

THE SCANDINAVIAN SCENE

Issue #3, 2015

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COVER IMAGE:

This October, PLU celebrates the 125th anniversary of the establishment of Pacific Lutheran University by the Reverend Bjug Harstad. In honor of this occasion, the cover image shows an artifact painted by a member of the Harstad Family, Fred Matzke, and recently donated to the SCC.

Please feel free to contact any of us if you have questions or suggestions! Information on how to reach specific members is available from SCC Director Elisabeth Ward at (253) 535-7349 or wardei@plu.edu. You may also email our main address scancnr@plu.edu or call during open hours to (253) 535-7532.

FROM THE PRESIDENT.♦♦♦



Linda Caspersen at Vesterheim Museum in Decorah, examining a collection plate that came from the church she attended as a

It is now the end of the first year as president and the last 10 months has literally raced by. There were many highlights for me, but the biggest one was the opportunity I had to take a trip to Vesterheim in Decorah. Driving through the countryside in the dead of winter was beautiful and Elisabeth, Ericka Michel and I were treated so kindly by all of the staff, especially Laurann Gilbertson, Vesterheim's Textile Curator. Their collection as a whole is amazing, but of course the Textile Archives were the most exciting for me.

Another highlight was the visit to PLU and the SCC from King Harald V of Norway. The opportunity to perform in the Harding Kvartett will be a lifetime memory for me. Because of a generous donation from Lynn Berg to the SCC in 1996, a wonderful story had a beginning. The history of the Harding Kvartett is now being researched by a man in Norway and will be published as a part of their history very soon. My goodness, are they curious! There will be more on that later.

On April 4th, 14 of us met in Gig Harbor for an all day treat to discuss the future of the SCC. It was very productive and set us in motion to get an updated set of bylaws. Jim Hushagen has been very instrumental

in this process. Thank you to all that participated and we look forward to more input from the Council.

Thank you to all of the volunteers!! Without all of you working together that total 1000's of volunteer hours, we would not have an organization as it exists today. Our events, banquets, lectures and numerous programs are the soul of the SCC. By bringing in a large number of people from the Community and University to the Scandinavian Cultural Center, all groups become stronger.

Lastly, I would like to thank Dr. Elisabeth Ward for all of her many hours of work. This is definitely not a 5 day a week job, but rather 24/7 much of the time. I look forward to another year. Please let us know if you are interested in serving in some capacity. This might be the best education you will ever receive in your lifetime with NO tuition costs.

På gjensyn; until we see again, Linda Caspersen

TAPESTRY PROJECT: SEPT. 16-17

Linda Caspersen has agreed to hold a two-day workshop focused on the amazing tapestry collection in the Scandinavian Cultural Center, some of which rival the best examples of their kind. We are fortunate to have these beautiful pieces in our collection. During the workshop, Linda will pull out a selection of tapestries, and explain how they were made, including the kinds of dyes and weaving techniques.

Participants will be able to get hands-on with the pieces, as they work with Linda to sew "sleeves" onto the back of the chosen pieces. This is to help facilitate displaying these tapestries in the future. Some in fact may wind up in an upcoming exhibition in the Ingram Gallery of the School of Arts and Communication. The exhibition, which will open in February 2016, will feature wall hangings from the SCC Collection. There will be more information about that in the next issue of the Scene.

If you would like to join us September 16th and 17th, the workshop will take place from noon to 3pm on both days. It is free, and coffee will be provided. We appreciate participants volunteering to help out with preparing the collection for exhibition!

SPOTLIGHT ON THE COLLECTIONS

KELMER ROE ON THE ROAD!

by *Ericka Michal*

The past year of spending time working on a research project with Dr. Elisabeth Ward, as well as working in museums in the United Kingdom and the United States has shown me a repeating truth; objects tell stories, evoking narratives and memories individual to each person. Dr. Elisabeth Ward and I received a Kelmer Roe Fellowship from the Division of Humanities to look at the objects in the Scandinavian Cultural Center collection. This was done by getting to ‘know’ the object itself, and glean any hint of its previous life before landing in the collection. We then closely examined our donor database, and identified clusters of donations from individuals and antique stories. This led us to wonder how indicative our collection actually was of a Scandinavian-American home in the Tacoma-South Puget Sound Region, so we put together an “object survey”.

