



# Midnight Sun



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## Sibelius, Symbol of Finnish Resistance to Russia

by Dianne Swanson

I was excited to learn during the second week of March, that the Regina Symphony Orchestra was performing a work by the Finnish composer, Jean Sibelius. This news brought back memories of a trip to Finland in 2019. My husband Greg Swanson, former SCOR president, had organized a bike tour in Finland for its members. Greg and I spent a week prior to the start of the tour exploring Helsinki.

With lots of time to roam, we discovered the Sibelius Park with a stunning sculpture of metal columns, commemorating the composer. Erected in 1967 by Finnish sculptor Eila Hiltunen, the abstract monument resembles a sound wave made from clusters of organ pipes. It consists of over 600 steel pipes unevenly grouped together at various heights, with the highest pipe reaching over 27 feet in the air.

The sculpture was criticized for not really depicting Sibelius so



*From a distance, to up close and personal, the pipe sculpture in Sibelius Park in Helsinki, Finland*  
a bronze bust of the composer was placed at the base of the sculpture.

All thoughts of Sibelius were forgotten as our group of 6 -the Swansons, Nelsons and Ashtons explored the southern parts of Finland. The SCOR bike tour ended in Turku on the west side of Finland. During our exploration of Turku, Greg and I found the Sibelius Music Museum; as an



amateur classical musician I had to visit.

To my surprise, Sibelius was so highly regarded by the people of Finland, that on his death in 1957 he was given a state funeral. Monuments and museums, festivals and awards are found throughout Finland celebrating the composer.

Why such a celebrity? His music captured a Finnish 'tone'

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*Bust of Sibelius at the base of the Pipe  
sculpture in Sibelius Park, Helsinki, Finland*

and was perceived as patriotic. This was especially celebrated around the 1900s when Russia was tightening its grip on Finland and likewise around 1940, when Finland went to war against the overwhelming might of Russia.

Sibelius was considered

throughout the world as a major 19th/20th century composer. He studied in Berlin and Vienna. He received invitations to conduct his symphonic works throughout the western world. Not surprisingly he and his family suffered financial hardship (he was a married man, with 6 daughters) especially during the time of the First World War, then Finland's independence from Russia and its civil war. Publication of his music and royalty revenue was limited during this time.

One of his most well-known pieces is the symphonic work "Finlandia". It was written in 1899 as a covert protest against Russian censorship. Finland was



*The Sibelius Museum in Turku, Finland*



*Greg Swanson hams it up at the Sibelius  
Music Museum in Turku, Finland*

then a nominal Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire but Finland's powers were being worn away.

I encourage you to go to YouTube and discover this work for yourself. It is "a timeless symbol of the Finnish spirit and also a universal hymn to freedom, known and loved all over the world."

## Upcoming Events

### Fishy Friday

**When:** Fri., Apr. 1 at 5:00 pm

**Where:** Ricky's in Harbour  
Landing

### SCOR AGM

**When:** Sun., April 24 at 7:00 pm

**Where:** Speers Family Centre  
2333 Cornwall St

Dessert is on the menu so we hope you will join us for the Annual General Meeting

### Summer Solstice

**When:** Sun., June 26 at 4-9 pm

**Where:** Speers Family Center  
2333 Cornwall St

Join us for a catered meal and a reading by author and poet Harold Rhenish.





## President's Message

some gatherings. The turn out for Fishy Friday has shown us that members are ready to go out and meet together. We are planning an Annual General Meeting (AGM) on April 24th and a Summer Solstice on June 26th. It is our hope and plan that these events will be held in person.

We have a wonderful opportunity for you; we are looking for a president for the coming year. We welcome any suggestions for nominees. If you or anyone you know might be a candidate for this position, please put your/their name forward. The position comes with the opportunity to meet and work with

a wonderful and helpful board. If, over the past 2 years, you have felt a lack of connection to your fellow kin, here is an opportunity for you. And if you haven't felt a disconnect, but you missed the gatherings, you might want to put your name forward in order for these events to continue to exist. To continue as an organization, a president is required.

A huge thank you to Andrea for putting together this newsletter. We are so fortunate to have a person with her interest and skills.

I look forward to seeing you at the AGM on April 24th.

