

THE SCANDINAVIAN SCENE

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Nålbinding

Dr. Steinar Bryn

Super Swedes!

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COVER IMAGE:

From the PLU Archives: Marsha King, Nancy
Shaw and Judy Zatterburg, finalist for Lucia Bride
1967-1968.

*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 DIRECTOR...♦♦

I have been discovering so many wonderful things about our collection this year! As an Icelander with a scholarly background in the Viking Age, it has been a learning curve for me to get to know the collection at the Scandinavian Cultural Center. PLU has had so many beautiful, meaningful, rare, and iconic artifacts donated to it over the years, mostly from the Norwegian-American, Danish-American, and Swedish-American community. Some things have also come in direct from Scandinavia, but most things have come via a member with a connection to this area. So each artifact is also about the story of the people who have owned it. To help me get to understand the collection and the stories it holds better, I have been visiting other museums this year. Those have been great research opportunities. As you know, when I'm in the office there is always so many more fun things going on, than reading about artifacts! So I very much appreciate the SCC and the Department of Humanities sending me on some trips that have helped deepen my knowledge.

There is continuity between the Viking Age and the 19th century in certain farm tools and ship building implements. Also arts like woodcarving, weaving and iron working have long traditions, so some things in the collection looked familiar from what I'd seen in the Viking context. My Icelandic background has not been as helpful, even though Iceland was a part of Denmark for 500 years, and part of Norway for 300 years before that. The strong historic, political and linguistic ties--the Icelandic language is closely related to Norwegian, unlike Saami, Finnish, or Greenlandic languages—does not extend to Icelandic material culture, which is quite different than in the mainland!

For instance, the entire rosemaling style never became popular in Iceland, and bunads, or folk



costumes, are not something Icelanders embrace as much as in Norway and Sweden.

So my trips were really necessary. The first stop was Vesterheim Museum in Decorah Iowa in January 2014, a trip I took with Linda Caspersen and Ericka Michal. It was a great trip and I feel I learned a lot about our collection, including how our 18th century cheese strainer works (hint, it needs a goat hair!). Then this summer I had an excellent opportunity to visit museums in Norway. I went to three folk museums and one museum about immigration from Norway to the U.S. I have to give a big thank you to Judy Scott who helped arrange that trip for me, by talking her friend Finn Brobakken into letting me stay at his farm while he went fishing for a week. His whole family helped shuttle me around,

SPOTLIGHT ON THE COLLECTIONS

and it was just amazing to get such a taste of Norwegian hospitality. That really reminded me of Iceland! I came to appreciate a lot more the importance of regional identity, to see the way the mountains and valleys create places where you feel like the mountains and hills seem to hug a person, keep them safe. I wrote about a valley in Iceland like that for my dissertation, and was amazed how full Norway was of places like that.

But of course I don't need to travel around the world to learn more about our collection! In October, we had a visitor from Norway (one of the members from the Stavanger choir) who runs a museum in Stavanger. I brought him into our collection storage area, and he was so impressed by the variety, age, and condition of our pieces. He told me about one piece of jewelry that didn't look like much to me, just a hook with a small ball of yarn hanging from it, but he said it was worn by high-society ladies as a sign of authority. That was really interesting!

Well, I think it is safe to say there are so many more stories left to discover, so much more our collection wants to reveal. I'm delighted to have our database up and running, and the help of a volunteer, Jamie Foster, and a student worker, Michaela Thompson, to make it as accurate as possible. I would really appreciate it if members who have donated things in the past have a chance to come by on any Wednesday morning this semester to talk to Michaela, and make sure we have as much information as possible about the pieces in the collection. We may also be calling people or emailing with questions. Thank you to everyone who has helped make the collection as wonderful as it is!

Vi sees og takk fyrir mig!

Elisabeth Ward

NÅLBINDING

Nålbinding, also known as “knotless knitting” or “knotless netting” is a technique used to create fabric that predates both crochet and knitting. (It is also referred to as naalbinding, nålbinding, nålebinding, and naalebinging). Its literal translation is “binding with a needle” or “needle tying”. Because it employs the use of a single needle made of antler, bone, or wood historically, (plastic needles are available today) the end product does not unravel like a hand crocheted or hand knit textile. A full length working thread passes through loops whereas crochet is formed only of loops. In the knitting process, a continuous strand of yarn is used, whereas in nålbinding, lengths of thread must be pieced together. Archaeological samples of nålbinding can be difficult to distinguish from knitted fabric. Wool fiber is commonly used due to its ability to naturally felt because of its “reptile like” surface. You can easily see this under a microscope.

