



Midnight Sun

ISSUE

2

VOLUME 27

April 2014

Quarterly Magazine for the Scandinavian Club of Regina



Julbock



Halmkrona



Majstång

Theme:

Wheat Weave



Members' Matters	2
President's Corner	3
Editorial	3
Theme articles	1, 5, 6, 7
Scandinavian News	4
Upcoming Events	8

Weaving With Straw

Wheat Weave is a craft hobby shared by many Saskatchewanians of Scandinavian descent. It has long traditions in the Old Countries. Theme photo for this issue is from a Norwegian/Swedish wedding table adorned with a "straw arch" (halmbåge) meant to unite the young bride and groom.

This particular wedding took place in the landscape of Dalsland, close to the Norwegian border. This area has a long and strong tradition of straw weaving. The local raw material is rye straw, and at one point making straw hats was a major source of income to the region. People would grow rye on their farms and manufacture meters upon meters of braided lengths which would be made into hats. Whole families were engaged in the braiding of lengths. Kids would have to make so and so much after school, and social events called "flätöl" (braiding beer) would attract lots of young people who would weave straw and socialize all night.

The hats were sold locally or carried across the border into Norway for markets in towns and cities. Hats were even exported to other parts of Europe and to America.



Up till around 1890 straw weaving was taught in Dalsland area elementary schools. In 1935 they started teaching the craft at the recently

opened Stenebyskolan, a centre for arts and crafts studies.

The tradition of crafting with straw goes hundreds of years back. Most farms would have a "halmkrona" hanging from the ceiling in the "best room". This beautifully crafted item was often

(Continued at bottom of page 7)



Online: <http://scandinavianclubregina.com/Newletter.htm>

From the SCoR Board

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The SCoR AGM takes place at Whitmore Park United Church, 336 Durham Drive, on **Tuesday, April 15th**. See details on page 8.

Motions for the AGM should be submitted to the Board of Directors (contact info on page 8) by April 7th.

Have
you
paid
your
2014



membership fee? If not, the AGM is a good time to get that settled.



Due
to
lack
of

volunteers, we will not have the annual "Syttende Mai" celebration this year. Instead we'll celebrate the National Days of four countries with a Steak Night on June 4th. See page 8.

However, the Sons of Brubyen Lodge invites everybody to their celebration on May 17th. in Saskatoon. Please call Inger Anderson at 306-343-5844 or write to itanderson@sasktel.net Deadline: May 3rd.

Members' Matters

SCoR Events

Dinner and Dance



30 participants enjoyed the food and the Prairie Ramblers' music of the February event at the Callie Club.

SCoR is starting to hand out Certificates of Appreciation to former board members.



Lylah Gess received hers for serving on our Board of Directors from April 2010 to April 2012. She has been a SCOR member since 1989.



Fay Johnsen has been a member of SCoR since 2002. She was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation for serving as the treasurer of our Board of Directors from April 2011 to April 2013.

Other past board members were not present on February 23rd. They will receive their award at a future event.

Game Night



Game Night happens every third Thursday of the month. A game of cards, board pieces or dice creates a good social environment. Coffee, tea and brought-along snacks were never wrong either. Here are Kari and Mavis at a table of Mexican Train.



President's Corner

As promised, we now have a monthly card/game night. Hopefully, with time, more members will come out and give it a try. No previous card experience is necessary. The goal is to have fun and to meet new friends. We are still working out what types of cards/games people are most interested in playing. Please come and join us! Secondly, to reduce the cost to members, we have tried a new venue. In February, 30 people attended a dinner and dance at the Callie Club. The feedback was very positive. The meal was enjoyable, and the Prairie Ramblers did a great job performing for us. We suspect attendance was low, due to this function being held just before the statutory Family holiday. Nevertheless, we still managed to break even.

Now onward for our next celebration! In honour of our Scandinavian heritage we will be gathering for a steak night at The Tap on June 4th to mark four national holidays. We request your presence to make this evening a resounding success!



