



# Midnight Sun

ISSUE

3

VOLUME 24  
July 2011

## SCoR Club Records

Our written records and lots of photographs have been deposited with Saskatchewan Archives on Hillsdale St. and may be researched there.

You may also find interesting materials on our website at [scandinavianclubregina.com](http://scandinavianclubregina.com).

Should you have anything to contribute to the archives, please contact **Larry Bristol**.



## Contributing authors this issue:

*Midnight Sun's* editor is happy to welcome these authors:

Jim Aho

Larry Bristol

Lois Lageson Gibson

*(For lack of space, Lois' original manuscript unfortunately had to be shortened.)*

Kim Gillies

Ida LeRuyet



Theme This Issue:

## Our Club

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## 35 years: Where do we go from here?

**Ida LeRuyet** writes: The success of the club in the past is obvious and it has enriched many people's life. Today, 35 years after it was founded, the club is struggling with its membership. The question is "why?"

As we are looking for ideas of how to revive the club to increase membership, I was asked to write an article of what I believe is the role of the club today. After some research, I found that there is no set objective.

I truly believe a missing objective is what is causing the struggle. Currently, there are too many agendas and too many expectations from different members of the club, creating a feeling of failure when they are not met.

Based on my experiences within the club, I have identified three possible focused directions the club could take.

**1. Provide social activities and a gathering point for the long term friendships that have been made over the lifetime of the club.**

*This will make a club for members who*

*still have strong ties to Scandinavia and enjoys the club as is. It will focus on the needs of the long term members and will not push for change or the attraction of new members.*

**2. Create an environment for those who want to learn, or want their children to learn, more about their Scandinavian roots.**

*This will require a strong educational approach where all activities are about or based upon Scandinavia and its traditions. Changes would involve replacing events such as the Corn Roast and perogies at the Fowl supper with celebrating 17th of May and Semla buns on Fat Tuesday.*

**3. Create a social club for those who wants to embrace the Scandinavian spirit.**

*(Continued on page 4)*



## SCoR 1976-2011 35 years

# Members' Matters

## Consulate Grove at Government House



SCoR had the honour of being present at

the dedication of the Consulate Grove at Government House. Each Honorary Consulate chose a tree to symbolize their respective country.

The next time you visit Government House make sure you enjoy the trees in the Edwardian Garden!

## Family Notices

Our club is our family; and we would like to invite members to inform others of their family news in the newsletter.

Please e-mail or call Kari or any of the Executive to share your news. Contact information on page 8.

## Family Notice

**Jim Petersen** passed away on March 30th, 2011, and he will be greatly missed by his wife Geneva and their two daughters Paula and Pamela. All the Scandinavian Club members offer them condolences for their loss.

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## AGM

44 club members attended the Annual General Meeting at St. Mark's Lutheran Church.

A motion that membership fees for 2012 remain at present level was carried: \$30 per family, \$20 per single membership.

Election of Board. Two positions were open. Fay Johnsen nominated Pearl Baumgartner; John Edwardson nominated Fay Johnsen. There were no further nominations.

The date for the 2012 annual general meeting will be **Monday 2 April 2012.**

Full Minutes from the 2011 Annual General Meeting can be found on the SCoR web page.

## 2011 Bottle Drive!

The club's first bottle drive was an amazing success. We had a great response to the idea and we will be turning this into an annual event. Our grand total was **\$415.00**. This money will go towards the club's children's activities.



Thanks again to all who donated bottles or money. And a

big thanks to John & Joanne Edwardson, Kelly Nelson and Kim Gillies for the people power to get this event off the ground.

**Keep the 2012 Bottle Drive in mind!**

## Midsummer Picnic



*Club veterans Lois and Mildred enjoying the SCoR Picnic*

We had approximately 66 adults and about 8 children out to enjoy the fellowship and games and the Candy Cane playground. Thanks to John (our Past President) and his wife Joanne, the food was great. Vegetable trays, hamburgers and hotdogs as well as the great fruit trays made for an excellent meal. The Norwegian coffee (including the egg) and an assortment of soft drinks topped off our day. John and I acted as conveners and thanks to all our club volunteers it made the day pass quickly and with lots of time to visit all our members and guests. May our Corn Roast on August 28th turn out as good. Once again, thanks to all that participated.

