



Nordic-American Psalmodikonforbundet

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



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Notes from

MUSIC-ON-A-STRING

Beatrice Hole

We have experienced a very long winter and now it is already time to be thinking of the next Psalmodikon Newsletter and the Psalmodikon Annual Meeting in August. Uff Da! Summer will be gone before we know it.

Other than letters with membership fees enclosed, I have not heard from many folks. Perhaps we were all too busy doing “gigs” for the Syttende Mai. I know the Wisconsin ladies had several occasions to play. In this issue you will read about the West Coast players. And as I have done for many years, I was playing for Gracia Grindal’s Syttende Mai service at the old Muskego log cabin church in St. Paul. It was another one of those damp rainy days and we had to have our “Lefse on the Lawn” indoors.

Oh well, in a few weeks, when the sun shines hot, Floyd Foslien and I will be in Decorah, IA for the 47th annual Nordic Fest. We continue to be invited back, to demonstrate our psalmodikons at the Museum, and we so enjoy participating in the festival. Here’s wishing you all a wonderful summer and hope that many of you will be making plans to come to the annual get-together in Hudson, WI. Will be waiting to hear from you!

**MAY YOU ALWAYS HAVE A SONG IN YOUR
HEART AND MUSIC AT YOUR FINGERTIPS!**



ANNUAL MEETING 2013

The 17th Psalmodikon Annual Meeting/Workshop of the Nordic-American Psalmodikonforbundet will be held on Saturday, August 17, 2013 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The meeting will be held in the air-conditioned Fellowship Hall of Mt. Zion Lutheran Church, 505 – 13th Street South, Hudson, Wisconsin. (Two blocks north of I-94).

Coffee, soft drinks, and assorted Norwegian delicacies will be available during the day with a catered lunch at noon. Plans are being made to enjoy an evening of fellowship and dinner at a local restaurant and possibly participating in Sunday morning worship.

We need a count for the catered meal at noon so it is very important that you make reservations.

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As you recall, we are fortunate to secure the same place as last year for our meeting. Mt. Zion is very accommodating and centrally located.

Every year we have many psalmodikon players and psalmodikon enthusiasts coming to our get-together. If you do not have an instrument of your own, we’ll have extras on hand to use with someone available to help you get started. Perhaps you are in need of technical assistance or need questions answered. There will be folks there to help on an individual basis. We also welcome those of you who just want to come for the fellowship and listen to psalmodikon music!

Looking forward to seeing everyone again!

PSALMODIKON PLAYING WOMEN?

I started researching Psalmodikon history over 20 years ago and often did I wonder why they only wrote about men playing the psalmodikons.

Several weeks ago I saw the play “A Doll’s House” written by Norwegian born, Henrik Ibsen in 1879. This drama featured strong confident female characters that were not cowed by society’s expectations. I began to realize Ibsen was contributing to the women’s suffrage revolution of that time!

Then I come upon a story about Aasta Hansteen, who in 1871 published an article condemning discrimination against women in the Lutheran church!

In 1913, the Norway parliament defined women as citizens of Norway and granted them voting rights. This set a precedent for the whole world and women in the USA were granted rights seven years later. This year the Norwegians are celebrating 100 years of universal women’s suffrage.

Now I have the answers to my question after all these years!

MUSICAL HISTORY

Hohner Melodica

The modern form of the instrument was invented by Hohner in the 1950s, out of Trossingen, Germany. Hohner also manufactured the accordion, harmonica, and reed organ.

The Melodica, also known as the pianica, blow-organ or key-flute, is a free-reed instrument similar to the melodeon and harmonica. It has a musical keyboard on top, and is played by blowing air through a mouthpiece that fits into a hole in the side of the instrument. Pressing a key opens a hole, allowing air to

flow through a reed. The keyboard is usually two or three octaves long. Melodicas are small, light, and portable. They are popular in music education, especially in Asia.

The Melodica was first used as a serious musical instrument in the 1960s by composers such as Steve Reich in his piece titled "Melodica".

Brazilian multi-instrumentalist, Herrmeto Pascoa, developed a technique consisting of singing while playing the Melodica, resulting in a wide tonal and harmonic palette.



Kazoo

The kazoo was probably the first "instrument" I played. I remember my teacher in Country School handing them out to the students during Music class.

