

SCANDINAVIAN SCENE

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FROM THE PRESIDENT



Once a teacher, always a teacher! As many of you know, I am a retired teacher and served Preschool-12th grades in a local school district as a Speech/ Language Pathologist for 35 years. Recently, at the Norwegian Heritage Festival, I had the opportunity to meet a pastor, some students, and a teachers

from Parkland Lutheran Church and School. They shared how the church and school were celebrating their 125th year anniversary. Bjug Harstad originally founded in the church in 1893 and the school in 1894 as part of Pacific Lutheran Academy (now Pacific Lutheran University.) The students were eagerly learning about all things Norwegian and preparing a special school play about Pastor Harstad to be presented on May 17th (*Syttende Mai*). Well it didn't take long to put together a visit to the school to offer the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th grade classes some time to learn even more about Norway and some help with pronouncing the words in the Norwegian songs for their program. *Tusen takk* to Linda Casperson and Melody Stepp for wearing bunads on a very hot May day, for putting together artifacts to show the students,

and for co-reading the story "Three Billy Goats Gruff" with me. The students enjoyed it and so did I! And *Mange Takk* to Marilyn Mahnke for baking some delicious cookies to give the students.

And speaking of students: *Mange Takk* to the President's Office for sponsoring such a wonderful *Syttende Mai* celebration on campus! Thanks to Dr. Jason Schroeder, Jon and Jean Malmin, and the Normanna Men's Choir for an enjoyable program. And to the Scandinavian Student Club members who shared stories at the reception and had plans to represent PLU in the parade later in the day in Ballard! *Hipp Hipp Hurra!* Guess you can tell I am excited about the involvement of young people in our SCC programs! Let me know if you are interested in being part of some PR Educational Outreach efforts. Teaching runs in my veins and I look forward to more opportunities next year.

Enjoy your summer,
Gerda



UPCOMING FALL EXHIBIT: LIVING HISTORY & NORDIC IDENTITY

In September, the SCC will open a new exhibit “Living History and Nordic Identity: Bringing the past to life in the present” based on KD Williams’ capstone project for her BA in Scandinavian Area Studies, which Dr. Schroeder supervised. The exhibit encourages visitors to interact with conceptions of the past and Nordic identities by presenting KD Williams’ fieldwork with Viking Age and medievalist re-enactors. Groups which will be featured in particular include the Glamfolk (known to SCC members for their booth in the Scandinavian Cultural Center at the Norwegian Heritage Festivals), The Northwest Viking Alliance, Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA), Empire of Medieval Pursuits, and a couple international medievalist fighting groups including Historical Medieval Battles (HMB) and Historical European Martial Arts (HEMA). Her exhibit explores the ways that re-enactors use a variety of arts, crafts,

fighting styles, lived experiences, and extensive experimental archeology projects to re-create and shape their sense of the historical Nordic world and their own Nordic identities. Galleries will include displays of the results of many of these efforts with features on fighting and weaponry, armor, textile production, jewelry making and even blacksmithing. The exhibit will encourage visitors to touch and experience a wide variety of artifacts and materials so they too can have an immersive experience like those groups who are being featured. Additionally, a variety of local Nordic medievalist artisans will have their works featured throughout the exhibit for all to enjoy as well. Look for the exhibit to show up on the SCC’s website, Facebook page, Instagram, and Twitter in September 2019.



FROM THE DIRECTOR



At the May 2019 SCC Council Meeting, the Council voted to accept a new mission statement for the Scandinavian Cultural Center. It has been a long process which I had the privilege to facilitate. Ed Larson, Lynn Gleason, Melody Stepp, Judy Scott, and Dr. Troy Storfjell collaborated from May

2018 until May 2019, brainstorming, talking, listening to Council members, reading drafts, and rewriting drafts. It was hard work! I am including a photo of the committee hard at work! I want to thank the Mission Statement Committee for their commitment and dedication to the Center; I also want to thank Melannnie Denise Cunningham from PLU's Campus Ministries, who served as our diversity consultant in



our early meetings. Thank you all so much! If you get a chance, be sure to thank them (and all the Council) for the work they do to keep the Center living, thriving, and highlighting the diversity of the Nordic cultures and lands. Here is the mission statement:

The mission of the Scandinavian Cultural Center at Pacific Lutheran University is: "to engage Nordic and Nordic-American heritage and highlight customs, traditions, and contemporary societies with understanding toward other cultures."



