

## Obituary

Gunnar Christie Wasberg, our Honourable Member of IPH and NPH, died after a long, eventful and significant life the 27th of January in his beloved Larvik. As Norwegian historian, philosopher and paper historian he was a true enrichment for everybody that made his acquaintance. At the University Library in Oslo he served as University Librarian, First Librarian and Special Reporter of the History Department. With his thesis “Defence idea and principle of sovereignty” he became Dr. Phil 1963 at the University of Uppsala.

In 1970 Wasberg came in contact with IPH, the International association of Paper Historians and with NPH, the new Nordic association of Paper Historians. From that year the history of paper and industry became a most central part of Wasbergs research. As new editor of NPH-Nytt 1986 it appears clearly from his note: “Invited by University Librarian Haakon Fiskaa 1970 I was involved in this field, and gradually I realized how unique the culture of script and its conservation are for the culture tradition.” Since then we have enjoyed the presence of Wasberg at the annual NPH meetings in Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark and all over Europe at the international IPH congresses and to listen to his papers and contributions to the discussions.

Wasbergs paper historical research and ideas are preserved for posterity in his numerous articles published in IPH- and NPH periodicals and in the IPH congress books. In connection with the first IPH Congress in Scandinavia, he wrote the following thought-provoking text in NPH-Nytt 1986/2-3 “In this very moment Denmark is opening a Scandinavian window to the world. We know how the study of paper has been a central interdisciplinary research field within all cultural scopes, technological as well as its historical development through inter alia research of watermarks. We are proud that Denmark now invites to the IPH Congress. A responsibility also rests on the other Nordic countries and we must mark our cultural unity by active participation. We know that we are dealing with a universal field of research, but also with special results in the North.”



*Photo: Ry Myrland, 2007*

Wasberg was a strong binding connection between IPH and NPH with his representation in both councils. He was appointed as Honourable Member of IPH as well as of NPH, and at the age of 84 he received the Norwegian King’s meritorious gold medal in 2007. In spite of the problem that he for the last couple of years was no longer able to participate in the meetings and congresses I know from his letters that his vivid interest and dedication for these two associations continued unchanged. Wasberg participated together with his wife in many annual meetings and congresses, because the personal contact at the meetings was so important for him. It is evident of his article “Groups of researchers as circles of quality” in NPH-Nytt 1987/1 “Quality circles are small groups where every person contributes with his knowledge to the collective result. A few groups of researchers have gone through with tasks of lasting results. The development within paper historical research has for quite a number consisted of contact between few persons. The Nordic co-operation here constitutes a quality circle within the international connexion. Every second year the congresses therefore are of so decisive importance for what in total can be reached.” Let us with gratefulness remember these wise words and pay tribute to his memory

Anna-Grethe Rischel [rischel@privat.tele.dk](mailto:rischel@privat.tele.dk)