



Passing

Perry Thompson of Strasbourg, SK, passed away on March 22, 2009. Perry and his wife Leona are charter members of the Scandinavian Club of Regina.

The club board, on behalf of all members, sends condolences to the family of Perry Thompson.

Upcoming Events

Midsummer Fest – Picnic & Camping

Picnic on **June 14th** at the Willow Island at 2 p.m.; cost is \$7.50 per person, payable to the club that day. There is no longer a fee to ride the ferry. Bring lawn chairs, games, etc.

New Camping on **June 20th** at Buffalo Pound Provincial Park at 5 p.m. Get your own campsite; bring your own gear, food and beverages. It is the summer solstice and we will be taking advantage of it with a night filled with social activities & fun. Contact Ida at i_hallin@hotmail.com if you are interested and need more details.

Corn Roast

Sunday **August 30th** at Candy Cane park in Wascana Centre, at 2 p.m.. Bring Lawn chairs; Cost is \$6.00 per person

Fowl Supper

Sunday **October 25th** at Luther College, at 6:00 p.m.; Jon Jonsson will be the guest speaker. Details to follow.

Christmas Party

Sunday **December 13th** at St Mark's Lutheran (tentative)

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Midnight Sun

Scandinavian Club of Regina Newsletter



New Family Group

It is with pleasure we are announcing our new SCoR's Family Group. Greta Lange has volunteered as an activity coordinator of this group and she will become a great asset in the process of recruiting young families with children.

If you are interested and need more information please contact Greta by phone at 543-6144 or at gretaelange@hotmail.com

Call for E-mail addresses!

Sign up with your email address and indicate what you interested in receiving. This will become our new prime communication tool and we want you on board: Email i_hallin@hotmail.com

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Letter from the Board: the future of our club?

This letter is from the present executive of the Scandinavian Club of Regina to let you know their thoughts about declining memberships.

The executive is somewhat concerned in regard to the present membership in our club. As you may note, we are concerned about the declining membership which is 99 members at this moment. Many have not renewed their memberships for 2009. What are the causes for this decline in membership over the last few years? There are probably many reasons for this through age, illness, deaths and other reasons that continue to perplex the executive as to how to keep present members and at the same time increase our membership. We know that many of our families sometimes do not live in our area or are busy.

If membership continues to decline over the next few years, there is a danger of our club ceasing to exist. We urge you to contact past members whom you might know who have not been active

for some years. We also ask if you might know of other people of Scandinavian descent or members of your family who would consider again joining the club to keep it a thriving club as it was many years ago when our membership was well into the hundreds.

As you know, we have not taken part in Mosaic since 1996. You might be aware this event was a significant source of our income which kept our club going. For the last 13 years, we have not had a major fund raising event. While we still have money in the bank from past participation in Mosaic, our bank balance continues to decline.

So we urge you to renew your membership; and if you have been inactive and not been a member for some time, then we ask you to rejoin and recruit new members to join our club and to ask your adult children, your grandchildren, friends, etc. to consider a membership to keep our club going in the future .

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

For any questions or further information regarding this newsletter please contact Ida LeRuyet at 757-7708 or i_hallin@hotmail.com

Tell Your Story

We want to hear your story about your origin

At the next indoor event, Fowl Supper, the SCoR is planning to host an information booth to promote Scandinavian culture, tourism & history. We want you to help us. Bring anything you think might interest the rest of the members.

Talk to John Edwardson to bring forward any of your ideas of how we can share our own stories with others.

New Book, Movie & Music Club

The club will be featuring Scandinavian produced books, music and movies. Get togethers will be organized where club members can enjoy our Scandinavian artistic culture.

More information will follow in the next newsletter. Contact Kari at:

kar-mit@hotmail.com or by phone 565-2450

Scandinavian Myths & Traditions

Henceforth, each 'Midnight Sun' quarterly issue will feature a special topic – related to Scandinavian mythology or traditions. A tradition is the process of preserving orally, cultural heritage, and/or a belief while a myth, by definition, can be given any of the following interpretations (found in YourDictionary.com):

1. a traditional story of unknown authorship, with a historical basis, usually to explain some phenomenon of nature, the origin of man, or the customs, institutions, religious rites, etc. of a people
2. such stories collectively; mythology
3. any fictitious story, or unscientific account, theory, belief, etc.
4. any imaginary person or thing spoken of as though existing

It is obvious that our origins are in a part of the world filled with a multitude of traditions, myth and folklore. This provides a fairly wide range of possibilities for subjects in our newsletter and we call on our readers to contribute with suggestions for future (season related) topics!

Primstav – A Calendar Myth?