On my front, I will be out of the office often this summer, including a three week trip to Finland and Sweden. I am looking forward to spending Midsommar with my friends on Åland. I am going to have fun but I am also going to work on a documentary that I have been working on for years and meet Swedish and Finnish scholars to discuss future exhibits for the SCC. I also have an article due and will be taking some time to work on my book about Swedish ballads. I look forward to seeing you all in September. *Ha en bra sommar!*

THE INGE MILLER SERIES

(Adventures in Denmark and Danish history and culture)

In the upcoming issues of the Scandinavian Scene, Inge Miller will write a series about her adventures in Denmark and about Danish history and culture. This is the first in the series, which we are still working a name for. I hope you enjoy it as much as I have and learn something new! Dr. Schroeder.

The Fairy Tale Queen

While attending the 30th anniversary banquet of the Scandinavian Cultural Center last month, I was reminded of all the wonderful events and programs that have taken place in that great facility over the years. One specific event stands out to me. In April of 1999, when the Danes (actually Carol Kemp and yours truly were co-chairs) put on a very elaborate birthday party for Queen Margrethe of Denmark. It was a little premature, since her Majesty's 60th birthday wouldn't take place until April 2000. We decided on the early date because the Queen and I share the same birth month and year, and since I was planning to be in Denmark for my 60th birthday as well, I just couldn't be in two places at once! Anyway, many of you might still remember this wonderful party, where 150 guests filled the center and almost all the Ladies wearing their most beautiful hats in honor of a Queen who herself "wears SO many hats !" (see the Scene's back cover!)

I am fortunate to be able to travel to my native Denmark every fall to visit family and friends. And so for the last ten years or so the editor of the 137 year old Danish-American newspaper *Bien* asked me to write a monthly column about my travel experiences in Denmark. This was a fun task as I enjoyed sharing interesting stories and unusual encounters from Denmark with my readers. Not long ago I asked our director, Dr. Schroeder, if I could contribute with

similar articles to the Scene. He graciously accepted my offer, so here goes:

On my last visit, I had the opportunity to visit a fascinating Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale exhibit at the Amalienborg Castle in the heart of Copenhagen, the residence of her majesty, Queen Margrethe and her family. The exhibit was put together by the Queen herself with some help of a curator; she really likes to be "hands on!"



The Queen

The Queen is one of the longest reigning monarchs in the world, taking over after her father's death in 1972. Female succession had been established in 1953 by a change in the Danish Constitution, since the King only had daughters, who had not been eligible to inherit the throne.

From her earliest childhood Hans Christian Andersen's fairytales have been of the greatest importance to the Queen. One of her fondest childhood memories comes from when someone, most often her father, King Fredrik IX, read her the fairytales aloud. The illustrations of the books, along with many trips

to the ballet, the royal family's tradition for dressing up and the enchanting interiors of the royal palaces all have inspired the Queen in her artistic work with scenography, costume design, and her exhibition designs. She certainly wears a lot of hats, both literally and figuratively, having illustrated many of Tolkien's books such as *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* as well!

Speaking of family, she developed an early in archaeology due to her maternal grandfather, the Swedish King Gustaf VI, who took her on expeditions in the 1950:s to Italy and Egypt. She is still one of the

first on the spot, when archeologists unearth 2000 year old treasure at important digging sites in Denmark. Every year in February she takes a couple of weeks to go skiing in Norway with her good friend, Queen Sonja of Norway, where she lets her hair down, braids it into pigtails and takes off in her red ski jacket and “*tophne*”, happy and careless among friends for just a couple of weeks.

In a special coincidence connecting the Queen to Hans Christian Andersen that she likes to mention, during her childhood, she had as *her* childhood room the very same room on the first floor of the palace that Andersen spent Christmas in 1825 by royal invitation 120 years earlier! It was much later of course that she realized, that it was the very same window, Andersen had looked out of during those Christmas days with a view of the very same winter-dark palace square, that she was looking through every day!

The Fairy Tale Exhibit Photographs

The exhibit displayed depictions of some of the Queen’s favorite fairytales such as Thumbelina, The Tinderbox, The Snow Queen, and many more. The Royal Theatre or the Pantomime Theatre in Tivoli had recently performed all these tales with the Queen working both as choreographer and costume maker. I have included several photographs of the exhibit for you to enjoy and see what wonderful work she does!

Now fast approaching 80, Queen Margrethe is still going strong, there is absolutely no talk of abdicating! If anyone brings it up, her firm answer is: “I will stay until I fall off my perch!” That’s the spirit, Margrethe!

In my next article, you will meet me on the west coast of Denmark, where I visited one of the abandoned German bunkers from WW2. What can it possibly hide? We shall see! —Inge Miller



A CONVERSATION WITH LESLIE FOLEY ABOUT NYCKELHARPA

I met with Leslie to ask her more about the nyckelharpa, one of my favorite instruments and below is what she had to say. As many of you remember, Leslie Foley played her nyckelharpa when she and Irene Myers played for the SCC's Christmas Banquet in December 2018 and I wanted to know more about the instrument and how Leslie got into the instrument. I am sure you all want to know more about this as well.

