



Nordic-American Psalmodikonforbundet

“ A Society dedicated to the education and preservation of the Psalmodikon and Sifferskrift Music. ”

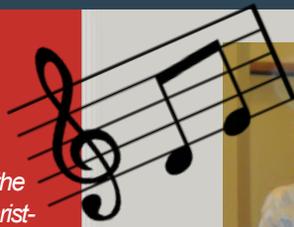


Nordic-American Psalmodikonforbundet | Tel: +1 952-934-4535 | E-mail: enstrengb@gmail.com | Web: www.psalmodikon.com

Notes from

MUSIC-ON-A-STRING

Beatrice Hole



The Autumn season is upon us, and the wonderful days of Thanksgiving and Christmas are not far off. This is a special time of the year for the psalmodikon when we can have a change in music and play the beautiful songs of Christmas.

Our Annual Psalmodikon meeting in August was well attended and we had a great time playing all the familiar music written for the psalmodikon. We realized how many songs we have learned over the years and now feel very comfortable playing them. I always wish that more members could attend this eventful day. Maybe next year we will select a day when more can attend.

The psalmodikon is a great way of expressing or relaxing ourselves on an individual basis. A lady once told me that she leaves her psalmodikon on the dining room table, where it is handy, and stops to play a tune whenever she has a moment. She is not a trained musician and it was such a good feeling for her "to be a musician".

Rodger and I recently took a trip to the New England states. While we were in Boston, touring the older part of the city, a lady said she had been demonstrating in the Paul Revere Home and had the instrument that Ben Franklin had invented in the back seat of her car. It was a Glass Armonica, and being interested in old instruments, I of course, rushed over there and took a picture. I have seen the glass harmonica at the Bakken Museum in Minneapolis, but it was special to see one in historic Boston. You can see my photo and read the article in this Newsletter.

Best wishes for a blessed holiday season.

May you always have a song in your heart and music at your fingertips!



(L-R): Beatrice Hole, Ruth Gibson, Jean Akre, Floyd Foslien, Betty Foslien, Joan Saathoff, and Susan Krueger.

ANNUAL MEETING 2013

Beatrice Hole

The 17th Psalmodikon Annual Meeting of the Nordic-American Psalmodikonforbundet was held on Saturday, August 17, 2013 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The gathering was held in the Fellowship Hall of Mt. Zion Lutheran Church in Hudson, Wisconsin.

There were nine members present: Joan Saathoff, Hudson, WI; Beatrice Hole, Eden Prairie, MN; Susan Krueger, Stillwater, MN; Ruth Gibson, White Bear Lake, MN; Emily Evenson, Montevideo, MN; Ardyce Albrecht, Montevideo, MN; Floyd Foslien, Hudson, WI; Jean Akre, Kalama, WA; and Betty Foslien, Alexandria, MN.

Special visitors: Linda Estenson and son, from Alexandria, MN. They stopped by hoping Floyd could repair an old family psalmodikon.

Everyone had a pleasant time of music, fellowship and playing all the old favorite songs we have learned to play over the years. It was decided that we should play "God Be Present", "How Great Thou Art" and "Jesus Loves Me" to tie in with the theme of the Sunday morning worship. Because these were all familiar songs, we did not have to spend time learning any new tunes. The day was very relaxing and fun.

A lunch at noon was provided by members of the Psalmodikon Quartet. A gift of money was given to the church in appreciation for use of their facilities.

Seven members participated in the 9:00 a.m. worship service at Mt. Zion Lutheran Church on Sunday morning.