There are known samples of nålbinding dating back to the Coptic Christians of Egypt (4th century CE). These include socks with a color pattern in the design. Peru is also known for this technique. These samples include shawls and hats dating back to 300 BCE and 300 CE and were prevalent in the Paracas and Nazca cultures. The Nanti tribe of Peru currently uses this technique to make bracelets. While accompanying a group of students from Bjerkely Folkehøyskole in Norway to Peru several years ago, I was fortunate enough to meet these indigenous people. The bracelets were sold on the street and displayed on handwoven textiles high up in the Andes Mountains. I was so fascinated by this technique that did not unravel.



The Scandinavian examples of nålbinding have been found dating back to the 9th or 10th centuries. This includes samples also found in Finland, Russia, Poland and other parts of Europe. The technique of nålbinding was used as a very effective way of producing sturdy garments during the Viking-age of 793-1066 ACE. The Scandinavians have also used this technique with the hair of cows' tails to make milk strainers. Examples can be seen in one of the Vesterheim permanent exhibit rooms.

It is amazing to realize that 1000's of years ago, there were people in Ancient Egypt and Scandinavia creating looped yarn fabrics and using the same technique. Nålbinding is actually believed to predate knitting and crocheting by 2000 years. During our trip to Decorah, Iowa in January, the SCC received a donation of a pair of mittens made in this traditional style by the Chariman of the Board of Vesterheim Museum, Kate Martinson. We are so pleased to have a great example of this weaving technique in our collection!

There are many other textile techniques that are an important part of our history. These

techniques are still prevalent today in Scandinavia. Some of them were crucial to survival, whereas others were more important for status and/or adornment.

Some of these include:

- Knotting Netting
- Crochet Spinning
- Macrame' Tatting
- Pulled work Drawn work
- Weaving Embroidery Knitting

On a side note, I have always been curious as to why someone would ask the question: "What class are you taking: underwater basket weaving"? Imagine you have to carry your only water source 4 miles up a mountainside and it has to last an entire week. Your only carrying container is a hand woven basket and you are going to place it on your head for the trek. The basket you left at home holds your food and needs to be insect and rodent proof. You best be a good weaver.

Imagine you are depending on fishing as your sole source of food and income. If you do not tie your knots properly, you will lose your anchor in the storm. If your nets are not "netted" properly, you lose the fish. If the glass floats/balls are not surrounded by a "macramed" shell and not knotted/attached properly to the nets, you lose your nets because they don't float. If your mittens are not knit properly, your hands freeze. If you can't spin, you can't knit.

All of these techniques and skills were and are a reality in many places of the world today and in many periods of time throughout history. The next time you see someone creating something by hand, be it textiles or another medium, say thank you and be impressed! Handwork is not only good for the soul, but essential for survival.

*På hilsen,
Linda Caspersen*

UPCOMING EVENTS

NOV. 12TH - STEINAR BRYN



On Thursday, November 12th, from 6pm to 8pm, Dr. Steinar Bryn will deliver a lecture in the Scandinavian Cultural Center entitled: “Dialogue and Peacebuilding: 12 lessons learned from 20 years of dialogue work.” Dr. Bryn has extensive experience working as a dialogue facilitator in areas traumatized by war and violence, especially in the Balkans. He is highly recognized in communities like Vukovar, Prijedor, Srebrenica, Bratunac, Stolac, Kosovo Polje, Obilic, Mitrovica. He has also facilitated dialogue in the Middle East and between Somalian clans. He has facilitated hundreds of seminars, published numerous articles and has an extensive record of lecturing worldwide. After the merger of Nansen Dialogue and the Norwegian Peace Center in 2010, he became the senior adviser at the Nansen Center for Peace and Dialogue. During the last 17 years he has developed and supported the Nansen dialogue centers in the Balkans. Dr. Bryn is responsible for the planning and implementing of inter-ethnic dialogue seminars in Lillehammer and in the Western Balkans.

Together with the Nansen Dialog Network, Dr. Bryn been nominated to the Nobel Peace Prize several times, including by a deputy president of the Norwegian parliament, a member of the Bosnian parliament and a professor in mediation in Norway. He has received numerous awards, especially for the dialogue and reconciliation work done in some of Europe’s most war-torn areas after World War II.

