



VIKING HALL 349-1613
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My Story, Part I

In my last President’s Message I explored the reception and treatment of Norwegian immigrants to the United States. This time I will tell you my story as an immigrant.

I was born in Stavanger on Norway’s southwestern coast in 1946. That is where I received my very Norwegian name of “Terje Gjert Birkedal.” My father was a small businessman and with his brother ran a family business called “Birkedal’s Skinn og Huder (Skins and Hides)” which was located in traditional wooden “Hansa Style” warehouse on the wharf. My father bought skins and hides from the farmers in and around Rogaland (the province that surrounds Stavanger) and sold them to wholesalers in Bergen who in turn sold them in England. On any given day my father and his brother could be found in their small office surrounded by friendly farmers talking about this and that. My brother, Audun, who was born 12 years before me, said the “snus” would often fly wildly across the room and you had to be careful not to get caught in the line of fire.



Terje Birkedal and his mother just before immigrating to the U.S.

My mother was a housewife who had previously trained and worked as a secretary. We lived in a two-story house on Holbersgata near what was then the stadium of the Viking soccer team (still the reigning soccer team in Stavanger). My family lived on the upper floor and renters lived on the lower floor—a typical arrangement in Norway at the time.

Two years after I was born my father, at the young age of 42, died of a heart attack while visiting the library. He had had contracted rheumatic fever as a child and it had permanently weakened his heart. He had had another difficult bout with heart disease during World War II which had made his condition worse. Norway was under occupation by the Germans and medicine was scarce. Once the doctor said he had only one aspirin in his possession and yet he kindly gave it to my father.

Despite the death of my father I lived in a safe and friendly neighborhood. Rune Bjornsen, the son of my father’s best friend, lived only three houses away and little Astrid Hipness lived next door. We played outdoors like all Norwegian children in snow, rain, or shine. I once tried to convince Rune to ride down a very steep hill beside our house on a kick-sled with me—he wisely refused. He was nonetheless a devoted friend (and still is) and once sat with me at the head of the stairs by my front door waiting for my mother to come home. I had asked him to stay because I was convinced that trolls lived in the attic and they would eat me if I remained alone.

For my mother and older brother life was not so easy. My mother began to work as a secretary again and my brother pushed a delivery hand-cart around town to help make ends meet. After he graduated from high school he apprenticed as an airplane mechanic at for Braathens at Sola Airfield. Meanwhile I started to go to a nursery school.

President’s Message continues on Page 2

My Story, Part 1

President's Message continues from Page 1



Thorbjorn Birkedal, a cousin, (on the left) and Audun Birkedal, Terje's brother, (on the right) out in the mountains with a two-year-old Terje.

To get there I either rode on a little seat behind my mother on her bicycle or the local commercial bus driver would pick me up at the bus stop near our house and make sure I was properly dropped off at the school (that was Norway back then for you).

Post-war Norway's economy was badly broken and the future looked bleak, My mother and my brother began to think seriously about immigration to America. The parents of my mother had immigrated in 1910 and left her behind to be raised by her grandmother. They soon convinced my mother and brother that the family should at least visit America, and in case they liked it, do the necessary paperwork ahead-of-time to stay as full-fledged immigrants. Our summer cabin was sold to cover the costs of the trip and we all got the necessary small pox shots.

We all left as uncertain immigrants in December of 1950. I was 4 and a half, my brother just short of 17 years old, and my mother 43. We boarded an old steamship of the Bergen Line and headed off for England on a two-stage over-seas trip to the United States.

(See the April issue of the Flyer for the rest of the story!)

*Fraternally yours,
Terje "Ted" Birkedal*



Fra Biblioteket

This month I will turn attention back to Iceland's premier crime fiction writer, Arnaldur Indridason. In the latest addition to our library collection, Indridason's Operation Napoleon takes us back to the end of WWII as a German bomber crash-lands on a remote Icelandic Glacier. The bomber is soon lost to history as snow falls heavily on the glacier and buries the plane, seemingly for good. Flashing forward to the present day, the bomber is resurfacing thanks to the present global climate changes that are melting away the ice grave that had buried the aircraft. Surprisingly, an American intelligence team is immediately sent to recover items from the wreckage and this causes concern among both Icelandic civilians that are present in the area as well as high up officials in the Icelandic government.

While the book is a work of fiction, it does highlight some of the historical context of American involvement in Iceland, especially as it concerns activities at Keflavik airport, Iceland's main international airport (an airport with a present-day connection to Anchorage in the summer season). An interesting fact is that this airport was built by the United States military during WWII and was under joint operation with Iceland up until 2006 when the military installation was handed over to Iceland. A gripping story that while fictional in nature, highlights some of the historical background to even more present day Icelandic-American relations. Come check it out in the lodge library which is open during normal business hours and during certain events. Sons members can check out books to take home and read.

