



Dear Friends,

- **This years (mostly electronic) Christmas letter** is late.

I returned 12.12.12 from a 22 day trip to China, see: <http://www2.imm.dtu.dk/~dibj/china2012/>. Our life revolves around the family, our days here at Fredsvej 11, Kari's work, Dines' work, occasional travels and else !

- **The Trørød Family: Charlotte, Wei Wei, Camilla and Caroline:** The girls are now 16 and 12, growing up, gorgeous and very happy, also with schools, doing well. Camilla started senior high in August. They still attend the local community parade band: Camilla playing flute, Caroline trumpet. Good to listen to. This summer they all four were in China: 6 weeks away, with Charlotte there for three weeks: Beijing, Wuhan and Hong Kong. After Hong Kong Charlotte returned home (for her work) and Camilla re-joined her girlfriend Nirmala in Taipei – for a week, then Tokyo for a week. (Nirmala had been with them to China and left them i Wuhan for Taiwan.) Sunday before Christmas eve the three ladies flew off to Xiamen, south-east China where Wei Wei has been since late October: movie acting: "The Sung Family" (<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/554624/Soong-family>), playing the father of three daughters. Caroline attends special singing lessons Mondays — which means that Kari usually drives her to that school (with Charlotte "collecting" her).

We enjoy seeing the girls weekly. Friday 21.12 we had our yearly Christmas lunch in town, at the same restaurant since 1976, with the three ladies and two girlfriends of the younger ones + Dines' cousin Anne.

- **The Woodinville Family: Nikolaj, Bodil, Marianne, Katrine and Jakob:** This year we have not been in Seattle. The year also marks the first in several years where we have not seen the children nor Bodil. Nikolaj came by, three times: In January for a week, in June and in August for a few days each. Nikolaj travels the world. If his father was a traveller in his time, Nikolaj is far more so. Business, that is, visits to Microsoft Research laboratories around the world and the usual array of conferences, in the US, Europe and the far East. Bodil became a home-based mother this summer: tending to three children who, after the summer, attends three different schools, i.e., off to and home from school at three different times.

Other than this we cannot report much — other than we miss them very much.

- **Fredsvej 11:** Our daily life evolves through quiet transitions: Kari up at 6am, me some hour or two later. To compensate I go to bed early, at 7:30 pm, to read, or, mostly to listen to classical music. Kari joins me, usually at 8-9 pm. We have breakfast around 8am. Kari has then absolved her morning exercises and started on her quilting (for more, see overleaf). Then I read the newspaper, checks e-mails and starts working "seriously" (see below). I walk around the house, in the summer also into the garden. For 4-5 months we usually have breakfast, and, more often, lunch on the terrace. I read books. Kari goes shopping, or to physical training in one of the neighborhood leisure centers. After the felling of two rather large fir trees last winter we had the landscape gardeners plant quite a few more rhodendendrons and replant the north-west corner of the garden into a group of beech trees: to be kept at a low height (say 2-3 feet). And just in November we had them cut the hedges and "prune" the beech group.
- **Kari's Work:** This summer Kari ended two years of weekly Thursday courses at the Peder Lykke Centre, some 40 kms. from here, "other end of town". She had enjoyed those years, but it was tiring her a bit too much. She had a kind friend take over the course, and, it seems, all are happy. The PLC ladies came out here for a light buffet lunch and sewing, and also did some shopping for fabrics in Kari's perhaps 3000 item "boutique". Tuesdays up to 11 (other) ladies come here for 3 hours of talking and sewing. Occasionally there are customers for Kari's boutique. In-between Kari works, indefatigably, morning, noon, afternoon and evenings on one or another patchwork & quilt project.



