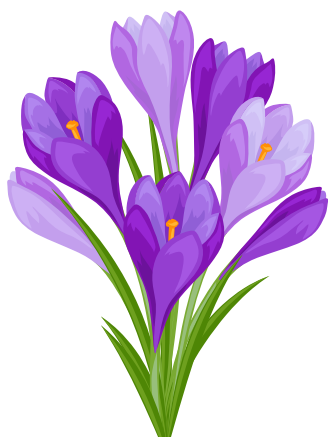


VIKING HALL 349-1613
www.sofnalaska.com

March
2017
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SONS OF NORWAY BERNT BALCHEN LODGE – PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

The Great Norwegian Porridge Feud

After helping me with the solution to the “Great Lutefisk Mystery” Kari-Anne Pedersen of the Norsk Folkemuseum suggested that I might be interested in the “Norwegian Porridge Feud” of the nineteenth century and she sent me a copy of “Popular Diet in Norway and Natural Science during the 19th Century: The Porridge Feud 1864 - 66” by Astri Riddervold and Andreas Ropeid which was published in 1984 in the journal *Ethnologica Scandinavia*. It was one of these two authors, Astri Riddervold, who had researched and explained the practical nutritional benefits of making and eating lutefisk in another scholarly work.



Peter Christen Asbjørnsen

Now that you have read these introductory words you are probably thinking “Why would I care to read about Norway’s Porridge Feud.” Why? Because this feud about porridge was a big deal while it lasted and it had a major impact on Norwegian history and society that reverberated well into the twentieth century, and in addition, most likely influenced the food habits and lives of Norwegian immigrants to the United States. The feud was actually about the very cultural soul of Norway.

The opening salvo of the feud was fired by none other than Peter Christen Asbjørnsen, the famous collector of Norwegian folktales. In 1864, writing under the pseudonym “Clemens Bonifacius (The Gentle Helper)”, he published *Fornuftig Madstel* (Sensible Cookery). With the publication of that book the feud began and it was fought with great intensity and feeling in Norwegian newspapers, in public meetings, in periodicals, and in other cook books throughout the rest of the century. And the effects of the feud were felt clear up to the start of World War II. What was seen as particularly incendiary was Asbjørnsen’s attack on the traditional Norwegian practice of stirring in an extra handful or so of raw, whole-grain flour into the porridge after it had been thoroughly cooked and was ready to eat. He claimed this traditional technique was wasteful, for it contributed nothing to the nutrition of the dish. He argued that this last-minute addition of flour to the dish could not be digested by the body and thus Norwegians all over the country were wasting enormous amounts of flour in the process of making this old-fashioned kind of porridge. Keep in mind that in the nineteenth century porridge (grøt) was a key if not central element in the Norwegian diet.

Asbjørnsen had much more to say in his book that ran counter to traditional cooking and domestic practices in Norway; all of it gleaned from an arrogant coterie of “natural scientists” writing in Germany and as well as elsewhere in Continental Europe. Believing themselves to be enlightened by the insights of contemporary “science” these professors believed that the European diet needed to be radically transformed in accordance with “scientific principles”. Not only did science tell them women were inefficient and wasteful cooks, but women were also inferior to men in their cognitive abilities. To teach them philosophy and music was futile; what they needed was thorough and focused training in domestic management; again, of course, informed by “scientific principles”. In addition, this group of influential “experts” argued that “bad diets” were the cause of poverty, not the result; they truly believed that “good diets” would eliminate the poor of Europe. Their ideas were not only adopted by Asbjørnsen, they were also heartily endorsed by many of Norway’s prominent doctors and other learned men.

The counter punch to Asbjørnsen’s attack on Norway’s diet and its women was delivered by Eilert Sundt, the founder of Norwegian sociology and ethnology, in the journal *Folkevennen*. Here in a series of articles, published between 1865 and 1866, where he represented the

President’s Message continues on Page 2

Porridge Feud

President's Message continues from Page 1

Association for the Enlightenment of the People, Sundt criticized Asbjørnsen for his assault on the intelligence of Norwegian women and Norway's "thousand year's old (food) tradition". Sundt basically thought the book was a great insult to the people of Norway. The disparagement of women by Asbjørnsen was particularly jarring because Norwegian women of the mid-nineteenth century had customarily important roles as managers on the farms of Norway. They were often in charge of the livestock, the kitchen, the storage cellar, and barn as well as the general economic affairs of the typical farm family.

