



Midnight Sun

ISSUE

3

VOLUME 26

July 2013

Quarterly Magazine for the Scandinavian Club of Regina

Storytelling on the Job

In 18th century Norway, glass blowing became a new industry with an increasing population of glass blowers. Many of these were imported from England or other European countries. One James Keith arrived from England to the Nøstetangen Glassworks in Hokksund, Øvre Eiker, in 1755. He became an important designer as well as a talented glass blower, and settled with his family for the rest of his life. Word has it that after his retirement he often visited the glass hut to sit watching the workers, among them his two sons, smoking his chalk pipe, telling stories. He was a great storyteller, and his stories were told and retold a long time after his death.



Theme:

Oral Tradition

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



Stories From the Era of the Vikings



Stories travelling down through history - how far back can the origin be? Is it possible that we can trace some of our folk tales all the way back to the vikings? I was tipped off that it might be useful to consult Erik Henning Edvardsen, Folklorist and Director at the Ibsen Museum in Oslo.

Erik Henning Edvardsen states that the dating of tales is problematic since we do not know the original form. Even tales with period character can be older because they are continually transformed, absorbing new elements right up to when they are being committed to writing. However, the story "Kvænen som staar og maler paa Havsens Bund" ('Why the Sea is Salty') has a clear parallel to Norse myth elements found in Gróttasöngur (Song of Grotti) from the Elder Edda: The two wise jotun maidens Fenia and Menia have to grind (make) gold for Danish King Frodi, but when he will not give them a break, they let the mill grind an army that kills him. Then the mill is brought on board the viking king Mysing's ship to grind salt. The viking also refuses to let the jotun maidens rest, so the ship sinks under the salt



Artist: Eirik Gustafsson, age 7

load and the grinding mill rests at the bottom, making the sea salty.

(Continued on page 7)

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



From the SCoR Board

SCoR Volunteers Wanted

Anyone looking at the activities through an average SCoR year will realize there is a lot of work behind it all. The Board of Directors wants to set up committees to help with different tasks, for instance organizing events, writing for our publications etc. We will come back to this later, but if YOU would like to engage more actively in SCoR activities, don't hesitate to let us know. You will find contact information at the back of Midnight Sun.

We'll be back with details in the next issue of the magazine.



Scandinavian Club
of Regina



Members' Matters

Syttende Mai



50 people, young and old, participated in the parade. Syttende Mai is a family event as well as a SCoR function!

Flying Flag June 6th



Midsummer Fest

This time the weather forecast really played a trick on us



Steak Nite



90 members and guests celebrated the Danish and Swedish National Days and raised almost \$810 for the club by buying Steak Nite and 50/50 tickets! The Draw was done by John and Blair, and the winner could go home with \$110!

President's Corner

We had a fantastic turnout of 90 people for our Steak Night, in celebration of Sweden's National Day and Denmark's Constitution Day! Well done everyone! On June 6th, the Swedish flag was also raised at City Hall. I believe this was a first for us. Our eventual goal is to commemorate all 5 Scandinavian country's National Day by raising the flag and, perhaps, including a festivity.

Aside from our annual August Corn Roast, and June Midsummer Fest (cancelled because of weather this year), we have added new events. A few of us gathered at the Regina Public Library on June 20th to watch Kon-Tiki. After fire alarm number three, sending everyone outdoors again, the show was cancelled. We all received a full refund and free movie pass. Isn't life an adventure? July marked the beginning of Fishy Friday at the Freehouse. Please come and share a few laughs and lively conversation with us on August 2nd, at our next Fishy Friday meeting. Then in September, join us for billiards at the Broken Rack. There is no obligation to play, just bring your enthusiasm!

This fall we hope to organize a regular card



night. What about whist, kaiser, or bridge? Let us know your preference. And yes, we have not forgotten about trying to organize a wine tasting event.

Members do not have to have any Scandinavian background to join the Club. So please spread the word! Remember, we are a small Board of Directors in need of volunteers! I hope to see you soon!

Pearl Baumgartner

Dear member: A good resolution for this week would be one out of two:

- Write a cheque for your outstanding fees, payable to **Scandinavian Club of Regina** and mail it to SCoR, P.O.Box 37182, Regina, SK S4S 7K4

or

- Submit a note of termination of your membership to one of the officers listed on page 8 of this magazine.

Thank you. Your continued membership will be very much appreciated, and your ideas for making the Club better for YOU are most welcome.