For the survey, we chose 14 objects that we knew came from Norwegian, Saami, Swedish, Finnish, Danish, and Icelandic origins, then we assigned each object a number, and asked people to tell us what they were. At the Norwegian Heritage Festival at PLU in April, we let people fill out the survey in person, and we repeated that in Astoria, Oregon, at their Scan Summer Fest. I also created a Google online survey



Dr. Elisabeth Ward and Ericka Michal conducting an “object survey” at the Astoria Scandinavian Summer Fest. Photo courtesy Judy Scott.

with photos of the objects and posted it in various places. The responses online and in-person are all anonymous, giving the surveyee the opportunity to express themselves without feeling as though they were taking a graded test, and to be frank in their answers. Some of the interesting outcomes were how the same object could be interpreted different ways. For example, a round wooden object with a matching lid was interpreted by Norwegians as a tine, used for butter or milk storage, but by Finns as an item used in saunas for water storage. The point was not to figure out what was “right or wrong”, but to see the way objects evoke memories and stories that were personal for each person.

This reminded me of my internship during the Fall Semester 2014 at the Firepower Royal Artillery Museum in Woolwich, London, UK. There, I learned to slow down, look at objects, and truly engage with what was in front of me. The objects always provide some sort of clues that the viewer has to see. At the festivals, people approached the objects in manners unique from each other, just like a researcher, based on what they see or do not see. Many of the individuals interacting with our objects did not touch, or get terribly close to the items. Others walked right up and handled the objects, turning them every which way, and sometimes finding the answer to the object’s origin from labels or inscriptions in discrete places.

How we observe and engage with objects also of course depends on our own knowledge and background. This was evidenced during our trip to the Vesterheim Museum in Decorah, Iowa. Dr. Ward has vast experience and knowledge in medieval and Viking Scandinavia. In the storage of the Vesterheim Museum was a sword that Dr. Ward was able to identify as an authentic Viking sword, but the Vesterheim staff had not realized what they had. An object’s stories can be hidden, but with careful consideration, they emerge.



Display of a traditional Norwegian home at Vesterheim Museum. Photo by Ericka Michal.

For me, the displays at Vesterheim reminded me of my recent trip to Norway, and what sorts of surprising objects can link us to our ancestors. On the flight from London after my internship was over, I had worn my Norwegian sweater, thrilled that I of course would blend in with everyone else, like one does as a Daughter of Norway or SCC member at our events. The only problem was that on the airplane, at the airport, and at the shopping centers, I was the only one wearing a Norwegian sweater! It wasn't until Christmas Eve at the Lutheran church at my family farm, Mesnali, that some people were wearing their Norwegian sweaters. Eating in the dining room on the family farm I saw simple objects and felt the warmth and love and stories they held. To my surprise, stepping foot into Vesterheim's houses and seeing the displays of similar furnishings to my families in Norway, evoked the memories of Christmas Eve.

The take-away for me from everything in the past year is a great appreciation of my education at Pacific Lutheran University, the opportunity to interact with Dr. Ward in a manner of colleague and co-researcher, and to study the objects of our collection, and the intent donors have when donating objects. The Kelmer Roe Fellowship allowed me to use all of my three majors in Anthropology, Art History, and Scandinavian Area Studies. I learned to appreciate the importance of context, intent of the donor when donating an object, and that objects have a life in

a home before becoming a museum piece. But it also taught me that Pacific Lutheran University has an underappreciated treasure in their midst; the collection at the Scandinavian Cultural Center. These objects hold stories and narratives that we may never know, but we can imagine through them our own stories and memories, as they sit in for us as a substitute, mediating our memories and narratives, and holding tight to the whispered stories of the past.

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

PLU @ 125: LUTHERAN HIGHER EDUCATION ON THE FRONTIER

It has been 125 years since Reverend Bjug Harstad set off from Iowa in search of the perfect location for a Lutheran university in the newly-formed Washington State. Intent on serving the many Norwegian immigrants to the area, Bjug chose Parkland for the new school. To celebrate this anniversary, V.P. for Marketing and Communications **Donna Gibbs** created an 125th Anniversary Committee, and appointed Dr. Elisabeth Ward as one of the members. Since then, she's been working on putting together a modest traveling exhibition that highlights the role of Lutheran education for Scandinavians and Scandinavian-Americans. The research for the exhibition got kicked off during meetings at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa in January, arranged by **Maren Johnson**, daughter of Past President **Loren Anderson**, who now teaches there.