Tom Falskow, Lodge Librarian



Flyer Corrections:

The wonderful write up on Erling Johansen, in the February Flyer, was written by his wife, Eileen Johansen.

Also, in the February Flyer - President's Message: the reference to World War II on the continuation page (2) should have been World War I.

Any comments, corrections and submissions are welcome! - the Editor

DISTRICT 2 CONVENTION

The 2016 District 2 Convention is June 1-4 in Coeur d'Alene, ID, hosted by Harald Haarfager Lodge No 2-011. Convention chair is Pam Silk.

Convention allows members to connect with old friends, meet new ones and to watch the business of our district as it is conducted during the 3 days of meetings. The President's Reception is Wednesday evening with delegates being seated and the first session starting the next morning. It concludes with installation of officers and a banquet on Saturday evening.

Socializing and discussions of various issues occurs at breaks, meals and in the evenings. Coffee breaks at convention are coffee and cookie breaks. No bran muffins or fruit for these Norwegians – it's coffee, tea and cookies all the way! The convention host for the 2018 district convention will have a hospitality room on Saturday evening.

And did you know that Zone 6 (Alaska) always has a hospitality room at convention too? Our party is a highlight of every convention! Every lodge contributes food and door prizes. Don't know how this started but it just keeps going on like the energizer bunny! We even bring our own music – Marit plays and there is singing and, sometimes, dancing.

Our elected lodge delegates for this year include Marit Kristiansen, Sandra Hanson, Ted Birkedal, John Olnes and Christie Ericson. Alternates are Linda Bustamante and Jacob Mathiesen.

The 2018 District 2 Convention will be in the Seattle area, hosted by the District 2 Board. Lodge members might think about being available for election as a delegate next time.

It's well worth the time and effort!



Woodcarving Time is Here!

The Last Frontier Woodcarvers will be offering another day of woodcarving on:

Saturday, March 12, 9 am - 4 pm at the Viking Hall.

There will be 10 classes offered. You may see the projects and register at Artistry in Wood (Northway Mall) from February 24 until March 6th. Cost will be \$25.00 per person.

A parent must attend with any child participating.

Classes are woodburning, cottonwood bark face, cottonwood bark house, cottonwood bark santa, spoons, feathers, cat, little man, relief and diamond willow.

See you at the 12th annual Artistry in Wood --- it's a must see event!!

For more information contact Cindy McDowell at 862-1143.

This is a SONS event.

Facebook / Online Newsletters

If you haven't had a chance to yet, check out the Bernt Balchen Lodge Facebook page.

<https://www.facebook.com/BerntBalchen/>



Our Facebook page is a great way to see photos of Lodge activities, hear about upcoming events, find out what other Sons of Norway lodges are up to, and learn fun facts about Norway and Norwegian culture.

The Lodge's newsletter, The Flyer, is also available on our website, so now you can see all those great newsletter photos in color!

<http://www.sofnalaska.com/newsletter/>



SUNSHINE REPORT

MARCH



Greetings are sent to the following members celebrating a birthday who are at least 75 years young.

A Big Happy 90th Birthday

to

Wayne Rockne

Dwight Hovland

Phillip Ramstad

Sigmund Restad

Gordon Severson

Frederick Steinouser

Robert Stinson

*"Happy
Birthday!"*

If you know someone who needs a little sunshine, *call* or *email* Cindy McDowell:

696-0725 (cell - 862-1143) Email: ccmcd38@hotmail.com

*"Gratulerer
med dagen!"*

Opportunity to Meet the Norwegian Senior Arctic Official

Come and listen to conversations about the Arctic with Norway's Senior Arctic Official and Ambassador to the Arctic, who will be in Anchorage for one day only.



The Arctic Council is a high-level intergovernmental forum that addresses issues faced by the Arctic governments and the indigenous people of the Arctic. It has eight member countries: Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the U.S. Each country has a designated Senior Arctic Official to represent their country. Norway's Senior Arctic Official and Ambassador to the Arctic is Else Berit Eikeland, who will be in Anchorage on Monday, March 14th.

Here are two opportunities for Sons of Norway members to meet Else Berit Eikeland.

1. Coffee/Breakfast for Sons of Norway members, 9:00 am, at Westmark Anchorage Hotel, located at 720 W 5th Ave. Come join me with Else Berit Eikeland who will talk about, "Polar Exploration and Policy." There is no cost for joining us; coffee and/or breakfast is optional and will be the responsibility of each person.