"The Nyckelharpa is a fun instrument to play. It is a fairly large instrument: the bigger the strings the bigger the vibration. I really like the sound of the nyckelharpa – the instrument is a pleasure to hear. It is historically a rather old instrument. It originated in medieval Europe. It did not last there but someone managed to carry one into Sweden in the early days and we know, for example, that there are angels playing nyckelharpa carved into stone walls of churches from the 1300s. It has been in continual use in one region of Sweden – Uppland – since then. The early versions were simple compared to the modern chromatic nyckelharpa (pictured).

"It is an instrument you wear sort of like a guitar. It has four playing strings and a rather short bow. And it has twelve sympathetic strings that run underneath; when they are tuned up really well with the playing strings, everything sounds that much more wonderful. On a violin, if you want to shorten a string and raise your note, you put your finger straight down on the string. The nyckelharpa has little wooden pegs called tangents, which you push up against the string. The tangents operate on gravity, so they fall back away from the string when you move your finger away.

Leslie says she first got pulled into the world of Swedish fiddling "by virtue of going to work for man after high school. The man I ended up working for, C. Alan (Bud) Johnson, played Swedish fiddle music with his daughter Laurie and two friends of theirs. I had always wanted to play the fiddle but I had never applied myself. It seemed much easier to play folk music than classical music. And it certainly was. So Bud and Laurie taught be how to play. Then I got sucked into the music, the people, the culture, and the language and all those things way back in 1979 or so. I have an older sister, who also got drawn in and



she spent some time traveling in Sweden and Norway. She was in Sweden in 1993 and bought the instrument I currently have from one of Sweden's better makers, Esbjörn Hogmark. She played it for quite a while and then two things happened. One is that she fell and hurt her arm. It never really recovered fully, so she had pain when she was playing. The other was that she moved to Australia and didn't want to deal with moving the instrument. So she left it with me and then eventually I bought it from her. I am extremely lucky! I didn't use it right away. I didn't really understand what I had and I was focused on playing the fiddle. One day we were talking on the phone and she asked: 'Are you using the nyckelharpa?' and I said, 'mmm.' And she said, 'You are either going to use it or you are going to put it into the hands of someone who will.' So I picked it up and went to a really great player in Seattle, Bart Brashers, who helped me put on new strings and get it in good playing condition. And he taught me how to play it. And I was really completely sucked in after that!" And PLU and the SCC has been so very fortunate to have such an enthusiastic player! Thank you Leslie!

MEET 2019-2020 SCC SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

This year the Nordic Studies faculty awarded the **Susan E. Young Study Away scholarship** to Leah Foster-Koth and the Neil Anderson Merit Scholarship to Tiffany Skrei. The SCC is able to award scholarships to students because of the SCC's members' generosity. Thank you! We are delighted to introduce them to you now.



LEAH FOSTER-KOTH, 20, is a junior at PLU. Leah grew up in Seattle and she loves to play the violin and go to comic conventions throughout the Pacific Northwest. As much as she loves her home town, Leah has

always loved international traveling and enjoys exploring new places. This past January, she traveled to China and South Korea with her mother, which was a life changing experience for her. Leah is eagerly anticipating her next international experience, studying in Norway through PLU's Bø program in Spring 2020. In this program, Leah will be traveling to the Norwegian town of Bø, where she is planning to study business administration. She has always had an interest in the role that business plays in our world, and she is looking forward to learning more about business from a Norwegian standpoint. In addition to immersing herself in the culture of Bø, Leah hopes to travel to Bergen to see the home of master composer Edvard Grieg, a lifelong dream of hers as a violinist. Leah grew up feeling connected to Norway due to her Norwegian heritage, as her grandmother grew up as a Haugen in Fergus Falls, Minnesota. In recent years, Leah has felt even more connected to her Norwegian heritage through her study of the Norwegian language, and she is looking forward to delving even deeper into Norwegian culture while in Bø. She has dreamt of travelling Norway for years, and the Scandinavian Cultural Center has helped her to make this dream a reality.

I am **TIFFANY SKREI** and I am a senior Kinesiology major with a concentration in pre-physical therapy and a minor in Norwegian. I have been active in sports and activities all my life, and now I am a dance teacher and choreographer at two local dance studios. As I grew up, it became a passion of mine to help people in any way that I can. After I graduate I plan to go to graduate school to become a physical therapist, however, I would like to continue learning about the Nordic region, cultures, and languages. I have always been fascinated with all of these topics because of my Norwegian heritage and family who still live in Norway. I see it as a way to connect myself to my ancestors and my family. Growing up, my family would always travel to Minnesota to visit other relatives and I continued to encounter more Scandinavian motifs. One of my favorite places to go as a child was the Hjemkomst Center in Moorhead, MN. I was so intrigued with all of the antiques and artifacts as well as the Hjemkomst Viking Ship and the Hopperstad Stave Church replica. It was just a marvel to me that such things could be built in the modern era, let alone in the time of the Vikings. This is where my love of Nordic history and lore arose and I found that as I learn more I become even more curious. I plan to take a course in Nordic folklore, and I also hope to be able to progress in the Norwegian language through external resources so that I can become more proficient. I look forward to one day traveling to Norway, as well as the other Nordic countries, and being able to experience the culture for myself. Until then I will continue to immerse myself in the culture the best that I can with the opportunities I am given. Due to the experiences and knowledge I have gained through my studies of the Nordic cultures I am also able to effectively communicate with and understand those from diverse backgrounds; social interaction is a large part of my future career.