Linda Wacker

**W**e are on the verge of spring and have to feel some joy at having made it through the winter. It is exciting to feel the sun's warmth and observe melting snow. Along with signs of spring is the hope that we can hold

## "Awe Walking" by Darlene Harrison



**I** discovered a new phrase the other day... "awe walking." I wish I had coined the phrase!

In a recent article in Zoomer magazine, Rona Maynard, in an article entitled "Walk This Way" said, "Science now has a name for this ritual of mine – "awe walking" – and researchers are proving the benefits. According to a US study published in September 2020, awe walking not only makes us happier, it fosters gratitude, compassion and admiration, the prosocial emotions that bind us to others."

In March 2020 when the COVID-19 lockdown began, I decided that I needed to start

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"Awe Walking" cont. from page 3

walking because I knew that I would spend too much time sitting around and inevitably gain a great deal of weight. I had never enjoyed walking but I am loving it now.

For the first little while I would post a few pictures on Facebook each day but then my project soon morphed into a daily post with many and varied themes. I kept track of my daily posts and at the end of June, 2021 I had posted 333 times so I decided to give myself a break over the summer. However, in September I resumed my daily musings and of course, now I don't know when I'll be able to stop!

By utilizing the concept of awe walking instead of walking for the sake of exercise and weight

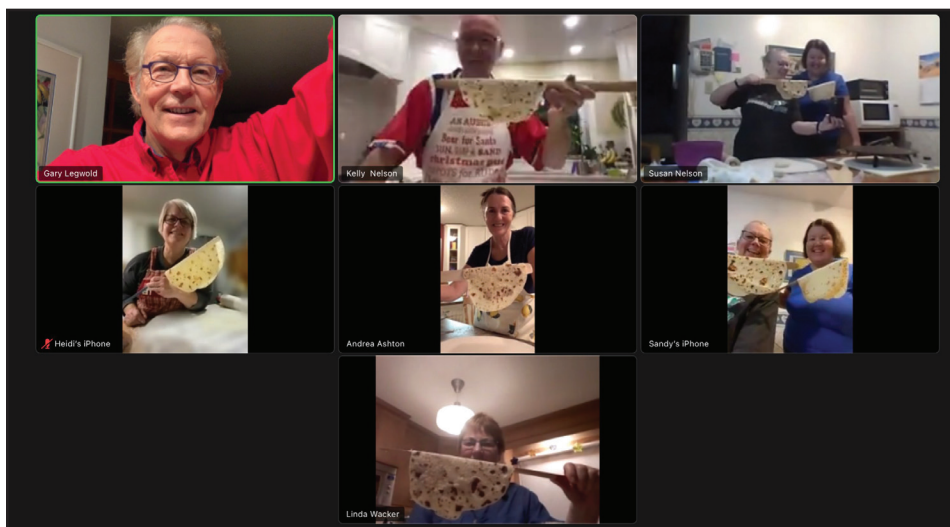
control I have become much more observant of the world around me. I have enjoyed photographing trees, flowers, reflections, buildings, Wascana Lake, Wascana Creek and whatever object catches my eye. And, of course, my recent trip to the West Coast and then east to Markham Ontario offered plenty of opportunities for photography! I have noticed the beauty in a weed, the grandeur of a sunset, the majesty of clouds, the texture of tree bark, and the list goes on and on. I have become far more attuned to the ever-changing seasons in my part of the world.

Maynard mentions in her article the benefits of walking. She says, "Most anyone, anywhere can take a walk. An ordinary walk has been compared to a wonder drug, with well established health benefits ranging from weight

control and depression relief to reduced risk of diabetes and cancer. If walkers learned to cultivate awe, could awe walking be even more wonderful?"

I think that when we cultivate the sense of awe, we begin to see the larger world around us. Awe lifts you into another realm of thought and feeling and it can even promote generosity, kindness and even environmental awareness. During my daily walking travels I make it a point to speak to everyone I meet. I offer a simple hello and I have been blessed with reciprocating greetings that often lead into short, but meaningful, conversations.

Awe walking has helped me get through the pandemic and believe it or not... I have even lost some weight! Give awe walking a try - you will love it!



## Zoom, Zoom - Lefse Online

Covid-19 may have stopped some things, but where there is a will, there is a way. For those wishing to learn the fine art of making lefse there was a way.