Please RSVP to Lise Falskow at 907norway@gmail.com prior to Friday, March 12th, if you plan on attending.

Bike Tune-up

Saturday, April 2nd



Get ready to ride. Bring your bicycle to the Bernt Balchen Lodge for the spring tuneup.

Martin and Mark Hansen will adjust your bike's fit, tighten the bolts, lubricate the chain, pump up the tires, and make sure it is ready to ride.

The tuneup will be on *Saturday April 2nd, 10:00 am - 1:00 pm.*

Location is the northeast corner of the upper parking lot.

Martin and Mark would like to schedule the tuneups. Please contact Martin at bikeskifish@gmail.com or (907) 980-5333 (text or call) to set up a time.

The first 12 Son's members under eighteen years old will receive a free pocket size bike multi tool to help them in future tuneups.

(Deb and I attended a get together in Portland devoted to small business, doing good, and enterprise. At the end all attendees were given a \$100.00 bill and asked to use it to do good. Bike tools for kids is my project.)

Martin Hansen

Make it Monday Forum:
International Cooperation & Peace in the Arctic:
Celebrating 20 Years of the Arctic Council



Monday, March 14 2016
noon-1pm | Dena'ina Center

2. Lunch program at noon at the Dena'ina Center presented by the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce and the Alaska World Affairs Council. Else Berit Eikeland will speak about, "International Cooperation in the Arctic: Celebrating 20 Years of the Arctic Council." Program will be moderated by Anchorage Mayor Ethan Berkowitz. Admission discounts are offered for early registration at www.anchoragechamber.org.

Else Berit Eikeland joined the Norwegian Foreign Service in 1987. She is a career diplomat with previous postings in Manila, San Francisco and as Minister Counsellor with a special responsibility for energy at the Royal Norwegian Embassy in London.

Meet the World



Karen Ruud and Christie Ericson at Bridge Builders Meet the World event.

Lodge Fundraising Reports

Scholarship Fund, Super Bowl Raffle 2016

Thanks to all of you who supported our Lodge Scholarship Fund by purchasing raffle tickets!

The enthusiastic crowd attending the Sons of Norway Super Bowl Party enjoyed a great game and wonderful food. Wayne Johnson's Lapskaus stew was once again a hit.

We congratulate all winners and especially the big winner Anna Bryant. Our thanks to those who helped with ticket sales, food preparation, and event set-up and clean-up.

Here are the 2016 winners!

#1	\$200	Susan Soby	#165	\$25	John Hall
#7	\$50	Marianne Kristiansen	#180	\$25	Annelise Moss
#13	\$100	Ted Birkedal	#195	\$100	Christian Mathiesen
#45	\$50	Lynn Ann Eng	#210	\$50	Robert Weimer
#66	\$25	Emily Tibor	#225	\$25	Sheila Harris
#75	\$50	Matthias Medina	#240	\$100	Larry Hinkle/Leif Strand
#90	\$100	Gordon Severson	#250	\$25	Marc Giampaoli
#105	\$25	Cindy Casqueira	#270	\$50	Marilyn Lee
#121	\$50	Sheila Hanson	#299	\$250	Anna Decker
#150	\$200	Karen Ruud	#300	\$1000	Anna Bryant

The Super Bowle Raffle is the primary source of funds for the Sons of Norway Bernt Balchen Lodge No. 2-046 Language/ Heritage/Higher Education Scholarships.

Spark (Kicksled) Winner

The winner of the Spark (Kicksled) was none other than Tim Andrew.

Tim's daughter, Juliana Andrew; *also known as Santa Lucia*, drew the winning ticket.

The kicksled was donated by Marit Kristiansen.

Raffle ticket sales and other donations for 2015 totaled \$759.08.

Proceeds go to Sons of Norway Foundation Cultural Heritage Fund.



FINANCIAL WORKSHOP

*For All Members and Guest/Friends of Sons of Norway Lodge
Elements of a Comprehensive Financial Program*

Thursday, March 10th 5:00 - 6:15 pm *Prior to the Membership Potluck*

Bernt Balchen Lodge - FREE to Sons Members

Come to the Financial Workshop on the Elements of a Comprehensive Financial Program.

This is a free benefit to Sons of Norway members to assist members in building a strong financial program for themselves and their families.

Presenter: Glenn C. Jacob Registered Representative, Sons of Norway, Fraternal Benefits Counselor
Securities offered through Legend Equities Corporation FINRA & SIPC
10355 E. Palmer-Wasilla Highway #107 Palmer, AK 99645

Sons of Norway Bernt Balchen Lodge Scholarships

The 2016 scholarship applications for both the Language and Heritage Scholarship and the Higher Education Scholarship are available at the Sons of Norway Bernt Balchen Lodge

(Viking Hall, 8141 Briarwood Street, Anchorage, 9 am -1 pm, Tuesday-Friday).