What Asbjørnsen and his adherents argued was nothing short of quackery and prejudicial nonsense, hardly science-based wisdom. Among other things, they believed that refined white flour was more nutritious than traditional whole-grain flour, that the consumption of sugar and sugary syrups were excellent sources of nutrition, and that coffee was a good substitute for meat. They also touted the virtues of margarine over butter and discouraged the eating of dairy products, both fermented and non-fermented. A central tenet of Asbjørnsen and his followers was that Norwegian women needed special school-based training in "scientific" cooking and other aspects of domestic science; this schooling was essential if Norway hoped to become both a healthy and prosperous nation.

In 1866 a Norwegian doctor proved through scientific experiment that Asbjørnsen's was wrong in his contention that Norwegian women wasted the nutritional value of the extra raw flour that they typically added to cooked porridge. Nonetheless, Asbjørnsen's book remained popular and sold well among the upper middle classes and middle classes. Also, other popular books on cooking and home economics, translated from German to Norwegian, echoed Asbjørnsen's original message. In the end, Asbjørnsen's teachings permeated all social classes in Norway, if not through the written word, then by the spoken word.

Schools for teaching women "domestic science" in Norway were established as early as 1865 and they became common across Norway by the end of the century. The irony is that over time these schools were taken over by Norway's women who also ended up setting the curriculum. Both the Norwegian Women's Rights Association and the Norwegian Women's Health Organization were instrumental in steering these schools toward teaching young women practical and informed approaches to cooking and other aspects of domestic science that reflected both the wisdom of tradition as well as the proven findings of modern science. By the turn of the century, the sway of Asbjørnsen and the German "experts" had faded in the face of persistent resistance from educated Norwegian women and their male academic allies. Still, the effects of the Porridge Feud on Norwegian food culture did not fully disappear until the start of World War II when refined flour, sugar, syrup, and coffee and the like became no longer available in quantity to the Norwegian people. It took a lengthy and devastating five-year war to bring a final end to Norway's long-standing Porridge Feud. During the war Norwegians had to turn increasingly to their traditional diet for sustenance and survival and by the end of the war the last vestiges of Asbjørnsen teachings had become, for the most part, history.

By the way, Finnish food researchers have recently proposed that the traditional Norwegian practice of adding a handful of raw flour to the cooked porridge may release beneficial enzymes that give the porridge or grøt a sweeter taste without benefit of sugar. Those Norwegian women; they are so smart.



Eilert Sundt

*Fraternally yours,
Terje "Ted" Birkedal*



*"Gratulerer
med dagen!"*



SUNSHINE REPORT



*"Happy
Birthday!"*

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

MARCH
BIRTHDAYS

Dwight Hovland
Phillip Ramstad

Sigmund Restad
Gordon Severson

Frederick Steinhauser
Robert Stinson

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

Scholarship Fund - Super Bowl Raffle 2017

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 with many complements to the chef. Not only was this the first time the Super Bowl game went in to overtime but also the first time the game was shown at the Hall on two screens. The game was broadcast on the 70" HDTV and thanks to Ed Swearingen shown on the big projector screen as well.



Our thanks to those who helped with ticket sales, food preparation, and event set-up and clean-up.

Without all those who pitched-in to help before, during and after the party this event could not take place.

We congratulate all winners and especially the big winner Jeanne Ostnes.

HERE ARE ALL THE 2017 WINNERS!

#1	\$200	Anna Decker	#105	\$25	Anna Bryant	#225	\$25	Jerry Hansen
#7	\$50	Cynthia Olnes	#121	\$50	Karen Ruud	#240	\$100	Dave Haugen
#13	\$100	Matt Olnes	#150	\$200	Kaare Elde	#250	\$25	John Backman
#45	\$50	Sandra Hanson	#165	\$25	David Fauske	#270	\$50	Giselle Tibor
#66	\$25	Susan Levi	#180	\$25	Wally Smith	#299	\$250	Kjell Kristiansen
#75	\$50	Christine Stirling	#195	\$100	Virgil Jensen	#300	\$1,000	Jeanne Ostnes
#90	\$100	Ted Birkedal	#210	\$50	Jackie Frenzel			

Thank you to those who supported our Lodge Scholarship Fund by purchasing raffle tickets. The Super Bowl Raffle is the primary source of funds for the Sons of Norway Bernt Balchen Lodge No. 2-046 Language/ Heritage/Higher Education Scholarships.