Thanks to SCOR President Linda Wacker who reached out to

the Lefse King - Gary Legwold - to organize an online evening class for those of us who wanted to learn how to make lefse.

With a class of six interested participants, we were all able to create some delicious lefse.

In addition to online lefse classes, Gary also held a contest for the best "lefse" limerick. Below is the winner of the 2nd Annual Lefse Limerick Contest.

*There once was a lefse-less Dane  
Whose diet was woefully plain  
Til she met a Norsk troll  
And with him she did roll  
And her night times were never the same*

*Under stars and the light of the moon  
Lefse steamed amid kisses and soon  
Through flour and frost  
Their minds became lost  
And the dish ran away with the spoon!*

Margie Oloughlin,  
from Northfield, Minnesota





# The Return of Fishy Friday

On Friday, December 3, 2021 thirteen members of the Scandinavian Club of Regina gathered for the first time since January 3, 2020 marking almost two years since Covid-19 put a stop to one of the most regular and popular events of the club - Fishy Friday.

The second Fishy Friday which had been scheduled for Friday March 4 but postponed to March 11 due to a snow storm, was an even larger event with twenty members in attendance.

Hopefully 2022 will be a return to normal - or at least a new normal - where members can gather once again at numerous events to enjoy some laughs, friendly conversation and some meals together.

Hope to see you soon.

Fishy Friday - December 3, 2021



Fishy Friday - March 11, 2022





# Midsummer Celebrations

by Darlene Harrison

When I grew up in New Finland, a Finnish community near Whitewood, Saskatchewan, June 24 was a time of great celebration! The midsummer festival is called “Juhannus” which is St. John’s Day. The celebration is an interesting mix of Christian and secular. There is some suggestion that St. John’s Day was established to counteract the ancient Festival of Light which was deemed to be “pagan” by some of the Christians. Christians celebrate in honour of Saint John the Baptist, the cousin of Jesus, who proceeded Jesus’ ministry and urged people to repent as he baptized.

Ever since the founding of the community of New Finland the Juhannus celebration has been a tradition held each year. It used to be such a big event that it was actually held on the actual date, June 24, but in recent years it has been held on the Saturday closest to June 24. It is celebrated with a community picnic that featured a horseshoe tournament, softball games, a fishpond, tug – of – war and races for every age group. And, of course, there was always good food provided by the women of St. John’s Lutheran Church: coffee, sandwiches and pies (and in later years hotdogs). And, very importantly, a great deal of visiting! There was a booth where you could buy ice cream, candy, soft drinks and watermelon. For so many of us, especially the children, it was the highlight of the

year. I remember the excitement of the Juhannus picnic! Often the girls even got a new dress for the occasion. For most of us, it was the only time in the year we got to enjoy watermelon and ice cream!

In past years the day concluded with a dance at the New Finland Hall. Sadly COVID-19 has meant that the picnic has been cancelled for the last couple of years; the first time in many years!



*A traditional “kokko” bonfire*

One of the traditions was the burning of an enormous bonfire called a “kokko.”

It was not just any ordinary bonfire. It was a huge stack of poplar trees, 20 to 30 feet in height, built in a teepee like shape and lit on fire after dark. The way that it was crafted meant that it could burn for a very long time before it fell to the ground.

The following is a quote from the history book titled “Life in the

New Finland Woods.” The article written by Harold Polvi describes the tradition as it was in Finland:

“Every year on Midsummer night a big bonfire was kept burning all night to celebrate the end of all work contracts between employers and hired help, male and female. During the week following Juhannus, any employer could hire anyone of the workers for the following year. If satisfied with their place of employment, the workers could stay on with their present employer.”

According to an article from Wikipedia Midsummer/ St. John’s Day is particularly important to this day in northern Europe – Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania but it is also strongly observed in Poland, Russia, Belarus, Germany, Netherlands, Flanders, Ireland, and parts of the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Spain, Ukraine and other parts of Europe. The festival is marked in some places in Canada, the United States, Puerto Rico, Brazil, Argentina and Australia. In Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Quebec the traditional Midsummer Day is a public holiday.

I think we should make it an annual celebration for SCOR!



