

The
Flyer



VIKING HALL 349-1613
www.sofnalaska.com

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Norwegians in Alaska, and a Question

According to the U.S. Census Americans of Norwegian ancestry make up 6.5% of the current population of Alaska. In fact, they constitute the fourth largest ancestry group in Alaska. And Norwegians have been coming to Alaska for decades. In fact, in the late nineteenth century “New Norway” was a nick-name used by folks who were promoting Alaska among Norwegians.

One group of early arrivals were the Norwegian Sami who were brought to Alaska by Sheldon Jackson to teach the Inupiat the ways of reindeer herding. The first group came in 1894 and were followed by dozens more in 1898. With them came an assortment of Norwegian administrators, doctors, teachers, and pastors to help organize the project and minister to the needs of the Sami. One of the more famous and adventurous Lutheran pastors that accompanied the Sami was T.T. Brevig; the village of Brevig Mission on the Seward Peninsula was named after him.

Many of the Sami also married in among the Alaska Natives with whom they lived. The descendants of those early unions are still in Alaska today. Many, such as Margie Brown, former President and CEO of Cook Inlet Native Corporation, have made major contributions to today’s Alaska. However, the Sami were not the only Norwegians who married in the early days of Alaska; young Norwegian sailors and fisherman founded numerous families with their Alaska Native spouses from Southeast Alaska to the Aleutians. Sven Haakonson, former Director of the Alutiig Museum in Kodiak, a MacArthur Scholar, and now a noted Professor of Anthropology and Curator at the University of Washington is from one such family. One of his ancestors was a Norwegian sailor named Christiansen who found a pretty Alutiig girl at a dance in Old Harbor in the 1930s. Christiansen’s best friend, a Danish sailor named Haakonson, also found a girl he liked at the same dance. Both married those pretty girls and ended up becoming Sven’s “bestefars”.

The Gold Rush became a magnet for Norwegians in search of both adventure and wealth. Most did not find wealth, but many found adventure. One of the most famous of the Gold Rush Norwegians was Leonhard Seppala who came to Nome from Northern Norway at the turn of the twentieth century. He soon found he had both a knack and love for dog mushing and hauled freight from Nome to the wide-scattered mines of the Seward Peninsula. He first gained fame for winning the grueling 408-mile All Alaska Sweepstakes Race and then going on to win the Ruby Derby. But his most enduring claim to fame came in 1925 when he successfully took on the most dangerous leg of the serum dog-sled-run to Nome across perilous sea ice and in the midst of a forbidding blizzard. His feat saved the people of Nome from a raging diphtheria epidemic and the serum run is celebrated today in the running of the Iditarod Trail Dog Sled Race.

And if I am talking about early Norwegian Alaskans I can’t leave out Petersburg, Alaska. It was founded by Peter Buschman, a Norwegian immigrant, who built a cannery, sawmill, and dock after scouting out a great location on Mitkof Island in 1897.

His cannery and dock soon became a magnet for Norwegians in the fishing industry and a full, flourishing town was incorporated by 1910. Because the majority of its inhabitants are of Norwegian descent, Petersburg is known by the nickname of “Little Norway”.



Photo by Hans-Jürgen Hübner - wikicommons

President’s Message continues on Page 2

Calling all Alaskan Norwegians!

President's Message continues from Page 1



It is no accident that Petersburg proudly boasts the largest the Sons of Norway lodge in Alaska with nearly 400 adult members in a town of only 3,100 people; and it is no accident that their lodge is the oldest in Alaska dating back to 1911 and their Sons of Norway Hall which dates to 1912 is on the National Register of Historic Places.

But Petersburg's lodge numbers raise a question. If a town of some 3,000 people can support a lodge with 400 active members why can't we? Bernt Balchen Lodge is located in Alaska's biggest city and yet we hover at just over 300 members. Two fifths of Alaskans live in Anchorage. So where are all the Norwegians hiding? To judge from the census numbers there should be at least 19,000 people of Norwegian ancestry in Anchorage not to mention thousands of folks of Swedish, Danish, and Finnish descent who we would also gladly like to welcome as potential members. Plus, remember we accept everyone who is simply just interested in Norwegian and Nordic heritage and culture. We have a big tent to serve the needs of all kinds of people with an interest in the Nordic countries and their traditions.