*Happy
Vacations!*



3

Editorial



The SCoR membership report for June showed that 44 members still have not paid the club fees for 2012. Obviously this represents a problem for our organisation. Throughout the year the Board of Directors and other volunteers spend time and resources on arranging events, the phoners contact every member, everybody receives the *Midnight Sun* either by mail or online.

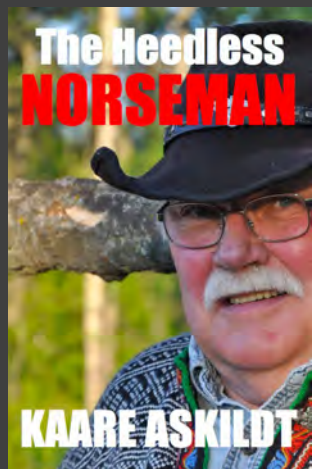
Fee payment is normally done by submitting cash or a cheque when members attend a function. Or a cheque is sent by mail upon receipt of

an invoice. Forgetting to pay is human, but the invoice would seem a timely reminder. So why is it that so many still have not paid for 2012?

People may have their reasons for wanting to discontinue the SCoR membership - that is totally justifiable. However, SCoR Bylaws (Consolidated) state that "A Member may terminate his membership in the Club by giving a written notice to any Officer stating the date of such termination; (- -)" (3.03 Termination of Membership) The Board very rarely receives such notice.



A Good Read for Scandinavians on the Prairies!



Allow yourself to be entertained and amused by the experiences of *The Heedless Horseman - Tales of a Farmer in Training*. Fellow club member Kaare Askildt was born in Norway and now lives in Hazel Dell near Preeceville. The tale is interspersed with lots of Sask style Norwegian recipes. The book can be ordered online by using the order form at this web page:

<http://theheedlessnorseman.com/order-form/>

Price \$24.95 plus \$2.00 shipping and handling total \$26.95

The author will read from his book at our Salmon Supper event in October.



Ambassador Spoke at Montreal Climate Change Conference



Her Excellency Ambassador Mona E. Brøther talked about climate change in

the Arctic in a speech to the 3rd Climate Change Technology Conference in Montreal in May.

Climate change will have severe impact and consequences, both in the Arctic and globally, HE Ambassador Brøther said. In Norway, the government has implemented emissions trading schemes and introduced taxes on carbon, as well as supported new renewable energy developments and energy efficiency projects, new stricter building regulations and promotion of public transport.

The Ambassador said Norway makes a contribution by developing best practices and as a producer of both renewable and non-renewable energy. As a steward for sustainable solutions in the High North, Norway is a long-term, resourceful and reliable partner to Canada for our common future.

www.emb-norway.ca



Flying Toilet in Traffic Accident



In early June, an outdoor toilet fell off the trailer on which it was being transported and hit an oncoming car on road 36 from Reykjavik to Þingvellir National Park. The car was badly damaged but the driver and the passenger were unhurt, albeit in a state of shock after being hit by the flying object.

The police in nearby Selfoss said in a statement that people should secure the goods they are transporting. According to the police, it is happening more and more often that goods being transported is creating danger for other people on the road.



Drive carefully while in Iceland, you never know when a flying outhouse may hit you.

www.iceland.is



"Why Do I Tell Stories?"

Midnight Sun interview with storyteller
Kevin MacKenzie

"A century ago, in most places, whole communities would gather to entertain themselves with telling stories, singing songs, and reciting poetry. Children saw their adult mentors imagining. Telling oral stories opens one more door, provides for one more possibility of who the children can be when they grow up – imaginers."

This quotation from a paper written by [Kevin MacKenzie](#), pretty much sums up the importance of oral tradition. SCoR members have been entertained and enthralled by Kevin's stories. How did this Early Childhood Educator from southern Ontario end up a professional storyteller in Regina?

- My father was a raconteur and quite a wit. He loved jokes, and he told stories I probably shouldn't have heard. And there was the Scottish egg man - a war veteran who owned chickens and came to our house. He would sit down and tell stories.

So these were your role models?

- No, I was not going to be a storyteller. I wanted to be an author and became a teacher. But at a festival in Vancouver I heard [Nan Gregory](#) telling "[King](#)

[Thrush-Beard](#)". She's a great storyteller, and I knew that I wanted to do that. So I quit my job and spent six months going broke - and learned how to turn art into mortgage. Three years into it I made a sustainable living. I came to Saskatchewan for a six month residency at the Regina Public Library, and I've been here since.