Although Steinar Bryn graduated from the University of Wisconsin (BA, MA) and obtained a Ph.D. in American Studies from the University of Minnesota, he has been a strong friend and supporter of PLU, visiting campus several times. In his lecture on Thursday, Nov. 14th, Dr. Bryn will discuss his documenting and publishing his experiences from peace and reconciliation work. He is particularly concerned with transferring the experience from numerous years of dialogue work in the Balkans to other areas of conflict, including Norway. We look forward to welcoming him to campus!

MINI FILM FESTIVAL!

On Saturday, January 16th, The Scandinavian Cultural Center will be transformed into an art-film venue for a special presentation by Dr. Amanda Doxtater of the University of Oregon. A specialist in Scandinavian silent films, she has selected four films that show the development of Scandinavian film from its earliest roots until today.

NORWEGIAN CONVERSATION HOUR WITH HARALD-FERDINAND A. OVERÅ:

A new Norwegian student here at PLU has offered to hold conversation hours on Mondays, starting in January! See the calendar for exact times, as it will change in February. To help you get to know Harald, he wrote this up:

I am from a small fishing village in Southern Norway filled with boats, a small little port at the edge of the Norwegian coastline before reaching Skagerrak, with 400 inhabitants living in wooden houses that are coloured red, white and yellow, where everyone knows everyone. I am from the other side of the ocean, from the start of the emigration process. I am from where people dreamt of a land far away, of a new life, halfway around the world. I am from all the men and women wanting to explore this blue sphere where we are living. I am from where people emigrated to the Pacific North West.

After a long week at PLU, striving for a little break from academics, I look out over the bay, with the harbor in the background, the fishing boats on the dock. As the sun goes down over the horizon in nice Puget Sound weather, I am thinking; I am home. I am home far away from home. I ponder upon my ancestors moving here before me, upon their lives, their travels, their development of this region I am now in. Their journey half a world away, surrounded by the same landscape, the same weather, yet different people. I am thinking about all these things, reflecting upon my first months as a college student, as I fill my mouth with some local ingredients from the sea, on the dock of Tacoma, at Duke's. I am living their life, their purpose, their dreams some hundreds of years later.

The celebration of it all, of this school changing the lives of others these 125 years, of one man emigrating from the hills of Setesdal, founding the framework here at this place. Founding the

framework for providing excellent guidance for academics and life. Founding dreams coming true in similar landscape as back home. I think it is so great to have a chance to be a part of it all.

The conversations hours will be free, and we hope you can make it!

LUCIA FESTIVAL! DECEMBER 12TH

This year's Lucia festival will take place on Saturday, December 12th, at 5pm in the Karen Hille Phillips Center for the Performing Arts, Eastvold Auditorium. The Lucia Festival used to be in this location for many years, and now that the auditorium is equipped with theatrical lighting, we think it will make a great venue for our beautiful Lucia Brides to shine! The program will include PLU Lucia scholarship candidates, and also the Sonora Scandinavian Children's Choir. We are still looking for a few more kids to be the tomte and Star Boys, as well as Junior Lucias. Please be in touch with Elisabeth Ward at wardei@plu.edu or with Kim Kittilsby if you have kids that would like to participate. We will have to coordinate a rehearsal time with the Sonora Scandinavian Children's Choir. Craft night is scheduled for December 1st.

A reception will follow in the Scandinavian Cultural Center, complete with a visit from our own Jule Tomte. Admission tickets will be \$5 for members, \$7 for non-members, and free for students. God jul!

NORDIC SWEATER SWAP

If you would like to have a table at our annual exchange on Nov. 21st, please let Elisabeth know by Nov. 16th. Remember, this is for members only to sell used Scandinavian items. It takes place the same day as the Danish Sisterhood Bazaar on the lower level of the Anderson University Center, near the SCC.

UPCOMING EXHIBITS

TAPESTRY EXHIBIT UPDATE

The Scandinavian Cultural Center is on the books for a collaborative exhibit with School of Arts and Communication (SOAC) during February, 2016. "COMMON THREADS: AN OVERVIEW OF SCANDINAVIAN TEXTILES", will feature a selection of some of our beautiful tapestries from the SCC Collection, as well as a few other items pertinent to the topic. This exhibit will utilize the Gallery space in Ingram Hall and will open on February 10th. This location will allow PLU art students and faculty as well as the public to see some of the incredible textile pieces we house in our archives. The textile exhibition will be paired with an exhibition at the Scandinavian Cultural Center that will help people understand how clothing and textiles have shaped our past, exist as one of the 3 leading industries today and how they are an important part of our future.