Event Co-Chairs - Wayne Johnson, Sandra Hanson, Jane Moe Newby & John Olnes

SAVE THE DATE: "Tradition Tuesday" showcasing our Norwegian Culture!

Tradition Tuesday is an opportunity to learn about the diverse cultures that make Anchorage unique. Beyond creating an enjoyable place for our community, Tradition Tuesday is a positive way to celebrate the diverse spirit of Anchorage and our appreciation for everyone who has given so much to our city.

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

The ultimate goal is to build dialogue, provide cultural enrichment and relationships within the community.

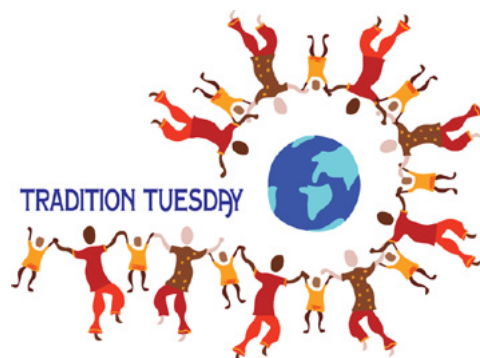
Our lodge will be presenting on April 25, from 6:00 - 7:30 pm. Some of our members with musical talent have volunteered to participate.

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

Please contact the lodge at 907-349-1613 to volunteer your help in any way you can. Most importantly, come to the event! 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





February Cooking Class

On February 19th, instructor Lillian Anderson showed the class how to make fastelavnsboller. Traditionally served on Shrove Tuesday before the advent of Lent, fastelavnsboller are rolls made from a sweet yeast dough, filled with vanilla cream and dusted with powdered sugar. As an added bonus, the class also learned how to make skolebrød (school bread), which are sweet buns filled with custard or pudding and topped with icing and grated coconut. Students got to take home the finished products, as well as fresh dough to make their own.



Ingredients



Going over the recipe



Making the dough



Skolebrød



Cooking class is so much fun!



Filling the fastelavnsboller



Skolebrød



Filling the fastelavnsboller

Fastelavnsboller



To sign up for the March class, contact Christie Ericson at (907) 602-0673.

Cooking Class: Vafler, pannekaker, and ertesuppe

March 26, 5:00 - 6:30 pm

Viking Hall, 8141 Briarwood St

\$20/members, \$30/non-members

All photos by Christie Ericson



Delicious Skolebrød



Yummy fastelavnsboller!

2nd Annual Spring Silent Auction

Saturday, April 8th

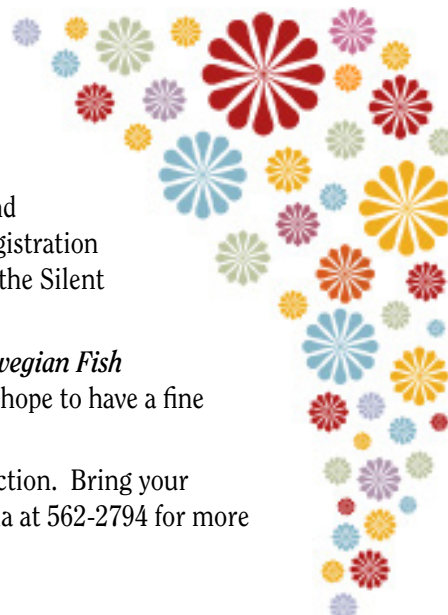
Proceeds go to Convention Delegate Fund

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. 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!

Free Cross Country Ski Lessons

Saturday, March 11- Classic and Skate Skiing

12:30 pm - 1:30 pm

Kincaid Park for all lessons -
specific location TBD

If you're interested in x-country
ski lessons please RSVP to Martin
Hansen, Sports Director.

Text to (907) 980-5333 or

Email: bikeskifish@gmail.com

Classes are subject to change depending on RSVP's.



Gotcha!

Aprilsnarr - April Fools - is a beloved tradition in Norway. One aprilsnarr that has become a legend happened April 1st, 1950. The Norwegian newspaper Aftenposten fooled a lot of the inhabitants of Oslo with the headline, "Svært billig vin, ta med bøtte." (Very cheap wine, bring bucket.) The article explained how Vinmonopolet, the State operated wine and liquor store, found itself in the position of having to get rid of great quantities of French wine. Having run out of bottles, however, it requested anyone interested in buying said wine, bring their own buckets or other containers to the store in Oslo. The wine would be sold tax-free. The only caveat listed was that the wine would be rationed in 5-liter increments per customer. Helpful and excited citizens responded immediately! (Seen here, waiting for the doors to open).