You have defined oral storytelling as "the sharing of an experience, real or imagined, through natural oral communication"? What do you mean by that?

- "'Sharing of an experience' (can be) a memory from the teller's life, or from a folk tale - which is really a memory from humanity's life, or from the teller's own or someone else's imagination (from a book, song, movie, (etc.) 'Natural oral communication' (is) the way you normally communicate - your words, your gestures, your gazes (- -)"

Who are your audiences? You say that both children and adults need stories.

- Children are the best audiences. When there are both children and adults present, I always gauge by the children. "Storytelling offers children autonomy in creating. When a storyteller gives a story, a different illustration appears between every pair of ears in the room. Each child envisions pictures that are created especially for her/him. (- -) No force feeding. No wrong answers. (- -) Stories have wisdom, especially folk tales that have been passed down from heart to heart for many generations."

But you do tell stories to adult audiences too?

- Yes, I have visited prisons, for instance. Such an audience can be tense. It can be hard to get and keep their attention. I once told a story with a sudden, scary end. Some of the staff

present gave a start, but the guys didn't bat an eyelash. I visit seniors' homes - that is always fun. I will sometimes be hired to parties, and to special interest groups. But the major part of my work consists of giving workshops.

It must be great to attend one. What are the themes for your workshops?

- One theme can be folk tales; or how to improvise a story; or how to tell original stories for younger audiences etc.

With so much electronic influence around us, Reginans are lucky to have a real, professional oral storyteller in our midst! Contact Kevin at kevin@storiesbykevin.com

- - -

Passages in quotation marks are taken from Kevin's paper.



King Thrush-Beard

Do we have your correct addresses?



Please make sure we have your correct postal and email addresses. Information will reach you faster when we have the address right. Using email can save considerable mailing expenses for the club. If we don't already have your email address, you may consider sharing it with SCoR.

Picture credits

P.1: (Storyteller) Section of Norwegian artist

[E.Munch's painting](#)

'History'; (Viking)

Courtesy G.Gulbraar

P.2: (Donna&Fynn)

M.Mitchell; (Flag, Steak Nite) K.Mitchell

P.3: (P.Baumgartner)

T.Baumgartner

P.5: (K.MacKenzie)

K.Mitchell; (King Thrush-Beard) Old Book Art Gallery

P.6: (P.Hultgren)

Courtesy M. Lee; (Emil)

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Bildmakarna Berg

P.7: (Vest) K.Mitchell;

(Illustrations) Wikimedia

Other: Public domain

"My Father Loved to Tell Stories"

Those were the opening words of a manuscript received from SCoR member **Marilyn Lee** some time back. The words triggered the idea of dedicating a *Midnight Sun* issue to the theme of 'Oral Tradition'. Storytelling in the circle of a family has been important in every society and every era, as a means of entertainment as well as of passing on local customs and family history. We talked to Marilyn about her father **Peter Hultgren**, born in [Småland, Sweden](#) in the year 1885.



"One of his favorite stories was about his family's journey from Sweden to North America", Marilyn wrote. Peter was seventeen at that time, his father was seasick during the whole crossing, whereas his mother was "knitting and singing, completely unaffected by the sea's swells".

The long, strenuous voyages must have formed so many stories told in immigrant families. On what occasions did Peter tell his stories?

- He liked seeing other people. His audience would be whoever he happened to be with, and often they were other Swedes who came to visit him. He always had a story to suit the occasion, and many of his stories he told in Swedish; he said that "it's only funny in Swedish". Of course I could not understand them. My father

believed that we should grow up with the language of this country, so I never learned his mother tongue. When he was reeve of the municipality and later as mayor of Midale he was famous for starting council meetings with humorous anecdotes that helped to create an amiable atmosphere for the meeting.

He was old enough when he arrived in North America to have many memories of the Old Country. Did he tell old folk tales from Sweden?

- Not that I can remember - other than stories based on his own experiences. He told us about his first "business venture" of buying a pair of doves for 75 øre from a neighbour. She informed him that even though the doves were young they already were making love and soon would start laying eggs. He told dramatic stories of everyday life like when he wanted to pick a beautiful flower in a canal, fell in and almost drowned. He had been told to stay away from the water, of course..., but that did not



Another adventurous Småland boy: [Astrid Lindgren's Emil i Lönneberga](#)

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 1)

Stories ...

