

WFWP Norway Holds Delightful Meet and Greet in Oslo

Mitty Tohma and Britta Houston
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Day One: Dinner with friends from Initiative of Change

Immersing ourselves in the heartwarming stories and experiences shared by 97 year old Jens and his daughter Camilla at their Initiative of Change center in the heart of Oslo, Norway was truly a soul nourishing experience.

The delightful meal lovingly prepared by Camilla added a special touch to our gathering. Jens' remarkable journey, inspired by his two uncles who encouraged him to visit the Initiative of Change in the USA, led him to rediscover hope and purpose, deeply touching all of us. His tales of missionary work in Japan, meeting his beloved wife Clair, and facing life's trials with unwavering resilience resonated with us on a profound level.



As we shared laughter and reflections, the barriers between us melted away, revealing a profound sense of unity and shared humanity. In this space of openness and understanding, we embraced the transformative power of storytelling to unite hearts and minds, nurturing a sense of belonging and harmony among us.

Britta, Vigdis, and Mitty also shared their own inspiring journeys, which were met with heartfelt appreciation by all. Together, we discovered that what unites us is far greater than what divides us,

instilling in us a renewed sense of compassion, empathy, and hope for a brighter future.

Day Two: Oslo fjord and the Nobel Peace Center

As the morning sun's warmth touched Britta, Vigdis, Karin, and Mitty, we set on a journey of walking along the beautiful fjord. Admiring the quaint houses and bustling fishermen, we paused to capture precious memories in photos. A pit stop at Vigdis's favorite farmhouse coffee shop offered a cosy break for coffee and cake.

Excitement filled us as we boarded the ferry to Oslo, crossing the majestic fjord towards the harbor. Upon arriving near the iconic Nobel Peace Centre, we were deeply moved by the legacy of peace advocates and compassionate souls who dedicated their lives to furthering peace. Postcards honoring Nobel Peace Prize laureates adorned the walls, showcasing their unwavering commitment to a better world.

Drawing inspiration from the stories of courageous individuals spreading love and service, we felt hopeful for a brighter future. Their acts of kindness serve as a guiding light for all striving to make a positive impact, while reflecting on the remarkable achievements of peace-builder Mother Moon, who has also dedicated her life to love and service for lasting peace.



Day Three: Gathering at local restaurant "Sætre Gård"

From widespread parts of the Oslo area, 14 women and a baby met up at beautiful "Sætre Gård" for a special meet-and-greet gathering. After welcoming remarks from the host Vigdis Parkins, WFWP-Europe President Mitty Tohma gave a speech. She took us back to the historical legacy of WFWP and the remarkable contribution of Japanese volunteers that for years poured out their work and service in foreign countries. The investment of these early members made it possible for WFWP to only a few years after the founding in 1992, be granted the ECOSOC status as a NGO and has ever since been able to maintain this highest level as an NGO. Mitty's speech touched the hearts of everyone present.

Vigdis continued to talk about the UN teams placed in New York, Geneva and Vienna and the benefits all the national chapters have in being part of the international work of WFWP. She also talked about various educational programs that have been developed in the area of character-dignity-peace education mentioning: "Building a world of Peace: The Woman's way" a curriculum launched in December 2023 in Europe and "Leadership of the Heart," another program used in the US. Vigdis also mentioned that we need to develop in the areas of finding funds and sponsors.

Britta Houston continued to talk about plans for 2024 and the strength of working together in collaborative efforts in the North region. Coming together across nations brings empowerment and energy but we can also learn from each other.

The art competition for children that the UK has as one of several ongoing projects got a lot of attention and will hopefully be launched later on in other countries in the region as well.

Meanwhile we enjoyed a delicious lunch and we ended the afternoon with coffee and delicious cakes, joyfully singing together in different languages.

Reported by Mitty Tohma and Britta Houston