



VIKING HALL 349-1613
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Summer 2015 sommer



Sprucing up for Summer!
Thanks John and Steinar!

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SONS OF NORWAY BERNT BALCHEN LODGE – PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Norway’s Beloved and Brave Royal Family

By the time that you read this message we will have enjoyed a visit to Anchorage from His Majesty, King Harald V of Norway. King Harald is a member of a royal family that is beloved in Norway and admired around the world for their courage and service.

Soon after its final split from the Kingdom of Sweden in 1905, the people of Norway elected Prince Carl of Denmark to be their King. He was elected by an 80 percent margin by the people of Norway. Once king, Prince Carl took the Norwegian name and kingly title of Haakon VII. He was the first Norwegian king in over 500 years. During those five centuries the Norwegian royal line and nobility had entirely disappeared. That is why the Norwegians in 1905 sought their king from abroad.

Haakon VI proved to be an able leader who enthusiastically embraced his role as the King of Norway. His guiding motto was “All for Norway” and he traveled all over the country to meet with people both high and low. His wife, Maud, was the daughter of King Edward of England, and this royal union with Great Britain gave the new-born country of Norway some measure of extra protection from other great powers in the first decades of the twentieth century.

Unfortunately, in a bid to control the North Sea, Germany attacked little Norway without warning on April 9th, 1940. Luckily, the brave Norwegian gunners at Oslo’s Oscarsborg Fortress sank the German heavy cruiser, Blücher, and damaged the battleship, Lützow. This successful artillery action temporarily stunned the Germans and caused the rest of the attacking German flotilla to hesitate.

This delay gave the Norwegian government time to round up the Royal family, the Cabinet, and most of the Storting and put them on a special train for Hamar, Norway. On the train was Haakon VII and Crown Prince Olav and their immediate families. Little Prince Harald, only three, was accompanied by his mother Princess Märta. With only 30 minutes head start, here was the Norwegian government and the Royal Family hurtling by train through the Norwegian countryside. Also, on the train were the entire gold reserves of the Norwegian nation. The Germans caught on quickly and were soon trying to bomb the train to smithereens.

At Hamar and Elverum, German envoys urged the King either to come back to Oslo or abdicate. When he would bravely do neither, German fighters strafed the area he and the Crown Prince were hiding with heavy machine gun fire. Even the King of Sweden advised Haakon VII to comply with the German demands.

As the danger increased Princess Märta and Prince Harald were sent on a harrowing car trip to safety in Sweden. Eventually they would make their way to the United States, where Princess Märta and her children were frequent guests of the Roosevelts at the White House.

Meanwhile the King and the Crown Prince continued to elude the German bombings and strafings



Haakon VII and Crown Prince Olav in eastern Norway during their escape from the Nazis.

President’s Message continues on Page 2



The Great Escape

President's Message continues from Page 1

and remained steadfast in refusing the German "diplomatic" overtures. Haakon told the huddled members of the Cabinet and the Storting at Nybergsund that:

"For my part I cannot accept the German demands. It would conflict with all that I have considered to be my duty as King of Norway since I came to this country nearly thirty-five years ago."

These are brave words from a head of state on the run in the forests of Norway with only a small contingent of soldiers to protect both him and the rest of the members of government. The next day the Germans destroyed Nybergsund in an attempt to kill the King, the Crown Prince, and the fleeing members of the Government. And so, they all quickly made their way across the mountains to Molde in western Norway where they boarded a ship for the city of Tromsø in northern Norway.

In northern Norway surviving contingents of the Norwegian army together with British and French troops made a brave stand against the German military which was being illegally supplied and reinforced through the "neutral" country of Sweden. As one Norwegian officer put it: "Could anything be more perfect than shooting Germans in the full beauty of the midnight sun." But a Viking attitude toward war was not enough. After a hard fought series of battles on land and sea, the Norwegians and their Allies were eventually defeated. Some 860 Norwegian soldiers gave their lives in this struggle. Haakon VII and Olav, the Crown Prince, with their heads unbowed and ready to carry on the fight elsewhere finally boarded the HMS Devonshire in the midst of a deadly naval battle and headed for England.

In England, Haakon and Olav would lead the war effort in exile for the next five years. Both the King and the Crown Prince became powerful symbols of resistance to the Nazi occupation of Norway. Their radio broadcasts boosted the morale of Norwegians everywhere and they successfully championed the cause of Norway among the Allies. They traveled extensively giving encouragement to Norwegian soldiers in exile and to the thousands of Norwegians seafarers who sailed Norway's huge surviving commercial fleet whose ships carried much of the badly-needed freight of the Allies. Many in Norway heard the King's broadcasts on secret radios and shared the messages with their neighbors and friends. The first letter of Haakon's name together with the number seven appeared on walls as anti-German graffiti all over Norway as a visible hallmark of Norwegian resistance.

