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From Object-Orientation to Formal Methods

Essays in Memory of Ole-Johan Dahl

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Ole-Johan Dahl

Preface

After Ole-Johan's retirement at the beginning of the new millennium, some of us had thought and talked about making a "Festschrift" in his honor. When Donald Knuth took the initiative by sending us the first contribution, the process began to roll! In early 2002 an editing group was formed, including Kristen Nygaard, who had known Ole-Johan since their student days, and with whom he had developed the Simula language. Then we invited a number of prominent researchers familiar with Ole-Johan to submit contributions for a book honoring Ole-Johan on the occasion of his 70th birthday. Invitees included several members of the IFIP 2.3 working group, a forum that Ole-Johan treasured and enjoyed participating in throughout his career. In spite of the short deadline, the response to the invitations was overwhelmingly positive.

The original idea was to complete the book rather quickly to make it a gift he could read and enjoy, because by then he had had cancer for three years, and his health was gradually deteriorating. Kristen had been regularly visiting Ole-Johan, who was in the hospital at that time, and they were working on their Turing award speech. Ole-Johan was gratified to hear about the contributions to this book, but modestly expressed the feeling that there was no special need to undertake a book project on his behalf. Peacefully accepting his destiny, Ole-Johan died on June 29, 2002. Kristen, who was 5 years older than Ole-Johan, was still very active. Quite surprisingly, he died 6 weeks later of a sudden heart attack. During this short period, Norway lost its two greatest computer scientists.

We are grateful to all who helped with the book, especially all the contributors and the anonymous referees. Credit is due to Ellef Gjelstad, who helped with the preparation of the manuscript.

University of Oslo
December 2003

Olaf Owe,
Stein Krogdahl,
Tom Lyche

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