- **[Kari's Work Continued]** The design, colour photos and sewing instructions for two of these were published in national P&Q magazines. Just the other day Kari was asked to contribute two new P&Qs for the annual Ste. Marie Aux Mines P&Q event in France in September 2013. She was very touched by this prestigious invitation and Dines very proud.
- **Dines' Work:** Dines is still trying. Trying to formulate a number of principles and techniques for describing domains of a large class of human activities for which computing support might (later) be required. The basic problem is "what can be described" and "how to then describe that"! The problem borders on epistemological, ontological and mereological issues and hence borders philosophy (of which, of course, Dines is not competent). The seminars in Urbino, Bergen, Paris and China were on these topics. Right now Dines feels ready to rewrite all the lectured material into 2–3 hopefully article-sized papers. But one is getting older and the mind less sharp and quick. Even concentration could be better. Right now Dines is toying with an example of: "what are documents", the kind of things one can create, edit, read, copy and shred, with whatever one can talk about, about documents being mathematically, but not necessarily computationally abstracted and modelled.
- **Travels:** Dines was in New York for the annual ACM Infosys Award committee meeting last week of February. The meeting took 90 mins., but ACM provided a business return SAS flight and 4 night stay at the Westin Times Square hotel. Had a delightful dinner with Karen Backus (daughter of John W. Backus, Dines "boss" for about a year and a half back in 1969–1971) and her charming husband Alan Goldberg; went to a morning rehearsal of the New York Philharmonic; and otherwise enjoyed New York. In mid March Dines was 3 full days in Urbino, mid Italy, and a day and a half in Bologna. Gave two seminars at Urbino. Late March, for two days in Genoa on the occasion of Egidio Astesiano's 70th anniversary. Kari and Dines spent a full week in Bergen, Norway, early May. Dines gave 5 lectures at the university. Late August we were four days in Paris: Dines gave a full day tutorial at the Formal Methods conference. For Dines' 75th birthday Kari and Dines went to Vienna, stayed four nights at the Radisson Blu Palais hotel on Parkring and had lunches and dinners at our dearest Beisl's: old, district restaurants, usually not too fancy: Zu Den Drei Hacken, Gmoakeller, Stopfer, Schneider-Göbel, Plachutta, Kuckuck and Reinthaler; coffees at Weimar, Hofburg, Diglas, Frauenhuber, Griensteidel, Hawelka, Museum, Dommayer, Schwarzenberg, Sperl and Tirolerhof. We wanted just a small vacation for ourselves so we had not told any of our many Viennese friends over the last 40 years. Monday we heard and saw Puccini's Madame Butterfly at the State Opera, Tuesday first act of Oscar Strauss' A Waltz Dream and then we walked 5 blocks to Schmid Hansl's beisl where we listened to Wiener lieder. We enjoyed Trzesniewski "brötchen. Early November Dines was three days in Stockholm, one day for himself, one and a half day at a workshop at the Royal Swedish Institute of Technology. And then there was the China trip: <http://www2.imm.dtu.dk/~dibj/china2012/>
- **Etcetera:** Dines enjoys reading the sermons of N.F.S. Grundtvig, Tage Schack, Otto E. Andersen and Johs. H. Christensen; Tidehverv; a number of books by C.S. Lewis: Mere Christianity, The Abolition of Man, and others, detective stories, novels by Mario Vargas Llosa, Anjall Joseph's Saraswati Park, Amitav Ghosh's The River of Smoke, Edmund de Waal's The Hare with Amber Eyes, etc., etc. Dines's "trip" to China — as do his PhD lectures around Europe — give him what his Technical University cannot give him: an opportunity to lecture, for several days, to bright young students (etcetera, etcetera). Old men seem to crave some form of "recognition". The China trip was really a boost to his ego: at Peking University, in Macau, at the APSEC Conference in Hong Kong and at ECNU in Shanghai Dines met many colleagues from 50 years, and many who had been at UNU-IIST at one time or another. Especially Dines enjoyed delivering the banquet speech at the UNU-IIST event (<http://www2.imm.dtu.dk/~dibj/china2012/node4.html#SECTION00472100000000000000>).
- We wish you a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year: *KARI &*