I would like to personally thank those of you who have been willing to devote many hours of volunteer hours to help prepare the tapestry pieces for hanging. (Julie Ann Hebert, Maren Johnson, Lisa Ottoson, Karen Hebert, Esther Van Noy). We still have a bit of work to do and will continue in the second week of November. Please email me if you are willing to help.

Linda Caspersen lindacaspersen@gmail.com

PLU@125: LUTHERAN EDUCATION ON THE FRONTIER

An exhibition curated by Dr. Elisabeth Ward, with assistance from Phil Nordquist, Samuel Torvend, Lynn Hunnicut, Kerstin Ringdahl, and Jim Hushagen, opened at the Nordic Heritage Museum on September 26th. Its next stop is the Nordia House in Portland. That wonderful facility opened during the summer of 2015, and is designed in pure Scandinavian architectural

style. PLU@125: Lutheran Education on the Frontier will be on display in Portland from January 5th until the end of February, 2016.

DEC. 19TH - CHRISTMAS BANQUET

Twenty three plus years ago my husband and I returned to "The Promised Land" and were never sorry for even a moment. The SCC was still in its infancy and a dedicated group of Scandinavians (largely Norwegian) worked hard to establish customs and events to satisfy all Scandinavian folk in the area. One of the events offered was a Smorgasbord. That tradition has continued over the years with some changes but much remaining the same.

This year, we wanted to make sure the Nordic Fest Banquet was truly up to the expectations of our members.. So a survey was sent with the membership renewal letters, and now, in light of the poll, the tradition will take on a slightly different look this year. A dedicated committee has met several times to assure it will be an event you will want to attend.

The same but better: a buffet of traditional fare to enjoy as a first course; real gløgg will be available along with other beverages.; then we will be seated for a plated dinner with a choice of two entrees. Great effort is being made to include food from each Scandinavian country in the meal. The theme will be A Child's Christmas.

Festivities continue with traditional singing of carols and entertainment from the Sonora Scandinavian Children's Choir.

I look forward to this evening as well as the annual Christmas Concert and other events offered by PLU. We hope you enjoy the 2015 Julebord and will appreciate your comments as we plan future events.

See you on the 19th of December!

Clarene Johnson

FOCUS ON OUR MEMBERS

THE LARSONS: SUPER SWEDES!

The Swedish Council of America will be honoring Ed and Betty Larson at their annual meeting in April in Seattle for their service to the Swedish community

Betty and Ed Larson are first generation Scandinavians. Betty's parents were both born in Sweden, while Ed's mother was born in Sweden and his father in Norway. (Ed jokes that while it is true that his father was born Norway, at that time Norway was actually ruled by Sweden.) Nevertheless, Betty and Ed are dyed-in-the-wool first generation Scandinavians! Their first trip to Scandinavia was in 1970 and since that time they have been in the "old country" over 20 times. In the late 1970s, Betty and Ed were involved with placing students in American homes in the Puget Sound area through the American Scandinavian Student Exchange (ASSE) program.

Ed's first involvement with the SCC came when he was working at PLU in the Development (now Advancement) Office, raising money for the construction of what is now the Scandinavian Cultural Center. He recalls an instance when he was talking to someone about the new Center, and that individual scoffed at the new construction, saying, "You mean that place they built in the gravel pit in the basement of the University Center!" The Center is now probably the most sought after facility for meetings and events on the PLU campus.

Betty began working with the Lucia program in the 1990s. Her partner in this effort was Ulla Lindwood, and the two of them helped to revive interest in the Lucia Fest. In 1999, when Betty was with Ed during his 3-month sabbatical in Sweden, she attended a number of Lucia celebrations in Sweden, noting that these events were almost all "sponsored" by a company or



organization. Encouraged by what she saw happening in Sweden, on their return to the US, Betty contacted the IKEA company in Seattle to see if they might be interested in a similar sponsorship with the PLU Lucia program. That contact resulted in a generous offer by IKEA that has continued ever since. Ed was a behind-the-scenes worker with Betty in her Lucia efforts.