Since there are plenty of things going on around campus to celebrate the 125, (kicked off with the visit of His Majesty King Harald in May!), this exhibition has been designed to be shown off-campus at appropriate venues. It will open at the Nordic Heritage Museum in the Ballard neighborhood of Seattle on September 26th, and stay open until November 10th. We thank Jan Colbrese and Eric Nelson of NHM for helping make PLU's 125th wider known.

The exhibition explores the roots of Lutheran higher education, as well as the efforts of Midwestern Scandinavian-Americans to create a widespread

PLU @ 125 EXHIBITION CONT.

Lutheran university system in the Midwest. But the Scandinavians in the Pacific Northwest were a different lot: more independent-minded, less pious, and more democratic. Necessity also made Scandinavians of different national origins live closer together in the Pacific Northwest, which created more of a shared Scandinavian identity than seen in the Midwest.

Pacific Lutheran University evolved along with the emerging identity of the immigrants living on the western frontier. It has continued to evolve since then, along side not only Scandinavians but also Lutheran religious and educational ideas. The exhibition traces these changes through all of PLU's 125 years with a wonderful selection of archival photos, maps, media interactives, and artifacts.

A special Alumni event at the Nordic Heritage Museum is being planned for the opening weekend on Sept. 26. Elisabeth is working with other Nordic venues in the U.S. to organize a national tour of the exhibition. It is also likely the exhibition will come to the Scandinavian Cultural Center.

In the meantime, however, the SCC has its own special 125th anniversary exhibition up: *1890, A Time of Change: Contemporaries of Bjug Harstad in Early Modern Norway*. That exhibition, which opened June 20th, will remain up through homecoming weekend and Bjug Harstad Day, October 14th.

Did you give your son or daughter (or pet) a particularly Scandinavian name, even if everyone else has trouble pronouncing it? If so, visiting artist Line Anda Dalmar would like to meet you! During the weekend of October 17th, 18th, and 19th, she will be taking portraits as part of her artistic research. These portraits may well be added to the "Restored Connection" exhibition that will open on October 23rd. Please contact the SCC at scancntr@plu.edu to become part of the project.

OCT. 23: TWO EXHIBITS OPEN WITH ROUNDTABLE ON IMMIGRATION

This Fall, the SCC will mount two complementary exhibitions. One is being developed by **Dr. Troy Storfjell** and graduating senior **Linn Chloe Hagström** exploring minority populations in modern Scandinavia. It is partially based on the research Chloe, as she is called, conducted for her capstone project on Muslim immigrants in Norway. We will be pairing that internally developed exhibition with a traveling art exhibition that was recently shown at Vesterheim Museum in Decorah, Iowa.

Called "Restored Connection", this art exhibition is developed from a research-based project that began in 2011 as collaboration between Norwegian artists **Line Anda Dalmar** and **Regine Osbakk**. Using still and moving images, it focuses on Norwegian-Americans to explore how cultural identity is inherited and transformed through generations.

The Restored Connection exhibition is made up of three mixed media art installations. The first is a series of videos portraying one family's story: the Halversons of Northfield, Minnesota. This family looked to Norway as an amazing and beautiful, but unreachable, fatherland, a kind of American Dream in reverse. The second piece is a series of portraits of American children, young adults and pets that have been given names inspired by their cultural heritage. The final artwork in the exhibition is an amazing collage of approximately 600 snapshots taken during Dalmar and Osbakk's research in Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota and New Jersey. The photos capture different expressions of contemporary Norwegian-American identity, such as jokes or ethnic sayings and food at festivals.

Together, these two exhibitions promise to be an interesting exploration of the human need for connection to one's own culture and history in the face of displacement. There will be an opening reception at 7pm on Friday, October 23rd, which will feature a round-table conversation with faculty in the Scandinavian Area Studies Program and visiting artist Line Anda Dalmar, who is coming from Norway for the installation of the art exhibition.

UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER 4TH: STAVANGER CHOIR

Philip Nesvig has been busy coordinating the U.S. Tour of the Stavanger Cathedral Boys and Girls Choir, and we are thrilled that he has arranged to have them come perform at Lagerquist Auditorium on Sunday, October 4th!

The Stavanger Cathedral Boys and Girls Choir is comprised of 45 singers, including 20 teenage girls and 25 boy sopranos and altos plus adult men. The Boys Choir is directed by the cathedral cantor, Oddgeir Kjetilstad while his wife, Tuva Ramlo Ystad, conducts the Girls Choir. The choirs perform regularly at the Stavanger Cathedral (Domkirke) for Sunday services, concerts and other special occasions. This is the fourth tour of the choir to the Western United States and Canada since 1994.



The choir system begins with elementary school children learning voice-training and simple choir repertoire. As the children age and advance in expertise, they move into the next higher choir level. While both of the choirs have a high performance level, the Girls Choir has a particularly refined choral sound.

The concert on October 4, 2015, 5:30 p.m. will feature an all-Norwegian program including sacred music and folk music. In addition, the Cathedral organist will perform a separate set of selections on the beautiful Fuchs organ in Lagerquist. A freewill offering will be accepted.

OCTOBER 18TH: DANISH DUO

The duo JENSEN & BUGGE are back on the road together, and we are ecstatic that they were able to fit a stop at Pacific Lutheran University into their schedule. Last time, due to visa issues, they had to cancel at the last minute. But now they are back for sure!

Mette Kathrine Jensen plays accordion, and **Kristian Bugge** plays fiddle. Both Mette and Kristian have won coveted Danish Music Award Folk prizes (Danish Grammy). In 2007, Mette Kathrine Jensen was awarded traditional artist of the year, and in 2006, Kristian Bugge received awards for debut and instrumentalist of the year!

Mette and Kristian have known each other since they were kids when they lived 3 kilometers from each other - near Vejle, Jutland, Denmark. Since then, they have played for dances and concerts in Denmark and other countries, such as USA, Faroe Islands,

Norway, Sweden, Finland, South Korea and Poland. For more information, visit www.jensen-bugge.dk

Kristian recently moved to the Portland, OR area, and has made guest appearances at Sangaften as well as at last year's folkdance class. But the SCC has never had the opportunity to meet Mette and hear the two of them play together. So the event on Sunday, October 18th will be special. It will also be held in a special location, **the Choral Room of the Mary Baker Russel Music Building (Room 306)**. The event, which will begin at 2pm, is free and will be followed by a light reception. The three CDs the duo have released will be available for sale.

OCTOBER 22ND: GREATER TACOMA PEACE PRIZE BANQUET FOR DIXON



Thomas Dixon was nominated for the GTPP by Ted Johnstone.

Thomas Dixon, a living icon in Tacoma's civil rights movement, is the 11th annual recipient of the Greater Tacoma Peace Prize. Dixon, leader of the Tacoma Urban League and a mentor to generations of Tacoma community leaders, will travel to Norway in December of 2015 to be a part of the celebrations surrounding the award of the Nobel Prize for Peace. He will also be honored at a banquet to be held at Pacific Lutheran University on October 22nd, 2015.

Born the grandson of a slave in Georgia in 1931, Dixon remained in Tacoma after retiring from military service at McCord Air Force Base in 1964. He then became the first executive director of the Hilltop Multi-Service Center, and served as a staff member of the Washington State Economic Opportunity Department. In 1968 he became the inaugural executive director of Tacoma's affiliate of the National Urban League, a position he held for 32 years. He worked assiduously for economic and community development, job training, and social and health services for all in need, but especially under-served and under-represented African-Americans.

As a leading voice for civil rights and social justice throughout Tacoma and Pierce County, Dixon advocated progressive change to a then-conservative, predominantly white city leadership; responded to an outbreak of racial violence in the Mother's Day Disturbance of 1969 with a strong voice of non-violence and conciliation; and co-founded the Black Collective, a weekly gathering of black concerned citizens and civic leaders that continues today.