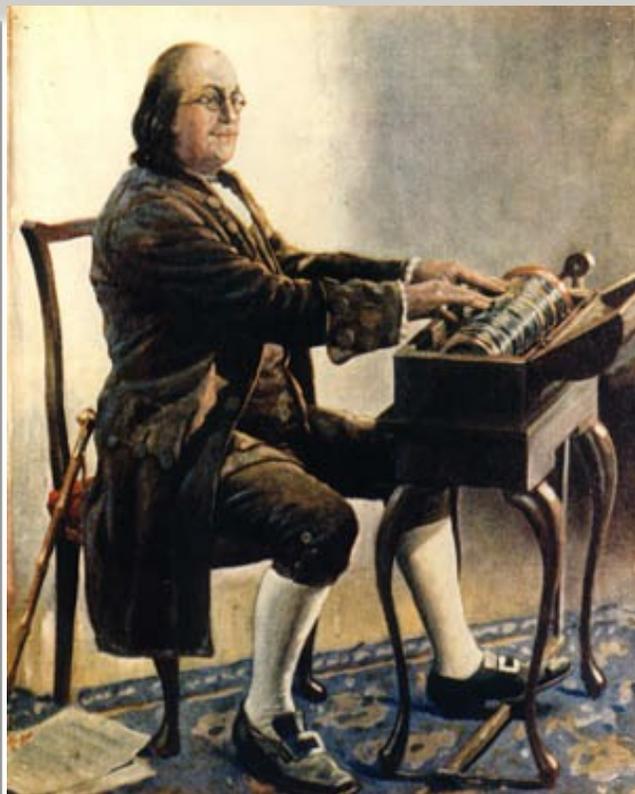


...more photos P. 6

Musical History

BEN. FRANKLIN'S MUSICAL INVENTION

by Beatrice Hole



Benjamin Franklin was known for many achievements and probably the least well-known was his interest in music. In 1761, while living in England, he heard someone playing musical glasses.

I think we've all tried touching the rim of a crystal glass with water moistened fingers and producing a sound. It was on this basis that Benjamin Franklin invented the "Armonica" meaning "harmony". Franklin and the instrument had its world premiere in early 1762 and he described the tone as "incomparably sweet".

In Franklin's treadle-operated version, 37 bowls were

mounted horizontally on an iron spindle. The whole spindle turned by means of a foot pedal. The sound was produced by touching the rims of the bowls with water moistened fingers. Rims were painted different colors according to the pitch of the note. A's were dark blue, B's purple, C's red, D's orange, E's yellow, F's green, G's blue and accidentals white.

Franklin's glass armonica was reworked several times to no avail until 1984 when master glassblower and musician, Gerhard B. Finkenbeiner (1930-1999), who had been experimenting for 30 years, finally designed a prototype consisting of clear glasses equipped with gold bands mimicking 18th century designs. The gold bands indicate the equivalent of the black keys on the piano, simplifying the multihued painted bowl rims as designed by Benjamin Franklin. G. Finkenbeiner Inc. of Waltham,

Massachusetts continues to produce versions of these instruments which are sold commercially.

The popularity of the instrument faded early in the nineteenth century but it is still played occasionally today. There are numerous occasions when the glass armonica can be heard in movie soundtracks, recorded as accompaniment for well-known vocalists and heard in theater concerts. For instance, Dennis James played glass instruments on Marco Beltrami's film scores for *The Minus Man* (1999) and *The Faculty* (1998). James also recorded an album of all glass music, "Cristal: Glass Music Through The Ages" by Linda Ronstadt and John Boylan.

You may listen on *You Tube* to "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy" played on the Glass Armonica:



www.youtube.com/watch?v=eQemvyyJ-g



That Busy Ben!



Jean Akre Attends Meeting = Goes to Hell, Returns

Jean Akre

It was great to see everyone again this year at the annual meeting. Sorry Kathy was unable to attend. Since Paul and I were heading to Norway and Denmark after the annual meeting, I was asked to write something about our trip. So the following is a short summary of our trip.

We flew into Trondheim, Norway, anyway that is what it is called, however, and the airport is really in Stjørdal, Norway. We were greeted at the airport by Paul's cousin and driven to their farm. Their farm is a very modern farm. It is a co-op dairy farm owned by four families, and as I understand it, your share in the co-op depended on how much land you own and contribute to the co-op. So basically the co-op grows grass/hay to feed the cattle. The grass is cut, baled, and shrink wrapped. It is then used to feed the 65 head of cattle they milk. There is a special room that looked only large enough for one cow and the milking robot. The cows go into this little room one at a time and the robot hooks up to the cow and milks it, all without

human intervention. While the cow is in this room, there is a special feed for it which, if I understood the explanation properly is what attracts the cow into the room. When it is milked, the cow leaves the room and the next cow comes in to be milked. This goes on 24/7. The cows never leave the barn. This farm is in the area of Åsen. Of course, the area is very beautiful like all of Norway.