The kazoo is a musical instrument which adds a buzzing timbral quality to a player's voice when the player vocalizes into it. While blowing is the term typically used to describe the technique required to play a kazoo, a more accurate term would be humming into the kazoo. Blowing with the lips closed around the mouthpiece of the kazoo will not create sound — one must vibrate air from one's lungs by

humming into the instrument to produce any sound. Instead of just humming, different sounds can be made by singing different syllable such as *doo*, *who*, *rrrr*, or *brrrr* into the kazoo.

Such devices have been used in Africa for hundreds of years, to disguise the sound of somebody's voice or to imitate animals, often for various ceremonial purposes.

The first metal kazoos were manufactured and patented in New York, where they are still made in the original factory.

Today the kazoo is played professionally in jug bands, in comedy music, and by amateurs everywhere.

In 2010 The Kazoo Museum dedicated to the history of the kazoo was opened in Beaufort, South Carolina.



From Our Readers

We received a letter from Walter H. Reynolds of Poughkeepsie, NY.

He writes: Enclosed is a check for my membership for 2013.

I finally finished building the kit I bought from Floyd, but have not "played" with it very much. My wife passed away in July and along with other commitments and other family illnesses and issues — the instrument has received little attention.

I bought the CD and have really enjoyed it very much.

Thanks, Walt



Nordic-American Psalmidifonforbundet & Newsletter

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The Newsletter is published using PagePlus X6 (www.serif.com) and is printed in Eden Prairie, Minnesota.

Halvordsson

SYTTENDE MAI CELEBRATION

by Jean Akre, Kalama, Washington

Johan Vineyard, Rickerall, Oregon

Syttende Mai Celebration was celebrated at Norse Hall in Portland, Oregon on May 17, 2013 with a parade consisting of fjord horses, high school bands, many Norwegians and want to be "Norwegians with old cars" carrying those who could or did not want to walk.

The Program for the evening was highlighted by a woman from the Portland area that had been chosen to go to Norway for the Norwegian Reality Show called "Alt for Norge". She was the second person from the Portland area to be chosen and another lady is over there now. She did not last to

the end, but had a great time. If you are interested in seeing what it is all about, you can find the information on the internet. Basically as I understand it, you have to have Norwegian relatives in Norway whom are unknown and you have never been to Norway. If you are the last to be kicked off the team, you receive, on top of your free trip to Norway, \$50,000 and meet your relatives.

Then our second *Syttende Mai* Celebration was held at Johan Vineyard on May 18. I believe this was their third year to celebrate. Four of the five West Coast Psalmodikon

group entertained the group from 12 noon to 3:30. Last year they had about 30 people who attended and at one point Saturday, the count was 150. We had a lot more interested people this year than last. It may be the difference in the people attending or it could be that we all were under their covered area so we were more up front and cozy! Although we were exhausted standing on concrete, we had a great time.

Then off to the last *Syttende Mai* celebration. A two grand, 8 hands concert, a flutist, and a vocalist with a beautiful spread of food and more wine.

Will Work for Wine!!





I C E M U S I C



PLAYING INSTRUMENTS MADE OF ICE

I have not heard of anyone who attended the concert put on by Terje Isungset, Geilo, when he performed at the Cedar Culture Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota in February 2013. We were on our winter vacation at the time; otherwise I certainly would have been there for the concert.

Terje is known for constructing musical instruments of natural materials such as wood, stone, and ice. For over 20 years he has brought unique musical experiences to audiences worldwide with unique instruments. He has made several CD's based on instruments made of ice.

The instruments made of ice do not last long because they melt a little during each performance, and so Isungset will often build new ice instruments for each concert. He can never practice like most musicians, nor does he know what tones to expect. Tuning and timbre of the instruments may change between the sound check and the concert, and even during a concert improvisation is important.

I am truly sorry I did not get to experience Terje's concert. It may be a long time before he comes to Minneapolis again. For more information and sound clips of Terje's performances at Website: www.icemusic.no

IN REMEMBRANCE

Frank Foslien, 87, passed away on May 31, 2013. The funeral was held at the West Moe Lutheran Church near Alexandria, Minnesota.

I remember Frank as being a very patient, kind and loving gentleman. I became acquainted with him through the Foslien family and the psalmodikon. Frank could sit for hours and listen to us practice our psalmodikons and a big smile would come upon his face when we played "*Hils fra mig der hjemme*".

Frank was the wife of Betty, brother of Fyllis Flannery and a favorite uncle of Floyd Foslien, all of whom are psalmodikon players and members of Nordic-American Psalmodikonforbundet.

On behalf of the psalmodikon organization, I extend our sincere sympathy to these families.

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