King Haakon and the rest of the Royal Family finally were finally able to return home to Norway in June of 1945, five years after their narrow escape from unprovoked German aggression and occupation. The King and the Royal Family were met by cheering crowds and a grateful Norwegian public. Haakon VII's long reign ended in 1957 with his death at the age of 85 from complications following a fall. Crown Prince Olav then succeeded to the throne as Olav V and continued the tradition of his father as "The People's King". He, in turn, was succeeded by his son who became King Harald V of Norway in 1991. All three of Norway's recent kings had their lives shaped by war, but all three rose above it in their service to their country and people. It is no accident that these same three kings have shared the same royal motto: "Alt for Norge".

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

Viking Hall News

A new computer is up and running in the office. Yeah! Programs needed are speedier and a joy to use. A new printer added to the efficiency of accomplishing more with ease.

Numerous in-house jobs have been taken care of, as well as several annual maintenance inspections.

Thanks to Gene and Shirley Moe for continuing to clean Briarwood Street and for caring for the South Side flower area. John and Ted cleaned 80th Street. They contribute to a more attractive setting and approach to Viking Hall.

Clean-up Day prior to Mother's Day Brunch led by John was a success. There were many jobs accomplished. John Olnes, Bev Griffin, Ted Birkedal, Merlin Hamre, worked outside washing the walls, picking up trash and cleaning brush, weeds and dirt away from the concrete retaining walls, while Cynthia Olnes and Sandra Hanson cleaned window screens and washed windows in the Hall. John washed the South Side windows outside. Next year, please add your name to the list of helpers!

Many hands make work lighter and quicker!

Sandra S Hanson, Viking Hall President



Erling Johansen Receives Norwegian Order of Merit

Erling T. Johansen, Esq., Royal Norwegian Consul for the State of Alaska, was awarded the prestigious Royal Norwegian Order of Merit, Knight First Class, for his outstanding service in the interest of Norway. The award was presented by H. E. Norwegian Ambassador to the United States, Kåre Aas, and signed by H. M. King Harald V who is the Grand Master of the Order. A private reception was held in his honor on May 1, 2015, at Viking Hall, Anchorage, Alaska.

We would like to congratulate Consul Erling T. Johansen, Esq. on his noted achievement!

Photograph courtesy of Cary Anderson, Eagle Eye Pictures



Kåre Aas, Norwegian Ambassador (Left) presents the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit to Erling T. Johansen.

Fourth of July Parade Hip! Hip!, Hurra! Hurra! Hurra!

Come join your fellow Sons of Norway members in the Bridge Builders section of the Anchorage Fourth of July Parade. Wear your bunad or Norwegian sweater if you have one, but if not, come anyway and meet your fellow Bernt Balchen Lodge members 10:00 AM, July 4th, at the southeast corner of 8th and D Streets beside the Conoco-Phillips Building. After assembling with the rest of the Bridge Builders groups we will proceed to form up in our assigned places for the parade. You need not do anything but walk and wave. We will carry the American flag and our large lodge banner. It's like Syttende Mai, but much bigger and with thousands of spectators. Come be part of the parade and proudly represent your Scandinavian-American heritage for all Anchorage to see. Bring the kids too, big or small, short or tall!

If you are interested in participating please contact Merlin Hamre at (907) 575-6420 or via email at mhamre@acsalaska.net.

Sunshine Report



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

"Happy Birthday!"

JUNE

Kathryn Aarseth
Martha Andrew
Dagrun Brotherston
Sylvi Dix
John Jensen
Wayne Johnson
Ms. Donald Marson
Cecile Mitchell
Thordis Nelson...
Congratulations for 95 years!
H. Lee Pederson
Colleen Rudledge
Anniversary!
Betty and Wayne Rockne,
married in 1948

"Gratulerer med dagen!"

JULY

Marilyn Freitag
Shirley J. Iverson
Paul Roseland
Donald Schulz
Alice Sears
Marvin Olson

AUGUST

Richard Anderson
Margaret Benson
Steinar Hansen
Sigurd Langnes
Donald Saur
Ann Strother
Diane Thomas
E. Frances Vadia

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

Bridge Builders Unity Gala

August 22rd, 2015 6:30 PM • The Dena'ina Center

Please support your Norwegian-American 2015 Honoree at the Bridge Builders' Unity Gala. In 2014 our Honoree was Eva Bilet, one of our longest-served Presidents of Bernt Balchen Lodge. We have reserved a table for this year's Honoree, his or her family and guests, and Sons of Norway Board Members. However, we encourage you to purchase additional tickets for \$60 per person and fill another table or two with more Norwegian-Americans. The more the merrier. The tickets cover dinner and all the festivities and entertainment.

