker communities were on the west coast. At Stakland, in Tysvær, one of the earliest meeting houses is still preserved by present-day Quakers, and in Tysvær itself you will find a memorial to the painter Lars Hertevig who came from a Quaker community.

There have never been many Quakers in Norway but they have a significant influence.

In 1825 aboard the 'Restauration' they led the first emigrations from Norway to the US to seek religious freedom.

The Quakers also started the tee-total movement – Asbjørn Kloster from Rogaland was very influential, and became a well-known head of a Quaker school which had been founded by Elias Tastad. This became the largest private school in Stavanger. It is worth noting that up to 1969 it was a legal requirement that all state school teachers must be members of the official Norwegian church.

The Quakers organized collections for overseas famine relief in Russia in 1922 and for Spain after the Civil War. At the end of the Second World War they sent a relief group to Finnmark to help in the rebuilding work, and then in 1947 to Germany. They started 'Operasjon Skoleverk' – the annual day for the schools in Norway to collect for charity by sales of coffee and cakes. There is a Quaker Service office which supports peace initiatives in Africa and 13 nursery schools in Gaza.

Today there are about 165 registered Quakers, with many additional sympathisers. They have a greater influence on Norwegian society than you might expect from their numbers.

Meetings can be found in Oslo, Stavanger, Bergen, Kristiansand, Mandal, Bø in Telemark, and Smøla

Details can be found at www.kveker.org.

Quakers and the Peace Tax

By Elisabeth Chapman

Norway has had a Conscientious Objection law since 1926, but the international and military situation has radically changed since 1926, so we believe the law must too. A new law would give not only pacifists, but

all informed people the opportunity to make a difference, for all of us are financing the military establishment via tax. Wars have not delivered security and through our financial contribution, we pay for others to kill. The Quaker belief is that war must be phased out. So what have the Quakers in Norway done? In the 1980s they wrote a letter asking parliament to consider the ethical problem of being forced to pay for war, and the possibility for lawful objection. The letter was never answered. Then around 1992 a Peace and Human Rights committee was established, but being deluged with all kinds of related problems (e.g. the plight of Canadian Indians.), it was decided to concentrate on one element: a Peace Tax. The word 'tax' in Norway awakens strong negative reactions and those of us on the committee struggled to find a better title for the concern, one being Peacefund. In 2010 the Quakers found other peace organizations agreeing on the need for a new law. This wider organisation uses the current word, Fredsskattalliance, Peacetax Alliance, but we are still seeking for a better one. The new members agreed to help us arrange the 10th International Peacetax Conference which was held in Sandefjord in 2010.

In 2000 Quakers convinced a member of parliament to present a law proposition for our cause. It was brought to Parliament, and rejected, but it was the first time in Norway such a proposition was presented on the floor. Not the first worldwide. In connection with our parliamentary initiative we sought and gained personal contact with influential people, the Bishop Oslo and church organizations, the Norwegian Humanist-ethical Association, politicians nationally and on state and local levels. We were out on the streets collecting signatures, which resulted in 3 local communities supporting us by asking parliament to again put Peacetax on their agenda. We were fortunate to have coverage on the radio, letters printed.

Still, the idea has not spread widely enough. We need a much larger understanding and support from the populace, and even more, support from political parties. These two elements are essential if we are again to present the proposition to parliament. Norway could then be the first country in the world to have an Economic Conscientious Objection law. This would give people a chance to say that they want to pay for peace.

Norgesfredsfond, (not a Quaker org.) is a new organization that has decided to go ahead and establish a private peacefond. (www.norgesfredsfond.no <<http://www.norgesfredsfond.no/>>) This can spread the idea, and increase popular support. That one element, public support being

essential for convincing parliament that people want to pay for peace. The other element is to convince the political parties. Until now, we have lacked the capacity for what is necessary for that - lobbying.

Loss of another bit of Oslo's cultural history

Marie Wells

Ibsen was a creature of habit and after he returned to Norway in 1891 he was regularly to be seen walking from his flat in Arbinsgate, past the university, where he checked his fob watch against the university clock, to Grand Café where he had his own reserved place. But he was not the only person who was a regular guest there. It was also the meeting place for the Kristiania Bohème, the radical painters such as Christian Krohg, Oda Lasson (who became Oda Krohg) and Fritz Thaulow, and writers such as Gunnar Heiberg, and Sigurd Obstfelder. All are immortalized on the frieze, (below) that Per Krohg painted for the café.



On 1st September this café is to close as the company which took over its running in March has not been able to stem the tide of losses which amounted to 44 million kroner last year. Palmen, the other restaurant in Grand Hotel has also gone with a loss, but the hotel itself is still viable and is going to undergo a major modernisation and refurbishment.

The Director of the Ibsen Museum, Erik Edvardsen has said that the town will be the poorer without its Grand Café. One can but agree.

Two ways of spending the summer in Norway

Summer in the city

By Irene Garland

Those preferring Oslo for their summer holidays can now combine shopping, museums and swimming in the Oslo fjord as the newest addition to the development of Aker Brygge and Tjuvholmen is opened to the public. The beach, which is at the point where Tjuvholmen meets the fjord, is right next to the master architect Renzo Piano's Astrup Fearnley Museum. There are also sculptures by the same artist on the beach. Further in on Aker Brygge one can shop for anything from groceries to fashion and chose between a good selection of restaurants and outdoor eateries. All this a stone's throw from the City Hall and with historic Akershus Castle as a backdrop. Something for everyone, in fact.



Summer in the country

By Aud Dixon

This summer I spent a week in Norway at Sandøya near Tvedestrand in Sørlandet where my sister has a summer house. It really was just what I needed.

It is quite wonderful the way some idylls have been preserved in this industrialised and stressed world we now live in. It was like moving back in time. .

There are no cars allowed on the island, only a sort of "go cart" vehicle for post and deliveries. The island has a small resident population and certain houses cannot be sold for summer use only. This gives the island a proper community and one day on our daily walk we found that one of the residents was celebrating her birthday with a garden party and just as we were passing the local choir started up a lovely concert so we sat down by the roadside and were transported to a quiet, calm world.



Below. View from Sandøya



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We are unable to keep a large and comprehensive stock of books and, therefore, will order books not on our list. Further details on application.

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