Perpetual calendars like the primstav – calendar stick – were found in many European countries before printed calendars came into general use. In the Nordic countries, mainly in Denmark, Sweden (referred to as “runstav”) and Norway, they were probably known as far back as 1000 A.D. and were primarily to help farmers keep track of when it was time to sow or harvest to avoid frost on their crops.

With the introduction of Christianity the calendar stick became even more useful in people's more complicated task of keeping track of all religious feast days. In Norway the primstav is known to have been in use well into the 19th century. Other Nordic calendar sticks will have looked very much the same, but they would differ somewhat in symbols. On the primstav/runstav, every day is represented with a carved notch, and all the church feasts or other 're-letter day' have their own symbols carved into the stick

The summer side – sommerside – of the Norwegian primstav covered April 14th (sommersmålsdag – First Day of Summer) to 13th of October. There are many important symbols during those six months such as Barsok, Summer Solstice and Olsok.

Olsok (St.Olav's Day) on July 29th was the most important religious feast in the Catholic church of the Nordic countries in Medieval times, commemorating Saint Olav, the Norwegian king who fell in the battle of Stiklestad (Trøndelag) in A.D. 1030.

The word Olsok is derived from Olavsok or Olavsvaka (Olav's wake). In many rural communities they would light bonfires on this day. People



EUROVISION SONG CONTEST RUSSIA 2009

The Eurovision Song Contest is an annual pop music competition, held since 1957 among the members of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), and it's huge! Each member country submits a song to be performed on live television and then votes are cast determine which is the year's most popular song in the competition. Check it out online here:

<http://www.eurovision.tv/>

Nordic country winners:

Sweden
1974, 1984, 1991, 1999

Norway
1985, 1995, 2009

Denmark
1963, 2000

Finland
2006

This year's finals took place in Moscow on the 16th of May, and the victory by Norwegian Alexander Rybak came as a nice prelude to the 17th of May celebrations. (Alexander was born in Belarus and speaks fluent Russian.)

Those 'Midnight Sun' readers with internet access can see and listen to the winning song on You Tube here:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uiH4BFTELME>

The World of Science

The Scientific American Magazine has released its top ten global leaders in biotechnology. Denmark, Finland, Iceland, and Sweden were all in the top ten. This ranking considers areas such as intellectual property, intensity, enterprise support, education, workforce and foundation dropout. This is a great feat which shows how Scandinavian countries continue to be on the cutting edge of technology.

Who is Ida? Not What You Thought...?

We all think we know Ida – our very own 'Midnight Sun' editor and valued member of the Scandinavian Club of Regina, Right! But then there is the new Ida. Or rather the old Ida. Very, very old Ida!

Ida is the most complete early primate fossil ever found, recovered from the Messel Pit in Germany by Norwegian archeologists. Scientists believe that she could be one of our earliest ancestors. She lived 47 million years ago, and her features show striking similarities to our

own. Palaeontologist Jørn Hurum has acquired Ida for the University of Oslo Natural History Museum, and a team of scientists finally has got the opportunity to examine this ancient fossil.

'Midnight Sun' readers with internet access can read all about Ida at <http://revealingthelink.com/> and among other things, Sir David Attenborough's enthusiastic comments on 'the Missing Link' now discovered.



Slimy Summer Treats in Denmark

When asked about her dearest memory of the Danish summer, **Hanne Marshall bursts out "Stegte friske ål"** - "Fried fresh eels"! Fried fresh eels with stewed potatoes and white sauce – no doubt!

Now, many of us will have eaten delicious smoked eel at some point, but to this Dane, the real first sign of summer was when they could get fresh eels in the market. The precious buy would be brought home in a burlap sack, wriggling and squirming even as they were being cut up and put into the frying pan.

These strange creatures have a remarkable life cycle, which begins and ends in the middle of the Atlantic ocean in the Sargasso Sea. But most importantly, they migrate to Danish rivers and on early summer nights to Danish dinner plates!

News Stories

June 5th - Denmark

The southernmost of the Scandinavian countries does not have a national day as such, but the June 5th Constitution Day (Constitution of 1849) is the closest Denmark comes to a national celebration.

However, **June 15th** has national status. The day commemorates King Valdemar the Victorious' (Valdemar Sejv) victory over the Estonians in the 1219 Volmer (Valdemar) Battle near Lyndanisse, Estonia. According to legend, the Danish flag, Dannebrog, drifted down from the sky during the battle. There are no historical facts to support the legend, but naturally it is one of those myths that will always live. The day also celebrates the reunion of Sønderjylland (Southern Jutland) with the rest of Denmark after the 1920 referendum.

June 6th - Sweden

The tradition of celebrating this date began in the 1910s at the Stockholm Olympic Stadium, in honour of the election of King Gustav Vasa in 1523. This event was considered the foundation of modern Sweden as the event signify the end of

the Danish-ruled Kalmar Union. It is a marking of Swedish independence, though the event occurred so long ago that it does not have as strong of a presence in the social consciousness.