If you are interested in attending please contact Ted Birkedal at (907) 351-6095 or via email at tedbirkedal@gmail.com. We ask that attendee's wear bunads or Norwegian sweaters, if they have them, to identify themselves as part of the Norwegian-American community. However, this attire is not required to attend.

WALK AND TALK

Rock and Ice: A Short History of the Anchorage Bowl.

Wednesday, June 17, 7:30 pm - Rain or Shine

Presented by Mark Hansen. Meet at Kincaid Park Chalet.

For more information, and to find out about more events through the summer, call the lodge at 349-1613, watch for the Eblast or go to <http://www.sofnalaska.com>. *Sponsored by Bernt Balchen Lodge!*

A Very Special Visitor



All Photos on this page courtesy of Glenn Soby, Sons of Norway, Bernt Balchen Lodge

MANY THANKS

Our Lodge was honored by a visit of His Majesty, King Harald V of Norway. When the Norwegian Embassy in Washington D.C. asked that our Lodge host a reception for His Majesty during his trip to Alaska, a Planning Committee was quickly appointed. We worked very closely with the Embassy and the Palace in Norway following their specific requirements for such an event. The entire Reception was detailed down to the minute, who was going to do what and especially how many people could be in attendance.

The Reception was wonderfully received by His Majesty, Norwegian Embassy Personnel and Norwegian Government and Palace attendees. In that regard, there are many who contributed to its success. I want to especially acknowledge the musicians, Hedwig Faber, Anne Adasiak-Andrew, Debbie Pankow, Lloyd & Sevrin Persson, Stefan and Anja Otterson and Sandra Christopherson. The Hall was beautifully decorated by Anne McCormick and Pia Meyer. Jonathan Andrew managed the Entry and directed the attendees into the Hall. Tim Andrew assisted the Children in greeting His Majesty and Karin Wanamaker for checking everyone in and directing them to their seats in her Nordlands bunad. You also can be very proud of our Lodge President, Ted Birkedal, who escorted His Majesty to his Seat, gave an outstanding welcome greeting with a wonderful history of Norwegians in Alaska. Last but not least, my hard working Committee: Ted Birkedal, Eva Bilet, Erling Johansen, Eileen Johansen, Lise Falskow and Mickey Andrew. Thanks also to Glenn Soby our Bernt Balchen Lodge photographer. The Committee did not have much time to prepare for this auspicious occasion, but they were fantastic. And to the many others who spruced up Viking Hall and cooked the delicious lapskaus. If I forgot anyone, please know that you are appreciated.

WE ARE A FANTASTIC LODGE!!! Mange hjertelig takk to everyone. Marit Kristiansen

His Majesty, King Harald



All Photos on this page courtesy of Sven Gj. Gjeruldsen, The Royal Court of Norway



SYTTENDE MAI!



It was a beautiful day to celebrate Norway's Constitution Day on May 17th. A good number of lodge members and friends gathered at the Park Strip in downtown Anchorage, all decked out in bunads, Norwegian sweaters, and red, white and blue. After a short program, the colorful group paraded around the block, waving Norwegian flags, and calling Hopp, Hopp, Hurra! After the parade, everyone enjoyed hot dogs and ice cream cones while chatting with old friends and making new ones.

Later that evening, members gathered at Viking Hall for a celebratory potluck dinner. Lodge president Ted Birkedal spoke briefly on the significance of Norway's Constitution Day and the courageous actions of those Norwegians involved in the country's struggle for independence.

In addition to celebrating Norway, we also recognized those lodge members receiving membership anniversary pins or lodge scholarships. Many members received pins reflecting their membership in the Sons of Norway--from 5 years to 40+ years! This year's Bernt Balchen Lodge Higher Education Scholarship was awarded to Service High School graduate, Matthew Wallender, son of Cultural Director Christie Ericson. Matthew will be starting college at UAA in the fall and is interested in studying in Norway in the future.



Photos Courtesy of Christie Ericson



MOTHER'S DAY BRUNCH

We had another successful Mother's Day Brunch at Bernt Balchen Lodge on May 10th. For many years, the brunch was put on by lodge past presidents. However, due to the aging process that seems to be hovering over too many of us, we began experiencing a shortage of persons to work the event so it has now been expanded to include members of our board. Fortunately, we are blessed with so many that are willing to put on an apron and do whatever is required.

Many of the ingredients arrive at the hall courtesy of Diann Sewald. She and Paul have done the bulk of the shopping for the brunch for more years than she probably wants to count. And she did it again for us this year.

