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Business Trip into a Winter's tale

by Michael Negele

I could take advantage of the invitation to a workshop with representatives of the new European Chemicals Agency at Helsinki to visit the wonderful antiquarian bookshop of our founder member Kimmo Vålkesalmi. In spite of difficult road conditions – the severe winter had Helsinki under control that afternoon with biting cold temperatures down to -10°C – my colleague and I could quite well reach the shop on foot from the hotel. Then we had a nice conversation with Kimmo – a long-time barter partner – naturally about chess in Finland and chess books, certainly he had several thousand to view in his shop. At least I could buy three interesting items, among them this strange game collection of the meanwhile inactive GM Heikki Kallio:



— A brochure of 42 pages containing 31 (undated) games. Self published, Vaasa 2008.

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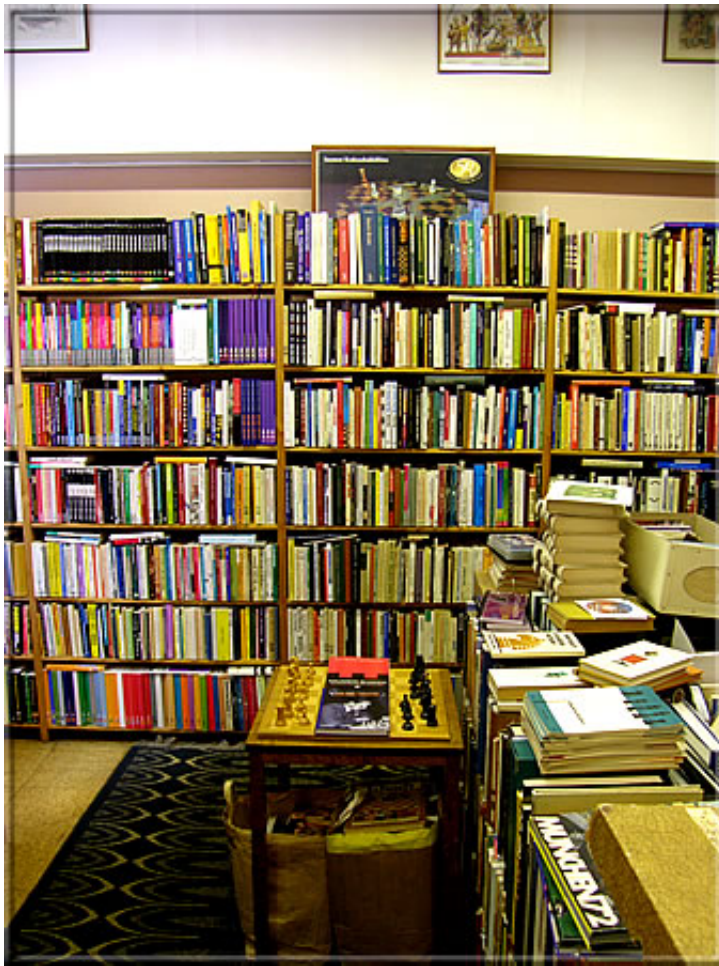
The author has switched to professional poker in the meantime. Here the link to his web site <http://www.hkallio.net/> and to the [Wikipedia page](#) (in German only).

The origin of the beautifully designed chess set for blind persons (photo below) remained unclear. However Kimmo was completely enthusiastic when I advised him of the historical importance of his youngest new acquisition – Amsterdam 1889: Emanuel Lasker's first international tournament.



The bookshop of Kimmo

Välkessalmi, Web: www.shakki.net/kimmoval/...



bookshop

The impressive chess department of the



Kimmo Välkesalmi in his area



A special chess set for blind persons



Kimmo Välkesalmi and Michael Negele

The additional photographs give a little impression of the deeply snow-covered metropolis in the North.



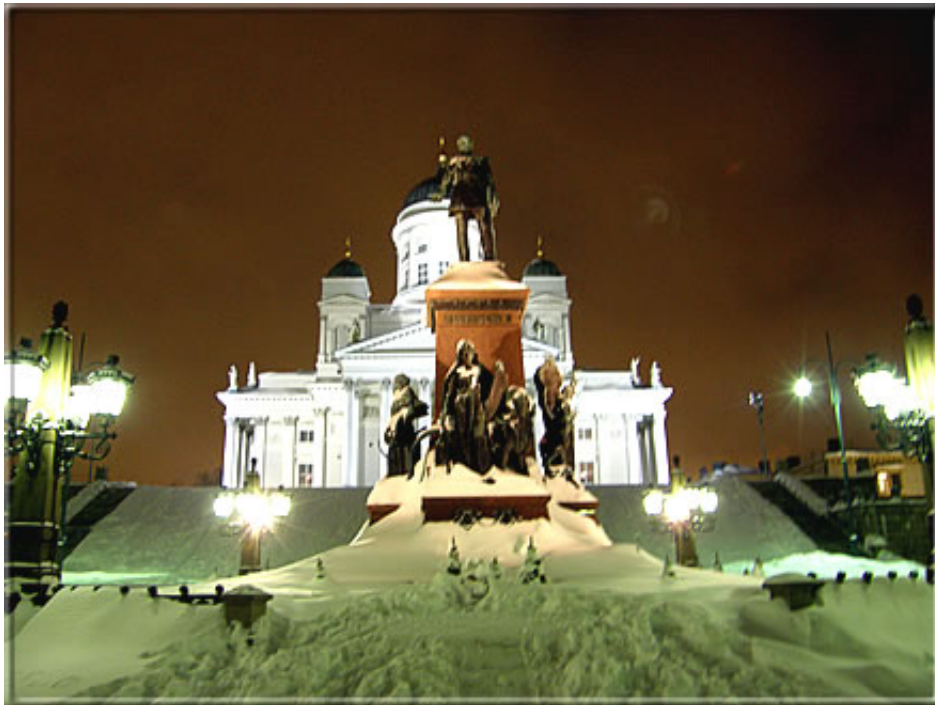
The Alexander Theatre,
directly adjacent to the hotel



Ice hockey – national
sport in Finland



Children in the "snowbox" instead of sand – that will harden.



View of the cathedral from the Senate Place – in the centre Czar Alexander II.



The Uspenski Cathedral "towers" over the harbour, the Russian influence is distinctive. It was ice-cold here.