We went to the Værnes Church where Paul's one set of grandparents were members before settling in the area of Fertile, Minnesota. In fact, they organized the Værnes Church congregation in their house near Fertile.

They took us to Ringve, I thought to see the music museum, but we only saw a small part of the museum. However, we did not get to see the actual museum where *all* the music instruments are and where you can play the Psalmodikon. However, I did tell the guide about the Psalmodikon of which she did not appear to have a clue.

Our son, Kristen (the editor of this newsletter), his wife Laura, and their daughter, Thea, met us in Åsen. We had our picture taken at the Railroad station in Hell and it appeared in the local newspaper. We had a great time in Norway.

We picked up our car at the airport in Copenhagen and made a wrong turn and we were on the long bridge between Copenhagen, Denmark

and Malmö, Sweden to the tune of a LARGE sum of money. Fortunately the pay station was almost at the end of the bridge and the attendant at the pay station told us to go to the end, basically make a U-turn and head back to Denmark and they would refund our money. Our first trip was in 1972 to Denmark so, we revisited some places we were before to retake pictures and to see the changes. *Things have changed.* Of course, Denmark is not as scenic as Norway, but just about as expensive!



Prices of most things in Scandinavia are extremely high, i.e. gasoline in Norway is about \$9.65 per gallon, a bottle of Coke \$4 or \$5.

So now back to the annual meeting. As always, you seem to learn one or two new things which is good. I also want to comment on one of our dear members of the group. As a Psalmodikon player myself and not the best, I hope the group realizes what a great guy you have in this group. As I see it, you have Floyd with his harem! Not all men would put up/have the patience with having to help us tune all our instruments. Since Beatrice asked that I write about the annual meeting, I thought all the way home from Minnesota about what I would write and finally finished my thoughts yesterday when I saw Linda





NEW LAND, NEW LIFE: NORWEGIAN IMMIGRATION IN MINNESOTA 1825-1925

Landmark Center, St. Paul, Minnesota

28 February - 20 June 2013

<http://www.landmarkcenter.org/>

One in five Minnesotans claim Norwegian ancestry. Norwegians, along with Swedes and Danes, made up one of the larger and earlier ethnic groups to settle in Minnesota, providing common experiences and common ground with later immigrants, all striving to be Americans.

The "New Land, New Life" exhibit featured information about the timeline and effects of Norwegian immigration, photographs, memorabilia, and other artifacts in display cases, on loan from Sons of Norway members. The Sons of Norway members also made a very informative film that was shown during the exhibit.

The Nordic American Psalmodikon Quartet had the honor of performing on Saturday, April 20. Beatrice Hole (see photo) displayed one of her old psalmodikons during the duration of the exhibition.

This was one of the most ambitious projects undertaken by a local Sons of Norway Lodge in America. Ruth Gibson of White Bear Lake is a



long-time member of the Synnove-Nordkap Lodge, and also of the Psalmodikon organization.

This exhibit has now become a travelling showcase and is available to any organization that is interested in displaying it.

I and so many others enjoyed it to the utmost. Very well done! 

The *Nordic-American Psalmodikonforbundet Newsletter* is published in the Spring, Summer and Autumn. We are always looking for newsworthy items and photos that you want to share with other readers.

The **\$8.00 membership fee** helps to cover the cost of printing and postage for the Newsletter, the annual fee for the Psalmodikon Web Site and the annual meeting expenses.

Check the date on your mailing label which indicates if your dues are current.

Send membership dues to:

Beatrice Hole
6560 Leesborough Ave
Eden Prairie, MN 55346



con't – Akre Goes to Hell, P. 3

and Jim Dalrymple. Some of the letters in Floyd's name just did not fit him so the following is the outcome.