*Larry Bristol*



# To live. To love. To belong.

By Jim Aho

I grew up in the 1960s on a farm near Rorketon, Manitoba, a small community 400 km north of Winnipeg. Our family lived along the well-travelled Finn Hall Road, a dusty gravel corridor that ran north to south for six miles and connected half a dozen Finlanders, their families, and often as well their aging parents who first settled there from Finnish colonies in Minnesota and elsewhere. With traditional names like Huttala, Kujanpaa, Saari, Mackie, Komula and Aho, these were descendents from a homeland thousands of miles – and a lifetime – away.

None of the families were wealthy. In fact, quite the opposite was true. When I visited our neighbour Sylvia Komula there several summers ago, she was 95. She said in her small and humble voice, her eyes tired, her hands shaking, “We’re still here. We’re still struggling.”

My most ardent memory of growing up with the Finns was their ritual of the communal sauna. Each family had a small log out building designed and built expressly for that purpose. It was here on weekend evenings – after a long day of stoking and tending the wood fire inside – that families would gather, disrobe, and share the experience of the steam. None of the farms in that era had running water, so this was both a social gathering as well as a weekly hygienic cleanse.

The men and boys would go first, the theory being they could better withstand the intense heat that had built up all day and now radiated from the granite rocks that encircled the fire pit. My dad and the other men used small sheaves of bun-

dled oak twigs they called “switches” to beat the sweat and the soil from their bodies. I remember being enthralled with the camaraderie and the conversation that these rituals evoked, despite the fact I understood very little of the Finn they spoke.

There was an intense sense of belonging. Even in the poverty, amidst the in-



*My father Edward Aho was the Secretary of the Finn Hall Community Club for many years. We found this poster from 1935 buried in the walls of our old farmhouse when we tore it down years ago. It's very special to us, because it's in Dad's own handwriting. It was done on the backside of a calendar from 1935, authenticating the date.*

cessant heavy farm labour, and the northern isolation of the community, our people found comfort in being together. I am convinced it was these steambaths – along with the dances and celebrations held at the small but well-used Finn Hall



that sat alone in the bushes down the road – that held our community together, and made it something special.

I've heard it said that the need to belong is among the strongest of human desires. The fact is, we are not meant to be alone. The communal ways of the Finlanders was great testimony to that. Together, they saw value in keeping their traditions alive and sharing their struggles, their joys, and their sorrows as one connected community.

Clubs and organizations such as ours, can play a vital role in building our own sense of belonging, too. No man – or woman – is an island. We all have much to learn from each other, to take back and process and integrate into our own lives. Over time, this sharing of our common genealogical roots may in fact be the most precious and most meaningful gift of all.

*Jim Aho is a senior partner with Brown Communications Group and one of the newest members of the SCoR. He may be reached at [jim.aho@brown.ca](mailto:jim.aho@brown.ca)*





Sweden

## Royalty in trouble

In a TV4 interview last month, King Carl XVI Gustaf denied reported claims from a former mafia member that he had pictures showing the king in a sex club. The king insisted it is impossible they exist; stressing that it is difficult to comment on something one has not seen. The royal court has demanded that TV4 show the shots to prove there is any substance to the claims. According to TV4 and a new book, alleged friends of the king's have been willing to pay large sums of money to block the publication of pictures of the monarch in compromising situations. One of the king's childhood friends, Anders Lettström, has admitted that he had contacted people involved with organised crime, but insisted it was purely his own initiative and had nothing to do with King Carl Gustaf.

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Images By Gillies

**As from this issue, Scandinavian Club of Regina's new President, Kimberley Gillies, will share her views with us. Welcome, Kim!**

### Welcome to my first President's Corner.

I'm honoured to be the new President of our wonderful club. It seems like just yesterday that I became a member with my family and I have truly treasured the new friendships I've have made. Our club has a lot to offer people; picnics, camp outs, dances, suppers, language classes, delicious desserts at the Christmas party, and the company of others. I joined

*This is a club which is open to everybody who is feeling Scandinavian. Just like everybody is Irish on St. Patrick's day, everybody can be Norwegian on May 17th. It is targeted to a young demographic with the intention to renew membership.*

Agreeing on an objective would set the expectations and direction of the club, and allow for the success we're looking for.