Eivend Heiberg, CEO of Sons of Norway International, has set a goal of recruiting 3500 new members into Sons of Norway by 2020. It would be great if we could help meet that goal. Since we have a good number of Scandinavians swimming just below the surface in Anchorage one would think we could devise a way to catch them. By the way, I must admit I am a terrible fisherman. I am "Alaska's Number One Conservation Fisherman"; on my own I catch nothing. However, I have found out that when I go on a fishing charter and pay attention to what the captain says I usually limit out. If that is a lesson, perhaps we need some good "captains" who know how deep to set the hooks and what bait works best to catch a batch of Norwegian Americans or Scandinavian Americans. And I don't mean catch and release. We want to have them stay on as happy and content long-term members of Bernt Balchen Lodge.

I ask all of you to put your oars in the water and become fisher men and women for Sons of Norway. If you know of someone who might be interested in things Scandinavian tell them about Sons of Norway and the benefits of membership. If you have ideas about how to better recruit and keep new members share them with me or other lodge officers. Come to the next Board/Membership meeting on April 13th and tell us your thoughts. We would like to see you; too often we have only a scattering of members in attendance. It is your lodge and the Board/Membership meeting gives you an opportunity to participate in important lodge business. You get to vote by "the sign", where else can you do that? Nowhere! So, see you there.

*Fraternally yours,
Terje "Ted" Birkedal*

SPRING BREAK-UP MUSICAL FUN BY LODGE TALENT

3:00 PM, SUNDAY, APRIL 30, 2017

Come greet and celebrate the Alaskan Spring by coming to this fun musical event put on by our talented Bernt Balchen Lodge Members at Viking Hall.

The event is FREE but we welcome desserts and/or donations.

This "Musical Fun" spring celebration is again the inspiration of Hedwig Faber and Anne Adasiak-Andrew, two of the most talented amateur singers in Anchorage.



Sons of Norway, Bernt Balchen Lodge
Norwegian Fish Dinner
Saturday, April 8th



GRAVLAKS (*Gravlax*)
MARINERT JARLSBERGOST
 (*Marinated Jarlsberg*)
MARINERT ANSJOS
 (*Marinated Anchovies*)
NORSKE KJOTTBØLLER
 (*Norwegian Meatballs*)

SOPP MED GJETOST OG TIMIAN FYLL ELLER
 (*Stuffed Mushrooms with Goat Cheese & Thyme*)
SJAMPINJONGER MED BLÅ SKIMMEROST OG VARLØK
 (*Stuffed Mushrooms with Blue Cheese & Scallions*)
KAVIAR PÅ RUBROD
 (*Kaviar on Ryebread*)

HJEMBAKT BRØD
 (*Homemade Bread!*)

Appetizers at 5:30 pm

Dinner at 5:50 and 6:20 pm

Entrees:



CIOPPINO MED KRABBE (AMERIKANS-ITALIENSK LAPSKAUS MED SKALLDYR-KRABBER, REKER, OG MUSLINGER)
 (*Cioppino with Dungeness Crab - Scandinavian at its heart but American/Italian in origin, Dungeness crab, shrimp, and clam stew*)
BENLØSE FUGLER
 (*"Boneless Bird" Stuffed Rolled Steak*)
POTETSTAPPE MED EPLER
 (*Mashed Potatoes with Apple finish*)
OVNSTEKTE ROTGRØNNSAKER MED BALSAMICOEDDIK (*Balsamic Roasted Root Vegetables*)
AGURKSALAT (*Cucumber Salad*)
SYLTEDE RØDBETER (*Pickled Beets*)

Desserts:

OSTEKAKE
 (*Cheesecake*)
SJOKOLADETERTE
 (*Chocolate Torte*)
RABARBRAKAKE
 (*Rhubarb Crisp*)
BLØTKAKE
 (*Cream Cake*)
FRUKTIS MED AKEVITT
 (*Aquavit Sorbet*)



Music starts at 6:30 pm!



MUSIC by
 BOOTLEG BROWN

Adults - \$30 Ages 12-18 - \$15 Ages 6-11 - \$5 Under 5 yrs - Free

Call Viking Hall - 349-1613 for Reservations



"Gratulerer med dagen!"



SUNSHINE REPORT



"Happy Birthday!"

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

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

| | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Ruta Cukurs | Delores Lambert | Aud Severson | Robert Strother |
| Loretta Hodson | Donna Luiten | Leif Strand | Arni Thomson |

If you know someone who needs a little sunshine, *Please call 696-0725 (cell - 862-1143) or email Cindy McDowell: ccmcd38@hotmail.com*

Wood Carving at Viking Hall

Thank you to Cindy McDowell and all the other folks who gave their time and expertise at the Wood Carving Seminar!