Lillian Owren Anderson



Welcome to All

Potluck Social - New Member Welcome

and

Board Membership Meeting

Thursday March 9

6:30 Potluck

7:30 Meeting



Calling all Cooks

Viking Hall Kitchen is still featuring cooking classes, and you get to take your creation home! Watch for reminders on the webpage and in the newsletter!

Did you know.....

Some of our members have requested donations to Bernt Balchen Lodge in lieu of flowers at the memorial services of their loved ones. This is a wonderful way to express thanks for the good times and fellowship over the years.



Hey there

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



Scholarship Deadlines Update

- **April 15** - Deadline for campers to mail applications for the Sofie/Olson Scholarship (available to two children to attend our District Two youth camps).
- **April 30** - Deadline for lodges to notify Youth Director of the names of recipients of lodge camp scholarships, the camps they will attend, and amounts awarded to be eligible for funds from the Draxten.
- **May 15** - Deadline for local lodge scholarship checks to be received by youth camp registrars. Please do not mail checks to campers!
- **May 31** - Youth camp registrars mail final camper packets with statements reflecting balance due after all scholarships are received.
- **June 10** - Deadline for youth camp registrars to receive full balance of fees.

Please contact the Youth Director at 971-284-4175 or norseherodotus@hotmail.com if you have any questions.

Faternally yours, David Champion, Youth Director & Scholarship Committee Chair, District Two Sons of Norway.

Passages

Ann M. Strother, 90, passed away January 7, 2017 at Providence Extended Care in Anchorage, Alaska. She was born August 14, 1926 in Red Cloud, Nebraska and became a resident of Kenai from 1969 - 1974. Ann lived in Stavanger, Norway for 3 years and then moved back to Anchorage in 1977, where she remained a resident until her passing.

Ann worked at the Loussac Library and her hobbies and interests included traveling, playing cards, reading, cross word puzzles, and collecting various items such as; dolls, angels, and santa clause figurines. She was affiliated with the First Christian Church, beta sigma, and a Leader of the Girl Scouts. Ann received an award for best dressed woman of the year.

A visitation and service was held January 12, 2017, at the First Christian Church. A potluck will be held after the service. Ann was laid to rest at the Fort Richardson National Cemetery.

The family would like to state, "Ann was a loving mother, grandmother and Mur Mur to all of her daughters and great-grandchildren. She got to spend a week in June 2016 for her 70th Wedding Anniversary with all of the family. It was a big event for her. Ann loved bright rainbow colors."

Ann is survived by her husband of 70 years Robert G. Strother; sisters Bonnie B. Farrell and Della M. McCoy; daughters Ann M. Baxter and Janelle Snyder (Larry); sons John G. Strother (Brenda) and William W. Strother; grandsons Thomas G. Strother (Teri), Alan D. Baxter (Tasha), and Robert N. Baxter; granddaughters Holly M. Rivera, Kathy M. Holmes (Ed), Stephon J. Babb (Michael), Tisha L. Weed, Jemina L. Robinson (Robbie); great-granddaughters Brenda Romero, Keston L. Hill, Paige Holmes, Monica Rivero, Madison L. Waibel, and Maria L. Waibel; great-grandsons Luke Holmes, Jordan A. Baxter, Logan M. J. Baxter, and Michael D. Hill; and many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her brothers Robert Harrington, Al Jr. Harrington, and Sidney Harrington; father R. S. Harrington; mother Dorothy A. Harrington; and many nieces and nephews.

Arrangements were by Janssen's Evergreen Memorial Chapel.

Please take to time to reach out to the friends and family of those who have passed.



Sons of Norway
8141 Briarwood St.
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EVENTS FOR MARCH!

7

Tuesday

10:00 am

Needle Crafts &
Rosemaling Class

18

Saturday

9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Woodcarving Seminar

9

Thursday

6:30 - 7:30 pm

Potluck Social/New Member Welcome
Board/Membership Meeting

21

Tuesday

10:00 am

Needle Crafts &
Rosemaling Class

WHAT'S HAPPENING? LOTS!

Here's how to find out

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

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

Facebook: www.facebook.com/BerntBalchen

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.

*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 March 20th to: sonancak@gmail.com Attention - **Ruth** Subject Line - **The Flyer**