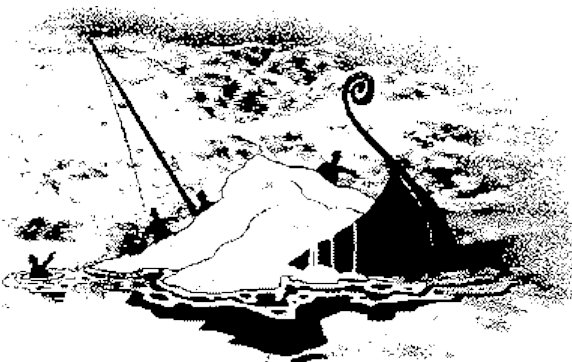


In the Norwegian folk tale as collected by Asbjørnsen and Moe, the story has been transformed to that of the young, poor brother who gets a magic handmill from the devil in exchange for a ham. Many people want to lay their hands on the handmill which can grind (make) food and other necessities, and at last a sea captain takes it away with him, wanting it to grind salt so he does

not have to sail the seas to get it. But he does not have time to wait for instructions on how to use it, so when he starts it, it doesn't stop. Hence the ship sinks under the load of salt, and the handmill sits at the bottom of the sea, forever grinding.

The universal point of the story is that someone has a magic handmill. A servant, apprentice, thief or some other unskilled person sets it working but lacks the ability to stop it, and only the true owner knows how. In Norway this story has been known in twelve different varieties.

The Elder Edda was written down in Iceland in the 13th century, based on oral tradition of that time. However, folk tales have been told from generation to generation for even more centuries, very likely by illiterate people who had no access to any written documentation.



(Continued from page 6)

My Father...

stop him from exploring his surroundings. He described how his father grabbed him by the ankles and held him upside down until all the water had been drained from his lungs.

He also told us how children were treated differently when he grew up. In Småland the custom was that at family gatherings the children were not to eat first. They had to wait until the adults had finished their meal. It upset many of us children when they continued that custom here in Canada.

He must have played an important role in handing down family stories to new generations?

- He was a role model for nieces and nephews who, when he passed away, kept asking the question "Who's gonna take care of what he used to do?" We have family reunions every three years with participants from both Canada and USA. On those occasions stories go around. I'm looking forward to one in Alberta this July where I'm sure many entertaining family stories will be told and retold.

Is this yours?



This vest was left behind at the 17th of May celebration.

Give us a call at (306)565-2450



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Excellent Service.



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Upcoming Events

Fishy Friday at the Freehouse



Let's meet on first Fridays of the month for a fish meal (or whatever you prefer) at Cathedral Village Freehouse on 2062 Albert Street at 5:00 PM.

We started on July 5th.

Dates coming up: August 2nd and September 4th

Corn Roast in Candy Cane Park



Sunday August 25th 2:00 - 5:00 PM

Tickets: \$10.00

Children under 12 years: Free.

Bring lawn chairs!

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

Billiards' Night at The Broken Rack



Thursday September 26th 6:30 - 9:30 PM at 3806 Albert Street

Meet for a social evening with fellow Scandinavians, with or without a game at the table.

Tickets: \$15.00 The price includes a snack



Bottle Drive

It has been difficult to organize a SCoR Bottle Drive this year.



Could we suggest that you donate to the Club your refunds for one Sarcan trip? The money will cover the purchase of gifts for the children at the SCoR Christmas Party.

Please observe

We would like to remind our members that guest numbers for catered events are submitted one week in advance. The caterer will order the food and SCoR will be charged accordingly. If you are unable to attend an event after you have been included in the final numbers, the club will have to bill you for your meal. Thank you for your understanding.

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Quarterly Magazine for the Scandinavian Club of Regina

2013-2014 Board of Directors

| | | |
|----------------|-------------------|--------------|
| President | Pearl Baumgartner | 306-761-0678 |
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| Past President | Kim Gillies | 306-531-9794 |
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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:

SCoR contact email

scormembership@gmail.com

Membership contacts

Larry Bristol [April to December]

Phone 306-586-1799

Email l.bristol@sasktel.net

Kelly Nelson [January to March]

Phone 306-584-2562

Email kndn83@gmail.com



Midnight Sun editor

Kari Mitchell

Phone 306-565-2450

Email kar-mit@hotmail.com

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