There is always an amazing lunch served, and as you can see by the photos, this is a popular and well attended event. Don't miss the next one, coming in October.

Photos courtesy of Ruth Kvernplassen



Amanda Saxton carving a spoon.



Cindy McDowell and the happy wood carvers.



Amazing creations can be found at the seminar.

Norwegians in the Iditarod - Heia, Heia, Heia!

Iditarod fans came out to cheer the mushers and their dogs.

The Norwegian mushers placed as follows:

- 4th - Joar Leifseth Ulsom
- 6th - Ralph Johannessen
- 26th - Lars Monsen
- 45th - Geir Idar Hjelvik



Photo courtesy of John Lovett



Photo courtesy of John Lovett



John and Christina Lovett.

Photo courtesy of Ruth Kvernplassen



Photo courtesy of Ruth Kvernplassen



Photo courtesy of John Lovett

“Meet the World” a Success in 2017



Parade of Nations! L - R: Karen Ruud, Linda Bustamante, Gayle Mathiesen.
Photo courtesy of Linda Bustamante

Sons of Norway Bernt Balchen Lodge has been participating in Bridge Builders of Anchorage “Meet the World” for many years now. “Meet the World”, is an official “Fur Rondy” event which showcases and celebrates the different cultures that make Anchorage one of the most vibrant and diverse cities in the United States. This year “Meet the World” was held at the Dena’ina Center rather than at the Anchorage Museum because the museum is still under renovation.

We had a centrally located table we were able to reach and talk to hundreds of visitors throughout the day. We had great assistance from the Royal Norwegian Embassy and Sons of Norway International with some of the handouts and displays. Our enthusiastic greeting team was led by Linda Bustamante and Melinda Hansen and also



Melinda Hansen ready to greet visitors.
Photo courtesy of Ted Birkedal

included Karen Ruud, Gayle Mathiesen, Charlene Howe, Steinar Hansen, Merlin Hamre, and myself. As President I wish to thank the team for a job well done. This year, we had a beautiful and informative table thanks to Linda and Melinda – a real eye grabber.

In addition, our Norwegian theme was echoed by Pia Meyer and Anne McCormick who offered a variety of exciting Nordic items for sale in an eye-catching display in the lobby just outside the main hall.

Over the years, participating in “Meet the World” has allowed us to inform thousands of attendees, both adults and children, about both the wonders of Norway and the value of Sons of Norway.



Karen Ruud and Charlene Howe greet visitors at Meet the World.
Photo courtesy of Ted Birkedal

*Terje “Ted” Birkedal
President, Sons of Norway Bernt Balchen Lodge*

2nd Annual Spring Silent Auction Saturday, April 8th

Proceeds go to Convention Delegate Fund

Every other year delegates from our lodge attend the Sons of Norway district and international conventions. Each delegate pays their own travel, lodging and registration expenses. In an effort to assist with a portion of these costs, the proceeds from the Silent Auction will be set aside in a special convention delegate fund.

This year’s Silent Auction will be held from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. during the Norwegian Fish Dinner on Saturday, April 8.



King Harald Medallion will be available for bidding.

Wood crafted items will again be featured and we hope to have a fine selection of Scandinavian/Nordic items as well.

Please consider donating any gently used Scandinavian/Nordic items for the auction. Bring your donations to Viking Hall (open 9:00 am-1:00 pm, Tuesday-Friday) or call Cynthia at 562-2794 for more information or to arrange a drop-off time outside of office hours.

Thank You in advance for your support!

DITT og DATT!

Last Cooking Class for the Season!

The date for the April cooking class is moving to April 23rd due to a scheduling conflict.

At the April class we will be making Syttende Mai kaker, pølser, and potetstappe. This will be the last cooking class for the season.

\$20/class (Sons of Norway members) \$30/class (Non-members)

5:00-6:30 pm at Viking Hall.

Contact Christie Ericson at least one week before the class to sign up.

christieak@gmail.com
907-602-0673



World Happiness Report

Norway is #1!

After ranking fourth for the last two years, Norway jumped three spots and displaced three-time winner Denmark to take the title of "world's happiest country" for the first time.