Floyd stands for:

- F** Fabulous Musician
- L** Likeable/lovable (everyone likes Floyd—what is not to like?)
- O** Offers help to all, young & old
- Y** Your Psalmodikon tuner, maker and repairman
- D** Dependable

So, here's to our wonderful friend, Floyd and I hope he never gives up on his "Harem". He put a new string on my tenor Psalmodikon during the time I was in Norway and Denmark and I purchased a cello bow after arriving home and I believe I can pretty much keep up with Linda and her bass on volume!

Thanks to all for making the annual meeting a wonderful experience. 



Maple fret board w/frets	30.00
Sitka spruce top material:	
small psalmodikon	17.00
tapered psalmodikon	22.00
Cherrywood violin bow	28.00
Rosin	5.00

ITEMS FOR SALE

PSALMODIKON SONGBOOK (revised edition) written in Sifferskrift and 4-part harmony for psalmodikons
\$19.00 pp

PSALMODIKON QUARTET CD \$15.00 pp

Send orders to:

Singsaas Lutheran Church
Attn: Music CD's
P. O. Box 87,
Hendricks, MN 56136
<http://www.countrychurchmusic.com/>

PSALMODIKON COMPONENTS

Psalmodikon Pattern	\$10.00
Tuning Peg	3.75
String	1.25
Fine tuner w/tailpiece	17.75

Send orders to:

Floyd Foslien
567 High Ridge Drive
Hudson, WI 54016
www.fffoslien@sbcglobal.net

Notes from Floyd:

These are usually the most difficult components for builders to obtain. I can, however, provide all of the other component parts required to make *psalmodikons*, if the builder is unable to make them or find them locally. You may contact me for prices.

I also sell a complete kit of parts to make a *psalmodikon* for \$130.00. This kit instrument is modelled after an antique Norwegian *salmodikon* (Norwegian spelling) similar to one used by Lars Roverud. He was the "Father" of the Norwegian *salmodikon* and is credited with using transposition sticks to allow playing in various keys without re-tuning so this kit includes a transposition stick. The parts are cut to size and need only to be glued together, sanded, and finished with varnish or lacquer.

Welcome New Member

We recently received an inquiry from Myron Wilcox of Madison, Wisconsin. Myron had read about the psalmodikon on the website and became interested in the music and the organization.

Through his correspondence with Floyd Foslien, Myron became a new member.



Nordic-American Psalmodikonforbundet & Newsletter

President

Beatrice Hole
Eden Prairie, Minnesota
+1 952-934-4535
enstrengb@gmail.com

Vice-President

Floyd Foslien
Hudson, Wisconsin
fffoslien@sbcglobal.net

Treasurer

Joan Saathoff
Hudson, Wisconsin
har.jo.saathoff@att.net

Editor

Kristen Åkre
Mount Vernon, Washington
+1 253-341-8430
kdakre@comcast.net

The Newsletter is published using PagePlus X7 (www.serif.com) and is printed in Eden Prairie, Minnesota.



I have many psalmodikons in my collection. Some sound good and some not so good. But my favorite one now was made more recently by Floyd Foslien. This psalmodikon is the 45th one he has made. This beautiful Alto psalmodikon is made from Cherry wood and Sitka Spruce. It measures 35" x 4" x 4" deep with curving lines. It is a beauty and I so enjoy playing it! I did not realize what I had been missing until I played the clear and perfect notes of a Foslien psalmodikon!



MORE MEETING PHOTOS...



“IN PICTURES”

- (1): *Emily Swenson and Ardyce Albrecht;*
- (2): *Jean Akre and Floyd Foslien;*
- (3): *Joan Saathoff and Betty Foslien;*
- (4): *Ruth Gibson, Emily Swenson;*
- (5): *Ruth Gibson and Emily Swenson, and Beatrice Hole.*

NORDIC-AMERICAN PSALMODIKONFORBUNDET



MUSIC-ON-A-STRING
Beatrice Hole
6560 Leesborough Ave.
Eden Prairie, MN 55346-2823

Psalmodikon website: <http://www.psalmodikon.com/>