## President's Corner

our club as a way to learn about my family's culture, of which I knew very little when I joined. One of the things I would like to see in our club is a greater emphasis on preserving our Scandinavian culture and traditions. One of the things that amaze me as I talk to members is that the majority of us are second if not third generation Canadians, so our family traditions have become an interesting combination of our grandparents ways mixed with the modern. I think this is a great strength of ours; we embrace many different people from many different places. We can learn a lot from each other.

Over the next two years I would like to do some fundraising activities. The first will be a bottle drive that I hope will become an annual event. I know there is nothing worse than being asked for a donation every time you come out to an event, so we are going to make it fun. We will be raffling hobby products that fellow members have made at future events. If you have an item that you would like to donate please let me know. We are all so looking at the possibility of revising the club's cookbook. This could be a great way to preserve those heritage recipes that without care will be lost over time. Submit yours!

I hope the year to come will see many successful events. We are also considering having our salmon supper in the fall when the salmon is in season. If you have any ideas of events that you would like to see happen please let me know. We will of course have our annual Christmas party and maybe a member craft sale.

I look forward to seeing all of you throughout the year; have a safe and fun summer. *Kim Gillies*

The challenge of attracting new membership has been talked about since the first club meeting I attended four years ago. So as a final remark, I think it is important not to get ahead of ourselves and focus so much attention on new members. We first need to know who we are as a club and where we want to go. The success of the club should not be measured by the number of new members, but instead the satisfaction of the present ones.



SCoR 1976-2011 35 years

## New Vice President

At this year's Annual General Meeting, *Pearl Baumgartner* was elected Vice President of our club, the only member among the present Directors who has not served on the Board earlier. Pearl is a lawyer working for Legal Aid in Regina. We wanted to know something about her Scandinavian heritage and her motivation for joining the club and putting her name down for nomination.



*Pearl, what is your "Scandinavian Connection"?*

My great- great- grandfather purchased an acreage called Augustine near Stord, an island in Western Norway. The name Ås was chosen for our family name. I understand that Stord is very hilly and that the English translation for "Ås" is "hill". In 1907 my grandfather, Reinert Reinertson Ås, moved to Velva, North Dakota. In 1909, he worked for the Tate family in Moose Jaw, and eventually purchased his own land northeast of Aneroid. Around 1917, Reinert returned to Norway where he married Ingeborg Eldøen and returned to Canada. That same year, Ingeborg died of pneumonia. Thereafter Reinert hired a housekeeper, whom he married, being my grandmother, Emma Karoline Erickson. Emma was born in Wisconsin to Norwegian parents. Many of the Erickson family settled in Melfort, where they still reside today. Our name was changed to Aaston in 1925. I am convinced that my grandfather changed his name because he got tired of being called an "ass". So, growing up being called "ass-ton" wasn't as bad!

My parents separated before I was born, at which time my mom (Myrtle Purdy, of

English descent) moved to Victoria, B.C. with my 2 older siblings. I did not meet my dad, Melvin Aaston, or his new family (his wife Pat, son Greg, and stepson Jim), until I was 27 years old. Mel and Pat were members of the Scandinavian Club for many years.

*And so you joined the Scandinavian Club of Regina in 2010. What attracted and motivated you into becoming a member?*

I actually joined the Scandinavian Club at your urging! I thought it would be interesting to learn something about my Norwegian heritage, since I did not have any exposure to this growing up. Then you urged me again to put my name down for nomination. The rest is history.