June 7th - Sjomannadagur (Seafarer's Day)

On this day you will see Iceland's entire fishing fleet in the Harbour. This is the day that the people of Iceland pay respect to the men and women who brave the unforgiving sea for a living, which have provided the foundation for Iceland's prosperity. This is a day to remember our forefathers who have faced danger and made sacrifices for the benefit of their families.

June 17th - Icelandic Republic Day

This public holiday celebrates the Kingdom of Iceland becoming a republic in 1944. The date of June 17th was chosen as a way to honour Jon Sigurdsson (his birthday) who Icelanders regard as their national hero. The biggest parties will be held in Reykjavik with events throughout the city. One of the most beloved events is the Fjallkonan (the woman of the mountains) clad in Skautbúningur, who recites an energetic poem. She represents the fierce spirit of the Icelandic Nation and the Icelandic nature.

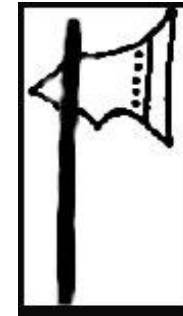
Feeling like hot springs this summer?

Everyone knows Icelanders are resourceful in a crisis, but their present situation is demanding that they more so than ever. Iceland has been hit hard by the world financial crisis with banks being nationalized and people losing their jobs, but the country is not accepting defeat. The government is capitalizing on what they have around them to help the economy. Iceland's natural beauty has been characterized as mythical,

and inspiring. Overseas tourism is expected to increase heavily this summer and Iceland is preparing. This year there are 60 recent graduates from the Tourism Guide School of Iceland and the government is working to improve their tourism office. So if you are planning a summer trip, Iceland is only a short flight from Toronto and they would love to have you.

would dress in their best clothes and eat Olsok porridge (rømmegrøt).

The symbol on the primstav is an axe, the Olav's Axe. Olsok was an important day for weather forecasting. In Hordaland (Western Norway) they expected weather change - for better or worse – and the new weather type would last until Larsok (August 10th).



They were generally anticipating rain, and a wet Olsok forebode a wet fall. A verse from Frosta (Trøndelag) goes: "Er Olavsdagen våt, skal bonden hauste med gråt". Roughly translated: "If Olav's Day is wet, the farmer shall harvest with regret". Good Olsok weather meant good fall weather. In many places in Western Norway they believed that after Olsok the meat would no longer taste of grass – hence they could slaughter after that day.

Icelandic Myths

Myths have been an important part of Icelandic culture throughout its history. The people who settled Iceland had to find ways to pass time during the long dark winter; they entertained each other by reading and telling heroic stories of the times gone by. This love of **story telling** has created a country that can boast universal literacy, and a wealth of written work that has been passed down throughout the ages. These stories explained the natural phenomena that surrounded them while featuring heroic figures. Some of the best known for these characters are the Norse Gods and Goddess, Odin, Freyja, and Thor just to know a few. The Icelanders were also known for their Sagas, these are stories that tell of the trials and tribulation of the Icelandic people. The tradition of Saga telling still lives on with those who immigrated to Canada as seen in the Gimli Saga and the Icelandic River saga.

Finnish Myths

Before 1316, the **summer solstice** was called Ukon juhla, after the Finnish god Ukko. For example Karelian tradition, many bonfires were burned side by side, the biggest of which was called Ukko-kokko (the "bonfire of Ukko"). After the celebrations were Christianized, the holiday is known as juhannus after St. John (Finnish: Johannes). The Swedish-speaking minority calls the event midsommar.

During the Finnish midsummer celebration, bonfires (kokko) are burnt at lakesides and by the sea. Especially in eastern Finland entire young birch trees (decorative entire young birch tree is called meiju while birch in Finnish is koivu) are brought to both sides of the front door to welcome visitors. In Midsummer night the sauna is typically heated and family and friends are invited to bathe and to grill. In the coastal areas some of the Swedish speaking communities raise a maypole, a tradition that has spread from Sweden during the 20th century.

Fact or Fiction?

Myth:

Norwegians eat a lot of lutefisk and lefse (all the time).

Fact:

In spite of the country's many valleys and fjords, Norway is an urban society. Out of a total population of close to 4.8 million, more than 75 % live in cities or other urban settlements.

Urban life rarely allows time for anything as work consuming as lefse baking. They can buy it, of course, but eat it mainly on special occasions.

Lutefisk has become an exclusive & expensive dish. By and large, it is eaten during the months of November, December and January when it is at its best. Real lutefisk lovers would not be caught eating frozen stuff - which tastes like a bleak copy of the real thing. Every district has its own range of side dishes – eating lutefisk is a serious matter!

