Dear dr.ing/Ph.D. supervisor, colleague and friend.

Congratulations on your 60th birthday. I am truly sorry that I am unable to attend any of the four parts of the celebrations due to my present Western Australian address, but I send you this instead.

I was very happy to learn about the planned celebrations from JJ last year. You definitely deserve it. Your professional academic carrier can safely be compared with the greatest names in the process systems engineering or process control field. Personally, I still think about my time in your PROST control group 1990-94 as one of the best periods of my working life. All the learnings from that time has certainly come to use many times in the 21 years thereafter. Just this week my company Yara has put another model-predictive controller on a world-scale fertilizer plant on-line, namely on the ammonia plant here in Pilbara. After which we immediately broke the daily production record, and with fine tuning, yesterday’s record will not last long!

As a Ph.D. supervisor and person you are able to combine an excellent, sometimes extremely fast-working mind with a practical and hands-on mindset. I must smile at the thought that Sputnik was one of you favorite artists. And the fact that you come from Porsgrunn and have taken up orienteering as leisure time activity MUST mean that you are a sensible, down-to-earth and nice guy! Still, the two most important things for me during my studies was your availability and the team.

To be able to pop in to your office to get direct, personal and helpful comments and proposals, at any time of the day (or week) was extremely important for me and greatly appreciated. And I am sure all my academic siblings will agree to this statement.

Cheers!

As mentioned, the team is very important, too. Sigurd, you had, and have, the ability to attract talent and people with drive and passion. You were able to include more or less everyone, I do not think anyone ever felt unimportant or small in the team in the early 90’s, even though all of us certainly had periods where we struggled a lot to be as innovative, creative and efficient as we, and probably you, wanted. To attract and nurture talent and create good teams are perhaps even the most important reasons for your huge academic success?

For me your past and present colleagues Truls Gundersen/Tore Haug-Warberg with Hydro/NTNU inspired me to start a dr.ing. degree and acted as co-supervisor/co-coach whereas fellow dr.ing. students including Thor, Elling, Petter, Erik, Eva, Bernd created a very special social and positive environment during those intense years.

Sadly Erik left us already many, many years ago. Writing this reminds me of his looks, his funny comments, interesting technical discussions, trips to international conferences including AIChE meeting in San Francisco, his happy face and key contributions at various social occasions.

R.I.P.

Still this a happy occasion. I hope you will have a very nice event this weekend, where good histories will be retold, old friendships can be renewed and some new contacts can be established.

I’d like to end with a toast to Sigurd and a thank-you note to the event organizing committee led by Johannes:

To celebrate Sigurd we need

A Johannes to take our lead

An event very good,

both setting and food

So fully deserved, yes indeed

Some pretty close, on email or call

Some academics, and one not at all

All we remember,

while being PROST member

we seldom felt outside or small

Support with infinity-bound

So we all the energy found

To understand, see

to defend the degree.

So thank you and cheers all around