Thomas Dixon has lived a life that embraces deep commitments to justice, reconciliation, cooperation, and the betterment of others, and he has nurtured these values in more than five generations of community leaders. For his long-time dedication to

peace and justice for all, the 2015 Greater Tacoma Peace is awarded to Thomas Dixon. To join us in the banquet in his honor, please purchase tickets at www.tacomapeaceprize.com. The Scandinavina Cultural Center is proud to help sponsor the laureate's travel to Norway and to support the work of the GTPP.

CLASSES

WHEAT WEAVING: SEPT. 15TH!



Jean Whipple will be returning to the Scandinavian Cultural Center for a one-day workshop on wheat weaving on Tuesday, Sept. 15. This traditional folkcraft is especially useful to practice in the Fall, when the wheat is being harvested in Scandinavia, and in time to make wonderful Christmas ornaments in classic Scandinavian designs. Learn how to make wreaths, hearts, animal shapes, and geometric patterns with wheat and other grasses, following the practice of generations of rural Scandinavians. Cost is \$5 and you get to take home whatever you make!

SCANDINAVIAN FOLKDANCE CLASS!

Dig out those dancing shoes, because the Scandinavian Cultural Center folkdancing class is getting geared up to begin again! Experienced, patient, and skilled instructors **Bob Hamilton and Leslie Foley** will be offering beginning level Scandinavian folk dance on Monday evenings this Fall. A six-week class beginning September 28th will get us all ready for dancing around the Juletree in style this year. The class fee will cover all six weeks, and is \$15 for students, \$20 for individuals, and \$30 for couples.

The classes will take place in Chris Knutzen Hall, which has a wonderful wooden floor perfect for ring dancing. The classes will include a variety of Swedish, Danish, and Norwegian traditional polska and schottis dances. Sign ups can be done the up until the day of the first class, September 28th. A form is available at www.plu.edu/scancenter or call (253) 535-7349. See you there!

FOCUS ON OUR MEMBERS

SEPT. 13TH: WELCOME H.O.ME

In 2014, the International Student Office of Pacific Lutheran University launched a new initiative with the Scandinavian Cultural Center. Called H.O.Me, this program pairs international students with members of the local community so that the students can get off campus and experience a bit of Tacoma and the great state of Washington. International students, some of whom have never been to the United States and most of whom don't have cars, appreciate a chance to get a bit of hospitality for a few hours that lets them experience something different. And since the majority of international students at PLU are from Scandinavia, it's a great opportunity for our members to get to meet some young Norwegians, Danes, and Swedes, but also people from other countries as well.

Only members of the Scandinavian Cultural Center are invited to apply to be hosts for this program, and then the International Student Office pairs up community hosts with appropriate students. The pairing process starts with a simple online application, available at <https://forms.plu.edu/709>.

Over the past two semesters, our members have taken students to the zoo, had them over for dinner, or taken them to the store. These simple gestures can mean a lot to students just getting to know the area. We hope you will consider being a local community host, as part of our "Hospitality Offered by Members of the Community" program. **Linda Nyland** was the coordinator for this last year, and we thank her for her great service!

Please contact Elisabeth at wardei@plu.edu or fill out the form directly **before September 5th**. Then

come to the Scandinavian Cultural Center on Sunday, September 13th at 4pm to meet the international students involved in the program. We will bake waffles together, have some coffee, and get to know each other. This event is free, as is the program, but we would appreciate knowing ahead of time if you plan to attend. Help us welcome students H.O.Me!

SONORO SCANDINAVIAN CHILDREN'S CHOIR

The newly-formed Sonoro Scandinavian Children's Choir (SSCC), based in Lakewood (and supported by the Scandinavian Cultural Center), was invited to "sing for the King" when **His Majesty King Harald V** of Norway visited PLU on Saturday, May 23. The walkway around "Red Square" was lined with hundreds of onlookers as the children, ages 6 – 12,

proudly performed. They sang several songs, including "Per Spelmann" and "Ro, ro, ro din båt", and they joined the Sonoro Women's Choir in performing "Tundra", a composition by contemporary Norwegian composer Ola Gjeilo.

On June 19 and 20, at the "Wisdom and Whimsy" concerts, featuring the Sonoro

Women's Choir, director **Jeremy Shilley** premiered the Scandinavian Children's Choir in a selection of folksongs from Norway, Sweden, and Finland.