UPCOMING EVENTS

October is always a busy month at PLU and in the SCC and with so many upcoming events in October, we want point out some lectures and classes for everyone interested in Nordic and Nordic American cultures.

Tuesday, October 15, 7 p.m., the **Harstad Memorial Lecture** will be held in the SCC – the speaker will be Dr. Rikke Cortsen from Denmark will give a lecture on Nordic comics and graphic novels. She is currently a lecturer at University of Texas-Austin.

Wednesday, October 16, 7 p.m., the **Thor Heyerdahl lecture** will be held in the SCC – more details to follow. Both these lectures are open to the public and completely free!

Cooking classes will return (all 10 a.m. to noon) with **Norwegian Cooking Classes** on October 8, 22, and 26; **Danish Cooking Class** on October 16; and **Swedish Cooking Class** on October 30. All the classes are open to the public and cost \$5.

Marilyn Hansen also returns to the SCC to teach **rosemaling** on October 10-12, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. each day. We will have a registration on our website starting in August; you will also be able to reach the registration via our Facebook page. The course costs \$75.

Nordic Folk Dance Classes will be returning this fall as well, taught by Leslie Foley and Bob Hamilton. It will meet every Monday from September 23 to October 28 in Mary Baker Russell Music Center, room 322 from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The cost for all classes is \$15 for students, \$20 for individuals, and \$30 for couples. The last class day will include live musicians! Registration will appear on the SCC's website in August. Look for it!



2019 SUMMER CALENDAR

SUMMER OPEN HOURS

(June through August)

Sunday: 1-4 p.m.

Regular hours return September 9.

All events take place in the SCC and are free unless otherwise noted.

July 20 (Sat).....Embla Lodge Summer Luncheon (contact Embla lodge #2)

Sept. 11 (Wed) SCC Council Meeting, 6 p.m.

Sept. 15 (Sun).....Danish Sangaften, 1 p.m.

Sept. 20 (Fri).....Chocolate Trail - SCC welcomes new students 1-3 p.m.

Sept. 23 (Mon).....Nordic Folk Dance Class 7 p.m., MDRC 322, (\$15/20/30)

Sept. 30 (Mon)Nordic Folk Dance Class 7 p.m., MDRC 322

Oct. 2 (Wed).....Danish Sisterhood, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

Oct. 7 (Mon)Nordic Folk Dance Class 7 p.m., MDRC 322

Oct. 8 (Tues).....Norwegian Cooking Class, 10 a.m.-noon, \$5

Oct. 9 (Wed) SCC Council Meeting, 6 p.m.

Oct. 10-12 (Thu-Sat).....Rosemaling Class by Marilyn Hansen, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., \$75

Oct. 14 (Mon).....Nordic Folk Dance Class 7 p.m., MDRC 322

Oct. 15 (Tues)Harstad Memorial Lecture, 7 p.m.

Oct. 16 (Wed).....Danish Cooking Class, 10 a.m.-noon, \$5

Oct. 16 (Wed).....Thor Heyerdahl Lecture, 7 p.m.

Oct. 20 (Sun)Danish Sangaften, 1 p.m.

Oct. 21 (Mon).....Nordic Folk Dance Class 7 p.m., MDRC 322

Oct. 22 (Tues)Norwegian Cooking Class, 10 a.m.-noon, \$5

Oct. 26 (Sat).....Norwegian Cooking Class, 10 a.m.-noon, \$5

Oct. 28 (Mon).....Nordic Folk Dance Class 7 p.m., MDRC 322

Oct. 30 (Wed).....Swedish Cooking Class, 10 a.m.-noon, \$5

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AT THE SCANDINAVIAN CULTURAL CENTER

As a member, you will have the opportunity to volunteer in areas of specific interest to you. For example, SCC members serve on the Scandinavian Cultural Center Council, teach cooking and language classes, help with exhibit preparation and much more. Another way to volunteer is by serving as a docent during regularly scheduled public hours. To find out more about volunteering, send us an email at scancntr@plu.edu or call 253-535-7349.



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