Scandinavian Club of Regina's new website

The SCoR is underway of launching its very own website. It is already up and going but have very little information posted. However, it is our goal to have a nice functional website by the end of the summer thanks to Kim Gillies's leadership. Thank you!

For anyone interested check the site out at:

www.scandinavianclubregina.com

Use this as our new promotional tool if you know of someone who are interested in joining our club!



Member Portrait of new President; John Edwardson

Each newsletter a member of the club will be interviewed and profiled. We found this an excellent opportunity to introduce our new President, John Edwardson, and look into the future of the club.

As we arrive, John is caring for the winter damage to the backyard lawn of his Orchard Crescent home. On the patio he has spread out several items of written materials on Norway provided by the Norwegian consulate. Obtaining similar material from the other consulates and sharing this information with SCoR members is one of the things John sees as steps to revitalising the club. People could sign out the material they're interested in borrowing, and bring it back for sharing with other members.

John has lived in Regina since 1996. After 27 years as a Mountie, he has now retired and has been doing home repairs for seven years. During his RCMP career he was stationed in Camrose, Alberta, for some years and met lots of Norwegians and other Scandinavians there.

"I am proud of my Scandinavian heritage", he says, "as well as of my being a Canadian". Our ethnic background is an important feature of our culture and our personality, well worth taking care of and communicating to new generations. I can bake krumkaker and three kinds of lefse, he confides to us. (Skills this reporter, born and bred in Norway, certainly does not possess...)

"With the Internet, those ties grow even stronger", he says. "Features like Skype enable us to meet our relatives face to face. And think about Google Earth, by typing in the street address you can basically see their house on your screen! Internet broadens your knowledge about the world."

"Communication is so much easier now. My father lived here for full 33 years before he went back to Norway for the first time for his parents' 75th wedding anniversary. After that, he visited several times."

"There are so many Scandinavians in this area, so why doesn't our club have 200-300 more members? Where are the children of our present club members? Parents could put a bit of pressure on their sons and daughters to get them join the club, but the most important thing is that there must be change. The Scandinavian Club of Regina of 2009 must look to new ways of attracting membership and care for the interests of new members."

"Look at this group of ladies calling themselves 'Scandinavian Sweethearts'. They sell their Scandinavian baking at the Farmers' Market on Scarth St. which

include lefse,ponnukokur, wienerterta, krumkaker. They are not club members, how can we attract their interest?"

It became apparent that Mosaic participation is close to John's heart.

"I would love to have Mosaic again. I always came from Carlyle where I lived before moving to Regina. But the club must change with the new times. Without change we lost Mosaic. We must be willing to invest the resources – money and work it takes to get us in again. There are profits to gain from participating too. Profits from the Mosaic bar sales are shared among the participants. There are other small country heritage clubs. We could join forces, share costs and profits alike and make ourselves visible!"

"Change is key. Without change we can only sit back and watch memberships shrink. New activities are important. And we must make ourselves visible!"

While talking to John, he definitely showed his pride and passion about Scandinavia and also the club. We look forward to seeing the results from his efforts to revitalize the SCoR.

A little bit of Scandinavia in Regina

During this year's **Cathedral Village Arts Festival** Regina based storyteller Kevin MacKenzie <http://www.storiesbykevin.com/> gave a fascinating rendition of the **Norwegian folk tale** Lurvehette or "Tatterhood". The story is taken from Peter Christen Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe's collection of folk tales. Kevin as a professional storyteller gave his own twist to the story, and his audience was enchanted by Tatterhood and the trolls, witches and magic in the story. The Regina Public Library has a book of folk tales which contains excerpts from the story with the original illustrations by Norwegian artists Erik Werenskiold and Theodor Kittelsen.



The Scandinavian Club's Board of Directors 2009

President:	John Edwardson
Past President:	Laureen Smith
Vice President:	Kim Gillies
Treasurer:	Michael Larsson
Directors:	Kelly Nelson
	Ken Trapp
	Brian Beck
	Marlin Berg
Membership:	Larry Bristol
Phone Coordinator:	Gudrun M. Jonsson

Join us in welcoming the new members to the board, congratulate those who took on a greater role and wishing them our best of luck as they take on the future of our club.

We really appreciate all your work.

THANK YOU!

AGM
April 21st, 2009

... to sum it up

The 2009 AGM was held on April 20th 2009 and presided over by Laureen Smith. There was a delicious dessert buffet to get the night started. A big thanks to Kelly Nelson who prepared a letter which was read at the meeting, it was a great catalyst for the club to discuss the future of the club. One thing that was apparent throughout the meeting is that **the club has and the desire and energy to** deal with any hardship we will experience in the future. One change you might notice in the upcoming year is the membership fee increase of \$5. This will cover the increasing expenses the club has been facing.

The next AGM will be held on April 12, 2010

Hope to see everyone there.