As to upcoming AGM matters, sadly John Edwardson is vacating the board as of April, 2014. John has been a very valuable, contributing member of our board for a number of years, with his last position being that of treasurer. We will miss you at our meetings, John. Thank you for your

dedication! As well, Kelly Nelson is stepping down from his position as secretary. We have significantly benefitted from Kelly's efficient work. Thank you so much, Kelly! We are hoping you will remain as a board member for at least one more year. On the upside, we are gaining a couple of new board members in April. I hope to see many of you at the AGM to greet the nominees and discuss upcoming club matters.

Pearl Baumgartner

Editorial



The Annual General Meeting is coming up - normally not an event which will attract the hugest attendance. However, there is every reason why SCoR members should pay attention to this important meeting on our annual programme. This is the one occasion when members at large can have a say on the running of our Club in a democratic process. Let's look at a few things:

President's Report. It is always interesting to have the activities of the past year summed up - but this is also an excellent occasion to ask questions about what may be planned for the coming year. And, not least, come up

**ANNUAL
GENERAL
MEETING**

with ideas!

Treasurer's Report. Rows of sums perhaps, but take this opportunity to get detailed information on the individual posts. Also, SCoR does not have a budget as such, but questions on whether there are plans for the spending of the Club's revenue during the upcoming fiscal year, could easily be asked at this point.

Media reports given by the editors of Midnight Sun, the SCoR website and the Facebook page can definitely be commented on. Any feedback to that part of Club activity will no doubt be received with due attention.

Last, but not least - there are *elections*.



There are always posts on the Board of Directors that need to be filled, and it's each of the member's responsibility to fill them through their casting of votes at the AGM. The Board does a great job in finding candidates, and it is essential that every year new people are willing to serve the SCoR as Board members for one or two or several years.



Great Olympians



It will probably be known to all that the medal count for the Sochi Olympic games left Norway in second place, followed by Canada as no. 3.



To us in the SCoR it is especially interesting that the most winning male winter Olympian ever is a man with relatives here in Regina. Nordic biathlon athlete Ole Einar Bjørndalen is related to our fellow club members Einar Bjørndalen and Susan Bjørndalen.



Add that most winning ever female winter Olympian is also Norwegian, cross country skier Marit Bjørgen, and we Scandihoovians can be really satisfied after Sochi 2014!

4

News From the Old Countries

Århus to Boost Cruise Ship Tourism



Århus, which in 2017 will be a *European Capital of Culture*, is making moves to capitalize on the significant increase in cruise ship tourism that the city enjoyed last year.

Almost 40,000 cruise ship tourists have landed in Denmark's second-largest city every year since 2011, compared to just over 6,000 in 2010, and the city wants to market itself as a prominent cruise ship destination in the future.



"The competition in the cruise line market is fierce, and Århus is battling against Gothenburg and other Nordic cities for the attention of the cruise lines," Peer H Kristensen, the head of Aarhus Tourism flagship VisitAarhus, said in a press release. "The cruise lines plan their routes years ahead of time, so it isn't easy to lure them to new harbours."

Together with Aarhus Harbour, VisitAarhus has created the network 'Cruise with Aarhus', and Kristensen is heading to Miami in order to convince the US cruise lines to drop anchor in Århus.

"Over the past 18 months, we have been in dialogue with a number of large cruise lines that we have thoroughly introduced to Århus," Kristensen said. "We hope that the many business meetings have paid off so that the city will see even more cruise ship guests in the coming years." (—) *The Copenhagen Post*



Second Coming of the Time Card

Many highly qualified professionals work long days without counting the hours they put in. However, would it be a good idea to keep track of overtime?

