

TELEFAX TIL: ROBERTA AND HELGE JELLINEK HILDING MANSSON
FAX NR.: 00-1-212-8744606
DATO: 09.07.1996
SIDER: 2

Dear Roberta and Helge,

Thank you for your greetings which however was a poor substitute for your absence from our grand birthday party. We were around 100 people who enjoyed the fortunate 12 hours break in the Danish summer rain.

To make room for the tent we had had to cut off some branches from my beloved trees - and above the barbecue the leaves of the chestnut tree soon got the colour of autumn especially when the children threw the remains of the barrel (Katten-af-tønden) into the fire. The menu was smoked salmon (from a friend who has a salt water fish farm at the North Sea), barbecue with grilled salmon, chicken drumsticks, sausages from the Aalborg School of Cooks and legs of our own tender lamb. After that the first strawberries with cream, coffee and Bentes home made kransekage. The favorite wine was the portuguese Vinho Verde, which Bente and I discovered during some recent visits to Portugal - a fresh sparkling wine which has not quite finished fermenting.

Unfortunately we did not even see Helge during his short visit to Gudumholm: Bente has suffered from problems with her back for quite some time (slipped disc as well as sciatica), and has not been up to seeing anybody - and I was in Latvia (Riga), which is almost my second country.

It is now somewhat better with Bente after she has found a witchdoctor (excuse me for the expression), who has exposed some trauma dating back to her childhood as well as an unfortunate mother fixation - I am sure you could have an interesting discussion about these subjects (which are far beyond my limited comprehension).

Last winter we had the most depressing weather which has also prevailed during most of the spring - well even now the temperature is only 12-14C in the day time and it is raining.

I got so fed up that I decided to do something about it. Since the weather did not react to the threat I developed my own solution: Get away from it all, from the weather, from the work which is getting rather boring, from a life run by the time manager. I found out that I secretly had a dream to set out in the great unknown without any meetings, time schedules or fixed itineraries.

Originally my idea was to buy a camper and drive all the way to Australia, as I am very fascinated by the culture of the Far East. However Bente as the more practical person in the family saw all the problems in crossing Iran, Burma and the like and suggested instead the North Americas.

And so be it.

Camilla shall soon start on her new school (Efterskole i Skals, Viborg) in 9th grade, and Anja shall start on her 7th grade in Gudumholm (unless we sell our house already this year). Next summer they need a break from the daily classes and instead learn (probably much more) from a one year trip with us in the real world.

Our plans are the following: In July 1997 we want to go to the USA, buy a 4WD-camper, and spend a year or so in the US but also Canada, Mexico and Central America.

Since you have several times invited us for a visit and the famous Helge guided tour, we thought that we might also ask you to act as our car buying agents: What is available in terms of:

A compact 4WD station Waggon/Camper, operating on diesel, with room for 4 persons to sleep, cook and wash. We have heard that a Mitsubishi Shogun with lifted roof should fit the description. The car should be rather new and in a good condition for the expected 30.000 km drive. Could you also be so kind to find out about insurance covering the countries mentioned, do we need membership of AAA or other organizations etc.

It is no rush, we are starting the planning well ahead, but I would like to get a feeling of what is possible and necessary, also in terms of money. Remember to include your commission (so we do not have to bring you any presents).

Apart from the practical assistance we particularly look forward to meeting you both on your home ground and to see your home in Vermont just as we hope to meet again Bob and Linda. Probably you will introduce us to a number of other nice people as well, whom we only know from your very interesting annual greetings.

Bente is spending a couple of holidays with her sister, the girls are on an international scout camp in Sønderborg (20.000 participants from 40 countries), and I am preparing for my next trip to the Baltic the day after tomorrow.

On behalf of everybody our warmest greetings,