Go to the link for more information:

<http://www.cnn.com/2017/03/20/travel/worlds-happiest-countries-united-nations-2017/index.html>

#Growingto2020

Sons of Norway is kicking off a member recruitment campaign and our lodge is excited to take up the challenge.

We've been asked to increase our membership by 10% or 33 new members - we can do this!

Being a part of the Bernt Balchen Lodge provides our members numerous opportunities to learn about Norway and experience the culture of a country that many consider one of the most beautiful places on earth! Please give some thought to who you know that might be interested in joining our lodge and invite them to an event.

We have membership brochures at the lodge or they can join online at www.sonsofnorway.com And lodge officers are always available to talk about the benefits of membership.



Your vision. Your creativity. Your venue.

Memories are shared here ~

Viking Hall rentals - 349-1613

Remember - Sons of Norway members receive a discount for private events held at Bernt Balchen Lodge #46, Viking Hall.

Tradition Tuesday

Tradition Tuesday is an opportunity to learn about the diverse cultures that make Anchorage unique.

Tradition Tuesday is part of "Welcoming Anchorage" and takes place in the Loussac Library in the Innovation Lab (4th floor).

Our lodge will be presenting on April 25, from 6:00 - 7:30 pm. Some of our members with musical talent have volunteered to participate.

We will have a table to display information and of course, our wonderful Norwegian desserts to share.

This is a great opportunity to share Norwegian culture and our history in our community.

To find out about Tradition Tuesday's, Welcoming Anchorage and more visit the Municipality of Anchorage website:

www.muni.org/Departments/Mayor/WelcomingAnchorage/Pages/TraditionTuesday



Welcome New Members!



L - R: Anna Decker, Cindy McDowell, new member *Kristin Raeesi*, new member *Amy Ciccone*, and Sandra Hanson.

Photo courtesy of Amanda Saxton

Sons of Norway Bernt Balchen Lodge Scholarships

The 2017 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 May 1st, 2017. Scholarship recipients will be chosen by May 15th and announced at the Syttende Mai Celebration at Viking Hall on May 21st.

If you have any questions concerning the application process and procedures, please contact Amanda Saxton at 907-349-1613, Tuesday - Friday between 9:00 am and 1:00 pm, or email sonacak@gmail.com -

Attention: Amanda
Subject Line: Scholarships

Please mail or drop off application packets to:

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

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"

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 of each scholarship and application details.

If you don't think you can qualify see below!

And join us at the next board meeting on April 13th where we will present the scholarship to our amazing Cultural Director.

Christie Ericson Wins the Carl Saltveit Scholarship



We wish to congratulate *Christie Ericson*, our Cultural Director, on winning Sons of Norway District 2's coveted Carl Saltveit Scholarship.

The scholarship will cover room, board, and tuition at the International

Summer School of the University of Oslo where Christie has been accepted into the Norwegian Language and Culture Course Program. David Champion, the Scholarship Committee Chair wrote that "The entire District 2 Scholarship Committee was so impressed with Christie's application. What an amazing person you have in your lodge." We second that assessment!

We will formally present the scholarship and celebrate Christie Ericson's winning of the Carl Saltveit Scholarship at the next lodge Board/Membership meeting, which will be April 13th at 7:00 pm.

Terje "Ted" Birkedal
President, Sons of Norway Bernt Balchen Lodge



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

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EVENTS FOR APRIL!

4
Tuesday
 10:00 am
 Needle Crafts &
 Rosemaling Class

8
Saturday
 5:30 pm
 Norwegian Fish Dinner
 Silent Auction

13
Thursday
 7:00 pm
 Board/Membership
 Meeting

18
Tuesday
 10:00 am
 Needle Crafts &
 Rosemaling Class

30
Sunday
 3:00 pm
 Spring Breakup & Musical
 Fun by Lodge Talent

Lodge Members

Do you have any news of interest to the lodge?
 Perhaps a question on Norway, or our lodge, that we can answer?
 Are you looking for a traditional recipe, or do you have one to share?
 Maybe you want to tell us your best Lena and Ole joke?
Ditt og Datt (this and that) is the column for you.

To submit items to Ditt og Datt send an email to:
sonancak@gmail.com Subject Line: The Flyer/DittDatt

Other ways to find out what is happening in our lodge

Our Website: <http://www.sofnalaska.com>

(You can see our Flyer in "full color" by clicking on the Newsletter page)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/BerntBalchen



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.

Please consider helping those who are less fortunate.

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

Please send articles or event information

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