*Good for you – and good for us! What were your expectations in your meeting with the club?*

I really didn't have any special expectations about the club when I joined, other than what I already mentioned. I am hoping that SCoR membership will continue to grow. I would like to hear stories about the lives of our members

*(Continued on page 6)*



Norway

*Playwright given honorary residence*



Norwegian author and playwright *Jon Fosse* has accepted an offer to move into the Government's honorary residence "Grotten" (The Grotto), located on the Royal Palace grounds in Oslo. Jon Fosse has written numerous plays, fiction, poetry, children's books, and essays, his work has been translated into forty+ languages and has been played in e.g. Germany, France, USA and Japan. "I Am The Wind" was staged at The Young Vic in London this spring.

The original owner of "Grotten", poet Henrik Wergeland, built the home in 1840. Now owned by the Norwegian state, it has been used as honorary residence for cultural personalities since 1922.

# Raise a little shell!

Clams, mussels and oysters always in season.



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## Picture credits

P.1: (Club event) Kari Mitchell

P.2: (Picnic) Michael Mitchell

P. 3: (Poster) Courtesy of Jim Aho

P.4: (Kim Gillies)  
Jon Gillies

P.5: (Pearl Baumgartner)  
Tony Baumgartner

(Jon Fosse) Knut Egil Wang, Samlaget

P.7: Guðrún Jónsson

P.8: (Food) Kari Mitchell  
(Corn) wpclipart.com  
(Salmon) life123.com

Other: Public domain

(Continued from page 5)

in upcoming newsletters.

*By now you have experienced the range of ScoR's members' activities. Do you have any ideas for future membership attraction and activities?*

I like John Edwardson's idea of trying to recruit one new member each to our club. It would be helpful to have extra copies of our newsletters to hand out for this purpose.

Perhaps we could have a drop box for people to submit their suggestions on ways to improve club membership and participation.

Would a private restaurant function

or dance be of interest to our members?

Do we have people in the club (or friends or family) who would be willing to sing, play an instrument, or share a story at one of our events? What about a sing along?

Do members have fundraising experience they can share?

What can we do to encourage young families, or our own children, to get involved?

*Midnight Sun would like to join Pearl in her invitation to all ScoR members:*

**We need your input!**

## Editorial

**The Scandinavian Club of Regina** turned 35 in April. In this issue of *Midnight Sun*, four members share their knowledge, hopes, ideas and enthusiasm for our club, one of many organizations founded by groups of immigrants into their great, new country of Canada. We share a cultural background, both in the Old Countries and in the communities where, for most of us, our ancestors arrived some time in the 19th or 20th centuries.

35 years means a full generation turnover. Times have changed, more than one new generation has grown into the SCoR membership circle. Generations farther removed from the original immigrants — less likely to have grown up with traditions delivered straight from the horse's mouth. Relatives once or twice removed sometimes don't see the same value in taking care of the old customs. Then that can change again. Young people want to learn about the origins of their

ancestors: Not necessarily just the handicrafts and singing/dancing, but also about the conditions in the Old Countries at the time of emigration as well as in this day and age.

One way of bringing old and new members into the active life of the SCoR is by inviting them to contribute with enthusiasm, ideas and hands. New members make good material for new Directors. The founding members still have a lot to offer, but it is also their responsibility to educate those who will take over.

Good education means giving new generations the chance to contribute by creating directions. Help new people better to understand the past in order to create the future together.

It is this editor's experience that new people join for a reason: They are interested. They are curious. They are enthusiastic. We must ask them in and use their ideas: not about our Nordic culture (they want to learn about that), but about developing our club. *KM*





## Lois Lageson Gibson on The Club's Origins

Everyone had a different reason for the founding or their joining the Scandinavian Club. My recollections maybe different than yours and all are interesting! We each remember highlights, and they are all precious! These are my recollections and when you write yours they will be your personal ones!

Did you know our club started through the Norwegian languages classes? They were organized through Esther Erlandson who was a former teacher and was then a member of the Public School Board of Education. Other languages were offered at Balfour Collegiate, and why not Norwegian? Esther had good contacts to draw from. Many spoke their language fluently. They wanted their families to learn. She asked Mildred Ihlen to teach. She and her husband and family had come from Norway. Mildred belonged to Central Lutheran Church, so they now had the basis for Norwegian classes! Later the classes were held at Holy Rosary School under a different funding agency.