Ed Swearingen is the man behind the fresh fruit cup. That other fruit in a glass with OJ is the creation of John Olnes. Steinar Hansen and Wally Smith were the egggers, pancake flipper was Jon Andrew. Jane Moe and Marc Giampaoli sliced and took care of the meat.

Others that provided valuable help were Shirley Moe, Cynthia Olnes, Anna Decker, Beverly Griffin, Marit Kristiansen, Sandra Hanson, Ted Birkedal, Ian and Emma Clark and Eric Andrew.

Thank you to all of you! We couldn't have done it without you!!!

Mickey Andrew, Chair

And the Scholarship goes to.....



Matt Wallender is the recipient of this years Higher Education Scholarship.

Matthew is a member of the high school graduate class of 2015 at Service High School, Anchorage. He maintains a high grade point average, is on the

honor roll and 4-time Academic Letter Recipient; Also earning an AP Scholar Award. Additionally he has served as a Student Government Representative. Matt has been the Team Captain for the Service Cougars Football Team, and this year served as

the Assistant Coach, earning many awards and recognitions for that activity, including 3-time Varsity Letter for football. He played on the All-Cook Inlet Conference, and received the Team Leadership Award.

Matt and his family are members of our Lodge. His mother Christie Ericson is our Cultural Director. His involvement began with attending the annual Lucia presentation and has continued since. Matt enjoys meeting and visiting with lodge members, and has helped numerous times in the Hall with social setups and cleanups.

Matt is planning on attending University of Anchorage, majoring in Health Sciences, and with his AP classes for college credit is pursuing his bachelor's degree in about two and a half years. Good luck Matt and we wish you well.

More Ways to Give - Calling on All Members

Did you know that only one if five qualified scholarship applicants receive funding? These students are Sons of Norway's future. By doubling or tripling our current assets of \$6M we can provide scholarship aid to many more students (50 - 75). They will attain their degrees and move into the workforce as productive citizens.

How do we do this?

There is a new way to contribute. The Sons of Norway Foundation has a new giving program entitled Klubb 250, Klubb 500 and Klubb 1,000. This recurring membership drive may be done on-line by credit card or by check. The donors will be given three choices to support: *Heritage & Culture* fund for grants, *Scholarship Funds* or *Humanitarian Fund*. Sons of Norway members have been very loyal donors to the Foundation. You will be hearing the specific details by email blasts, newsletter articles, Sons of Norway's blog and Viking magazine.

Enlarging the *Heritage & Culture* funds of the Foundation will give our local lodges and their communities the funding needed to bring quality Nordic themed programming to their areas: Festival participation, cultural presenters, art exhibits, musical offerings to name a few.

Our *Humanitarian Fund* has been called on many times since its inception in 1997. To date we have given over \$500,000 in natural disaster aid. In 2004 the Foundation created the Helping Hands to Member grants. Sons of Norway members across the US and Canada have received individual grants to help them recover following natural disasters including hurricanes, tornadoes and floods. It is the true meaning of fraternalism to care about each and every member.

You may donate online at www.sonsofnorway.com/foundation. You may send a check payable to Sons of Norway Foundation, 1455 West Lake Street, Minneapolis, MN 55408-2666 with Klubb in the memo line and further designate grants, scholarships or humanitarian fund as your choice of support. KLUBB donation envelopes will be coming out soon and available for lodges to order. A stunning new KLUBB pin will be shipped to you.



Thank you from Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska

The Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska organization received a \$500.00 sponsorship from Bernt Balchen Lodge for Team Sons of Norway in the *Amblin' for Alzheimer's* walk.

This along with other contributions amounted to \$825.

The Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska organization sent a very nice thank you to Sandra Hanson and Bernt Balchen Lodge.

Thanks you Sandra, and thanks to our very generous lodge!



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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.

EVENTS

JUNE

11 Thursday 7:30 pm Business Meeting

JULY

4 Saturday 10:00 am July 4th Parade
Meet Corner of 8th & G
Come one, come all!

The Website has a
NEW Look!

Check us out at:

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



Spring Bicycle Tune-up

Wednesday, June 10 • 6:30 - 9:00 pm at
Viking Hall

Get your bicycle ready for safe and fun summer riding. Martin (your Sports Director) and Mark Hansen will provide a bike stand, tools, pump, cleaning supplies and lubricant. They will help you do a safety check, pad adjustments, oiling, pump up your tires and get you ready to ride. If you need to replace parts bring them with you.

*Questions? Call or text Martin at
(907) 980-5333 or, email bikeskifish@gmail.com*



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

Please send articles or event information
for the next Newsletter by August 20th to: sonancak@gmail.com Attention - **Ruth** Subject Line - **The Flyer**