If you know of children who may be interested in joining this choir, contact the director, Jeremy Shilley, at jeremy.shilley@gmail.com or 253-307-1226. We hope to have a lively Scandinavian Children's Choir that can perform at various SCC events throughout the year, including our Lucia Festival. This is a great way to share your Scandinavian heritage with the next generation. The SCC is able to provide scholarships to help cover the costs of the choir for members of the SCC as needed to make this choir a success!



PAST EVENTS PHOTO GALLERY



Marv Peterson volunteered to give the twelve, much-beloved, carved wood panels, donated by Florence Buck in 1995, a much-needed beeswax

treatment. They were so dry after all those years in the bright spotlights, it took two coats! Graduating senior, and loyal SCC student worker, Jonathan Dennie helped out, one of his last projects for us!



Two photos from King Harald's visit: The King in the SCC talking to students, and Linda Caspersen with her hardanger cello just after playing.



In June, the SCC participated in Astoria's 3-day festival honoring Scandinavians in Northwest Oregon. Along with Dr. Elisabeth Ward, members Ericka Michel, Kate Emmanuel-French, Judy Scott and Lisa Ottoson all took turns covering the booth and telling people about PLU and the SCC. We also joined in the festivities, from raising the May pole to burning hexes. We might just have to make the SCC booth at the Astorial Scan Fest a yearly ritual!



THE SCANDINAVIAN CULTURAL CENTER

FALL 2015 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

ALL EVENTS ARE FREE AND IN THE SCC UNLESS
OTHERWISE NOTED

We are on
facebook!
Please like us!

OPEN HOURS:

Sundays 1pm - 4pm

Tuesdays & Wednesdays 11am - 3pm

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Aug 10th-21st | SCC Summer Break |
| Sept 9th | Council Meeting, 6-8pm |
| Sept 11th | Chocolate Trail, 1-3pm |
| | Student Involvement Fair 3:30-5pm |
| Sept 13th | H.O.Me Student/Family Introductions, 4pm |
| Sept 15th | Wheat Weaving, 11am, cost: \$5 |
| Sept 16th-17th | Tapestry Project, noon-3pm both days, free |
| Sept 26th | Opening of "PLU at 125: Lutheran Education on the Frontier" at the Nordic Heritage Museum (Curated by the SCC) |
| Sept 27th | Docent Luncheon, noon |
| Sept 28th | Folkdance Class, located in CK, 7-8:30pm, cost: \$15 students, \$20 individuals, \$30 couples (covers all classes!) |
| Oct 4th | Stavanger Choir, Lagerquist Hall, 5:30pm, cost: donations accepted |
| Oct 5th | Folkdance Class, in CK, 7-8:30pm |
| Oct 7th | Danish Sisterhood, 11am |
| Oct 12th | Folkdance Class, in CK, 7-8:30pm |
| Oct 14th | Norwegian Cooking Class, 10am-12pm, cost: \$5 |
| | Council Meeting 6-8pm |
| Oct 15th | Thor Heyerdahl Lecture, 7pm |
| Oct 18th | Danish Folk Duo, MBR 306, 2-4pm |
| Oct 19th | Folkdance Class, in CK, 7-8:30pm |
| Oct 22nd | Greater Tacoma Peace Prize Banquet, 6pm, tickets through www.tacomapeaceprize.com |
| Oct 23rd | Dual Exhibition Opening Reception with Roundtable Discussion of Immigration and Identity, 7pm |
| Oct 24th | Norwegian Cooking Class, 10am-12pm, cost: \$5 |
| Oct 26th | Folkdance Class, in CK, 7-8:30pm |
| Oct 27th | Swedish Cooking Class, 10am-12pm, \$5 |
| Oct 29th | Norwegian Cooking Class, 10am-12pm, \$5 |

SAVE THE DATE!
DEC 19TH
CHRISTMAS
BANQUET



PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY

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**The Scandinavian Scene is a quarterly newsletter published for members and friends of the SCC.
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During August, when the SCC is closed, Dr. Ward will attend an international conference on the Icelandic sagas. She will present on a saga set in the valley of Skagafjörður, Iceland, where she did her dissertation research.