I enrolled in the language classes in 1973. My motivation was that we had won airline tickets to wherever Air Canada flies! I had never been overseas but I chose Oslo, Norway as a destination, and I needed to add to my sparse Norwegian vocabulary! I discovered the communities my grandfathers emigrated from to Iowa, USA.

Pot luck dinners organized by Mildred Ihlen, Cindy Saunderson, Helen Husum and Clara Tangyard were held in the Central Lutheran Church basement after classes. It became a real social and learning group. Many of us had not been raised in Norwegian or other Nordic

communities and were eager to learn. The attendees of the classes were surprised at how many Scandinavians lived in Regina and signed up! Why not form an organization?



Margit Juliesson and the children dancers 1978/79

As a background, there are a few people I should mention! Per Lindness and Niels Selnes had come from northern Norway a few years earlier. Sigurd and Lola Hoff and family also moved here from Norway. Sig suggested starting a Sons of Norway chapter, but realized other Nordic people wanted to join. Lola loved to entertain and in 1976 decided to have a dinner party for May 17th. She invited friends and interested people from the classes and others - probably eighty attended!

Elections were held at the Hoff house, and Niels Selnes was elected president, Margaret Wetterlund, treasurer, Kim Thorson, vice president, Lois Gibson

secretary. Kim Thorson, a local lawyer, was our legal expert and drew up our constitution. The formal day of foundation was 30 April, 1979. The name of the Club was to be the Scandinavian Club, but people with background from all five Nordic countries would be eligible for membership.

The club has been host to Ambassadors many times and in interesting locations. Dancing, singing, cooking, the art of open face sandwich making, needle arts and knitting, cleaning and pickling herring, rosemary, taking part in over seventeen Mosaic Pavilions, forming arts and crafts groups, and so many more activities filled our time. The most interesting thing has been the people we have met and maintained friendships with over the years.

Only in a diverse club like ours, originating from five countries, could you experience that!

## Recipes Wanted!



### SCoR Members:

Don't forget the challenge: Share your favourite recipes for the next issue of

*Midnight Sun* and the new SCoR cookbook!

**We need your contribution by September 1st.**

Email or call

Kim or Kari, contact information below,

or mail to

Kari Mitchell

2047 Rae Street

Regina, SK S4T 2E6

# Upcoming Events

## • Corn Roast

**Sunday August 28th in Candy Cane Park**

**Time:** 2:00 to 5:00 PM.

**Tickets:** Members: \$10.00; Members' guests: \$12.50; Children under 12 years: Free.

**In case of rain at 10:00 AM the day of the function, it will be cancelled.**



## • Salmon Supper

**Sunday October 30th at The Austrian Club.**

Yes — we're changing the menu for our main fall event! Fall is a better salmon season — that also means less costly.



Details in *Midnight Sun* no. 4 and on SCoR web and Facebook pages.

**Bring family and friends to SCoR events!**

## Memories

We are asking all club members to share their favourite club memories so we can preserve them for the future. This could include fun stories, historic information, or anything that you would like to share. Email or call Kim, contact information below.

Midnight Sun Issue 3 July 2011

Quarterly Newsletter for the Scandinavian Club of Regina

### 2011-2012 Board of Directors

|                |                   |          |
|----------------|-------------------|----------|
| PRESIDENT      | Kim Gillies       | 531-9794 |
| VICE PRESIDENT | Pearl Baumgartner | 761-0678 |
| PAST PRESIDENT | John Edwardson    | 584-2246 |
| TREASURER      | Fay Johnsen       | 522-0377 |
| SECRETARY      | Kelly Nelson      | 584-2562 |
| DIRECTORS      | Brian Beck        | 789-0662 |
|                | Larry Bristol     | 586-1799 |
|                | Lylah Gess        | 586-0406 |
|                | Laureen Smith     | 525-5183 |



SCANDINAVIAN CLUB OF REGINA  
P.O.Box 37182, Regina, SK S4S 7K4

### Membership Fees

Family membership \$ 30

Single membership \$ 20

Membership starts January 1, expires December 31.

### Contact us:

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**Any views expressed in individual articles do not necessarily reflect the policies of the Scandinavian Club of Regina.**