Riikka Mykkänen is pleased with her time card. It goes everywhere with her as a mobile app, as her job at the *Finnish Association of Business School Graduates* (Seife) means she often works outside the office, goes on work trips and attends meetings and other events, sometimes also in the evenings and on weekends. (—)



"I felt a little dubious about the time card to start with. I thought it might restrict me but it has actually increased flexibility, and has done so in a way that is fair. Now I can be sure I'll be compensated for all the work I do and I can also keep track of my hours." (—)

Companies have realised that work that is not tied to a time or place must also be kept tabs on, and this is not only to stop employees from easing off on their work. There are companies abroad where company heads have to rein in over-enthusiastic employees. (—)

Helsinki Times



SCoR Website <http://www.scandinavianclubregina.com/>

Teaching the Skill of Wheat Weaving

Interview with our very active SCoR member Lois Lageson Gibson who used to teach wheat weaving on quite a grand scale.

"A man showed me a crafted piece and some straw, and demonstrated by means of a clothes line how to do it." That is how, many years ago, Lois Lageson Gibson got introduced to the intricacies of wheat weaving. She and a British lady got books from the library, followed instructions, and soon she had reached a level where she could give craft classes.

"Wheat weaving is a very old craft - originating probably around the Mediterranean Sea", says Lois. "The prettiest material around here is the black (durum) wheat, the grain they make pasta from, because of its dark chaff."

- Was it easy to get the materials you wanted for the craft? You did not live on a farm then?

"When I started, I asked farmers to be allowed to cut straw in their field with

lawn clippers. That way I got the lengths I wanted."

- You obviously cannot weave or braid the straws as they come out of the field - they would break. How do you prepare them?

"First, I dry the straws, sort them and



Wheat weaving gives you a cornucopia of inspiration

store them in long boxes. When I want to use them, I soak them at least overnight in water with a little glycerine in it to give the straws an extra shine. Then they are ready to be crafted into whatever I want to make."

- You not only developed a great skill in this craft, you also started teaching it. When was that?

"Oh, about thirty years ago. I had a wheat weaving class in the Scandinavian Club of Regina. And when we were still a part of



Centerpiece made from durum wheat ears.

(Continued at top of page 7)

Sole searching?

We can help.



Pacific Fresh Fish

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306-525-9147

Picture credits

P.1: (Wedding) courtesy of K.Mitchell; (other) M.Gustavsson, Halmens Hus

P.2: (Dancers, game) P.Baumgartner; (other) T.Baumgartner

P.3: (P.Baumgartner) T.Baumgartner

P.4: (Athletes) sochi.2014.com; (Woman) A.Isotalo /HS

P.5: K.Mitchell

P.6: (Vase, centerpiece) K.Mitchell; (other) Heather Weir

P.7: (Landscape) Halmens Hus; (other) K.Mitchell

Other: Public domain

Samples of Caroline's creations



Vase cover



Bride and groom



Centerpiece

A Hobby to Bring Out One's Artistic Potential



Caroline McGillivray found she needed a hobby to focus on her passion for crafts. Wheat weaving brought out her creativity and artistic skills. She developed her hobby into a great specialty.

Caroline who came from Weyburn, Saskatchewan, passed away some years ago, and *Midnight Sun* has talked to her daughter *Heather Weir* of Olds, Alberta.

precision to handle the delicate strands. Different types of wheat and barley straw were here favourite materials.



Caroline once wove a vest from straw, but decorative elements of different sizes and shapes were her favourite products. Among her creations were straw angels, intricate centerpieces, meticulously assembled wheat stooks, etc. For daughter Heather's wedding she made two hundred napkin rings for the guests to take home with them.

When Caroline was trying to find a hobby to fill her attention and dedication, she looked around for something that would involve local raw materials. On the Prairies, what could be more natural than using straw which was readily available in the field just outside her front door?

Family members and friends are lucky to have beautiful pieces of Caroline's craft as memories of a dear lost one.

She took a class with a friend and found a great attachment to the wheat and the whole craft of it. She had the exact skills needed: dexterity and



Teaching ..

(Continued from page 5)



Mosaic, I had my own table and display area where I would demonstrate the craft to visitors."