The *Language and Heritage Scholarship* is available for persons of any age who are interested in attending or participating in Norwegian language or heritage programs.

The *Higher Education Scholarship* is available for persons entering a school of learning beyond the high school level.

Application deadlines are once again April 15. Scholarship recipients will be chosen by April 30th and announced at the 17th of May Celebration.

If you have any questions concerning the application process and procedures, please contact Jane Moe Newby at 274-1357 or email bigksis@yahoo.com.

Please mail or drop off application packets to:

Sons of Norway
Attn: Scholarship Committee
8141 Briarwood St
Anchorage, AK 99518

Several other scholarships are also offered by the Sons of Norway Foundation and District 2. Go to www.sofn.com/foundation and www.sonsofnorway2.com to get a full description for each scholarship and application details.

Application Requirements for Language and Heritage Scholarship

1. Name, date of birth, and address
2. Name of program to be attended
3. Membership in Sons of Norway Lodge #2-046, or a relation to a member of Sons of Norway Lodge #2-046
4. Essay describing your involvement in Sons of Norway Lodge #2-046 and what the Sons of Norway has meant to you
5. Essay of "Why I want to attend a Language/Heritage Program"

Application Requirements for the Higher Education Scholarship

1. Name, date of birth, and address
2. Name of High School with transcript included
3. Date of graduation or expected graduation
4. Membership in Sons of Norway Lodge #2-046, or a relation to a member of Sons of Norway Lodge #2-046
5. Extra-curricular activities and honors
6. Essay describing your involvement in Sons of Norway Lodge #2-046 and what the Sons of Norway has meant to you
7. Essay of "Why I should receive a Higher Education Scholarship"



Consul's Corner

Information and Opportunities for Norwegian Alaskans



Arctic Frontiers Conference

Last month I had the opportunity to attend the Arctic Frontiers Conference in Tromsø, Norway, which was attended by 1,700 people from around the



Erna Solberg, Prime Minister of Norway

world. This weeklong conference is something I would highly recommend for anyone interested in going to Norway, a place that understands the Arctic, to learn more about the number one foreign policy priority of Norway. This conference included Norway's Prime Minister, Norway's Foreign Minister, Norway's Minister of Oil & Energy, Norway's Minister of Climate and the Environment, as well as other leaders from around the world.



Lise with the Alaskan winners of the Meet the Arctic Short Film Contest

The topics this year focused on the balance between resource utilization and preservation, and between industrial and environmental interests in the Arctic. Many discussions centered around well-planned, well-governed, and sustainable development in the Arctic with a balance between environmental concerns and industrial expansion.

For more information you can visit the website:

<http://www.arcticfrontiers.com>

Norway has also put a lot of focus on youth leadership and sponsored four Youth Ambassadors from Alaska as well as the winners of the Meet the Arctic Short Film Contest who are also from Alaska. These individuals were professional, engaged, positive, and inspired by being



Alaskan Youth Ambassadors at Conference

part of this event. They have written wonderful short summaries of their impressions and how much they enjoyed and learned from this experience which can be found at:



Alaskan Youth Ambassadors at evening dinner/program

<https://www.facebook.com/InstituteNorth>

Lise Falskow

I am honored to have been asked to serve as the Norwegian Honorary Consul in Alaska. When information and opportunities come across my desk, I will let Norwegians in our community know about them in a regular Consul's Corner section of the Flyer.

If you have any questions, you can reach me at 907norway@gmail.com.



Sons of Norway
8141 Briarwood St.
Anchorage, AK 99518
907-349-1613

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EVENTS

MARCH

- | | | |
|----|----------|--|
| 1 | Tuesday | 10:00 am - Noon
Needle Crafts and Rosemaling Class |
| 10 | Thursday | 6:30 pm - Potluck Social
7:30 pm - Board/Membership Meeting
New Member Welcome |
| 12 | Saturday | 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Woodcarving Workshop |
| 15 | Tuesday | 10:00 am - Noon
Needle Crafts and Rosemaling Class |

FOOD BANK DONATIONS

Our lodge continues to donate canned goods, non-perishable foods and money to the local food bank.

Please bring your food or monetary donation in to Viking Hall.



All events take place at Viking Hall, 8141 Briarwood St., unless otherwise noted.

Please send articles or event information

for the next Newsletter by March 20th to: sonancak@gmail.com Attention - **Ruth** Subject Line - **The Flyer**