Betty was a docent for a number of years, sharing that effort with Ulla Lindwood. Betty received the SCC Outstanding Service Award in 2005. Ed became more involved in the ongoing programs of the SCC when he and Betty initiated an annual Swedish program in memory of their parents. Because the Dalahast is one of Sweden's icons, the first program saw them bringing a carver and a painter from the Nils Olsson factory in Sweden where dalahasts are made. Since then programs have included a Swedish chef (twice), a Swedish glass artist, a Swedish composer, a program about a three-century-old weaving company (Ekeland), and most recently the program was a weekend of experts on Swedish genealogy.

Ed now serves as Vice-President of the SCC Council.

PHOTOS FROM RECENT EVENTS

Clockwise: Jensen & Bugge in the Ness Family Lobby; Daughters of Norway display their dishes from the Norwegian cooking class; Trygve finds his son in the Re-connected photo series currently on display; Tom Dixon (c), 2015 GTPP Laureate, surrounded by past laureates; Gus van Beek at the opening of PLU@125 at the Nordic Heritage Museum.



THE SCANDINAVIAN CULTURAL CENTER

NOV 2015 - JAN 2016 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**ALL EVENTS ARE FREE AND IN THE SCC UNLESS
OTHERWISE NOTED**



OPEN HOURS:

Sundays 1pm - 4pm (except 11/29)
Tuesdays & Wednesdays 11am - 3pm
Closed 12/27 to 1/3

Nov. 2nd	Final Folkdance Class
Nov. 3rd	PLU hosts: My Valley Home Program by Finn Brobakken 7pm at the <u>Nordic Heritage Museum</u> , \$10
Nov. 4th	Danish Sisterhood, 11am
Nov. 11th	Council Meeting, 6-8pm
Nov. 12th	Lecture by Steinar Bryn of the Nansen Peace Center, 6pm "Dialogue and Peacebuilding: 12 lessons from 20 years of Dialogue"
Nov. 15th	Danish Sangaften, 2pm
Nov. 17th	Photo Archives Project, 11am-3pm
Nov. 21st	Danish Sisterhood Bazaar, 10am-4pm Scandinavian Sweater Swap 10am-4pm (in the Lower UC)
Dec. 1st	Lucia Craft Night, 7pm
Dec. 2nd	Norwegian Language Christmas Service, 7pm
Dec. 2nd	Danish Sisterhood, 11am
Dec. 6th	Lucia Performances at local nursing homes
Dec. 9th	Council Meeting 6-8pm
Dec. 10th	Nordlyset Christmas Banquet
Dec. 11th	President's Christmas Concert: PLU's 125th Anniversary (Lagerquist Hall, tickets through the PLU concierge)
Dec. 12th	Lucia Concert in the Karen Hille Phillips Center, 5pm - \$7
Dec. 19th	Nordic Christmas Banquet, doors open at 5pm, price TBD
Dec. 20th	Danish Sangaften, 2pm
Jan. 6th	Danish Sisterhood, 11am
Jan. 11th	Norwegian Conversation Hour with Harald
Jan. 13th	Council Meeting, 6-8pm
Jan. 16th	Mini-Nordic Film Festival: Four Great Films presented by Dr. Amanda Doxtater, University of Oregon, 11am to 10pm
Jan. 17th	Danish Sangaften, 2pm
Jan. 25th	Norwegian Conversation Hour with Harald



PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY

Scandinavian Cultural Center
12180 Park Avenue South
Tacoma, WA 98447-0003

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Elisabeth Ward, Editor 253-535-7349 Email: wardei@plu.edu Website: www.plu.edu/scancenter

IF YOU AREN'T ALREADY A MEMBER OF THE SCANDINAVIAN CULTURAL CENTER, PLEASE CONSIDER JOINING US! MEMBERS GET SPECIAL INVITATIONS TO EVENTS AND EXHIBITION OPENINGS, AS WELL AS GREAT OPPORTUNITIES TO NETWORK WITH OUR COMMUNITY. VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.PLU.EDU/SCANCENTER FOR A MEMBERSHIP FORM. OUR PURPOSE IS TO ENRICH UNDERSTANDING OF SCANDINAVIAN AND SCANDINAVIAN-AMERICAN CULTURES IN SUPPORT OF PLU'S EDUCATIONAL MISSION AND IN RECOGNITION OF PLU'S SCANDINAVIAN HERITAGE.