Did you have students outside the Club environment?

"Oh, yes. I was on the City of Regina's list of leisure activities and taught at different community centres. I also taught in Weyburn and Balgonie. I had to supply all the ready-to-use soaked wheat

for the classes I taught!"

Unfortunately, neither the City of Regina Leisure Programme nor the SCoR has wheat weaving on their agenda now. At the *Traditions* store on 13th Ave. they tell us that they do not have any artisans providing them with wheat weave products these days.

However, the [Regina Public Library](#) has a number of titles in their book catalogue. Lois learned her skills from books, so anyone interested in learning this craft could easily take that same first step.



Here are a few examples of what is available from RPL or other libraries:

Morgyn Geoffry Owens-Celli: *The Book of Wheat Weaving and Straw Craft; From Simple Plaits To Exquisite Designs* (1997)



Weaving with...

(Continued from page 1)



made by traveling artisans, and it had symbolic powers as well as being a decorative element. Other items made from straw could be decorations for holidays like Christmas and Easter, or for weddings and other family celebrations.

In the town of [Bengtsfors](#) they have built a [House of Straw](#) (Halmens hus) which is a museum and activity centre dedicated to the straw weaving tradition. They have exhibitions, classes, lectures, concerts and different projects. On a visit there *Midnight Sun* met curator *Eva Bryntesson* and straw weave



N. Maloku sorting rye straw

specialist *Nexhmije Maloku* who were preparing for the next exhibition: a presentation of donations made by local artisans, showing the heritage from pioneers who paved the way for today's craft activities. The museum's gift shop will be filling up with a great variety of new objects, and visitors will enjoy *Halmens hus*, the coffee shop and the magnificent views.

Source: *Siv Jägerung: Mer än en hatt. 1995*



Linda D. Beiler: *Wheat Weaving & Straw Art : Tips, Tools, and Techniques For Learning The Craft* (2009)

And there are more titles to be found.

If you prefer to buy your own book, both these titles can be found at [Chapters, Regina](#).

Searching [amazon.ca](#) is another option if you want to buy a book to get you started.

Good luck!

Samples of Lois' craft





Do we have your email address?

Higher Canada Post rates for mailing have been introduced. Please consider the option of receiving *Midnight Sun* online, thus saving expenses for the Club.

Test it out via the SCoR website under 'Newsletter'!

Make sure you share your email address with SCoR or check that we have your current email address information.

Upcoming Events

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

2014 AGM

Date: Tuesday, 15th April.

Venue: Whitmore Park

United Church, 336 Durham Drive.

Doors open at 6pm, meeting starts at 7:30pm.

Dessert potluck only, NO entrees.

Important meeting - see you there!

Game Night



Third Thursday of every month at 7pm.

Venue: 2600 Arens Road; use the buzzer marked "Activity room only".

Bring snacks (optional); coffee and tea will be supplied. Your friends are welcome!

Upcoming dates: **Apr.17th, May 15th, June 19th**

Fishy Fridays at the Freehouse



First Friday of every month at 5pm at Cathedral Village Freehouse,

2062 Albert Street. No need to sign up - just turn up! Upcoming dates: **May 2nd, June 6th, July 4th**

Summer Social Steak Night



Celebrating the national days of Norway, Denmark, Sweden & Iceland

Venue: The Tap, 4245 Rochdale Blvd

Time: Wednesday, June 4th, 6pm to 9pm come & go

7 oz steak, potato, tossed or Caesar salad; pop or 20 oz draft beer. Veggie burger or chicken can be substituted

Tickets: \$20 to be bought in advance.

Midsummer Barbecue



Date: Sunday, June 22nd.

Information later on SCoR website and Facebook page and via phoners.

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2013-2014 Board of Directors

President	Pearl Baumgartner	306-761-0678
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Membership Fees

Family membership \$ 30

Single membership \$ 20

Membership starts January 1, expires December 31.

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