# Swedish Crows to the Rescue

by Lynda Delaney

Cigarette butts are the most abundant form of plastic pollution in the world, with about 4.5 trillion individual butts being tossed every year. Many people are under the false impression that cigarettes are biodegradable, and therefore toss them on the ground. However, cigarette butts are actually primarily plastic and they contain toxic chemicals that pollute the environment. Cigarette filters can take up to ten years to completely decompose!

In Sweden, more than 1 billion cigarette butts are tossed on the streets each year and make up 62% of the country's litter. The city of Södertälje, southwest of



Stockholm, spends 20 million Swedish kronor on street cleaning yearly, which is more than \$2,600,000 Canadian dollars!

What can be done about this? Why not let crows volunteer to help!

A Swedish company called Corvid Cleaning plans on using crows to pick up cigarette butts.

The birds will receive a small amount of food for every cigarette butt they pick up and drop into a bespoke machine.

The crows are wild birds taking part on a voluntary basis. They are free to come and go as they please. The method being used is known as positive reinforcement training. By rewarding the crows with a treat every time they do something good, it teaches them to keep repeating the behaviour, since they know a tasty snack awaits.

It is believed this method will cut down the cost of cigarette butt cleanup in the city by 75 percent.

Maybe humans can learn also...



## Arthur Lange



Arthur Lange was born on November 16, 1924 in

## *In Memoriam*

Mazenod, SK and died peacefully at home in Regina, SK on Saturday, January 15, 2022. He was predeceased by his wife Betty; parents Herman and Pauline Lange; brothers Paul and Walter; and sisters Olga, Laura (Morrison), Martha (Gough), Ella (Krauss) and Johanna (Pruden). Art leaves to cherish his memory his daughter Greta; son-in-law Murray Wall and grandsons Erik and Peter.

Art will be fondly remembered for his intellect, open-mindedness, style and sense of humour. Friends and family from near and far were always welcome in Art and Betty's



home. His career as a Geophysicist took Art and his family around the world, eventually returning back to his home province of Saskatchewan as the first Chief Geophysicist for SaskOil. After retiring, Art became a licensed gemologist and started his own business. Art loved to curl, golf, play the piano and connect with family and friends. He was a life-long learner, enjoyed traveling and adventures with his grandsons. Art led a long and meaningful life.

A Service to Celebrate Art's Life will be planned for the spring/summer of 2022.

## Movie Reviews

### Bombardment by Andrea Ashton



(L-r) Eva, Henry, Rigmore and Sister Teresa

Netflix is now streaming *Bombardment*, a film based on the true story of a school in Copenhagen, Denmark (Institut Jeanne D'Arc) that was accidentally bombed in March of 1945. The British Air Force's target was Gestapo Headquarters in Copenhagen, however, when one of the British planes crashes near the school, that area near the fire is then mistaken as the target and their remaining bombs are dropped on the French school, killing eighty-six children, nineteen adults and wounding over

one hundred others.

In the opening scenes we witness a British aircraft accidentally shooting a car carrying three women and a man on their way to a wedding party, mistaking it for a car carrying an SS Officer.

A young boy named Henry follows the aircraft, finds the car and is left traumatized, unable to speak, and now terrified of the open skies.

Henry's mother, unable to help him recover, takes him to Copenhagen where he stays

with his aunt, uncle and cousin Rigmore. The movie follows the three children – Henry, Rigmore and their friend Eva who all attend Institut Jeanne D'Arc. Through them, we meet young Sister Teresa who is having a crisis of faith after witnessing the treatment of Jews in her city. In one scene, she witnesses a young Danish SS Officer Frederik beating a prisoner. When Frederik confronts Teresa on the street, she boldly accuses him of being the devil and this confrontation leads him to seek her out later in the hopes she will teach him how to pray. The two form a connection, and later, this connection forms one of the most powerful moments of the movie.

This movie allows us to see the tragedy of this event through so many different eyes – of children, parents, teachers, officers, and even those we called the enemy.

This is an intimate and haunting movie about morality that will remain with you long after watching it.

The Scandinavian Club of Regina's newsletter *Midnight Sun* is published quarterly.

The editors of this publication are comprised of a committee. If you have any ideas or stories you would like to share with us please contact us at [scoreventsregina@gmail.com](mailto:scoreventsregina@gmail.com)



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