

Pacific Coast Norwegian Singers Association

Souvenir Program of the Millennium



91st Annual Sangerfest



1904



1909



1917



1924



1936



1944



1951



1960



1970



1975



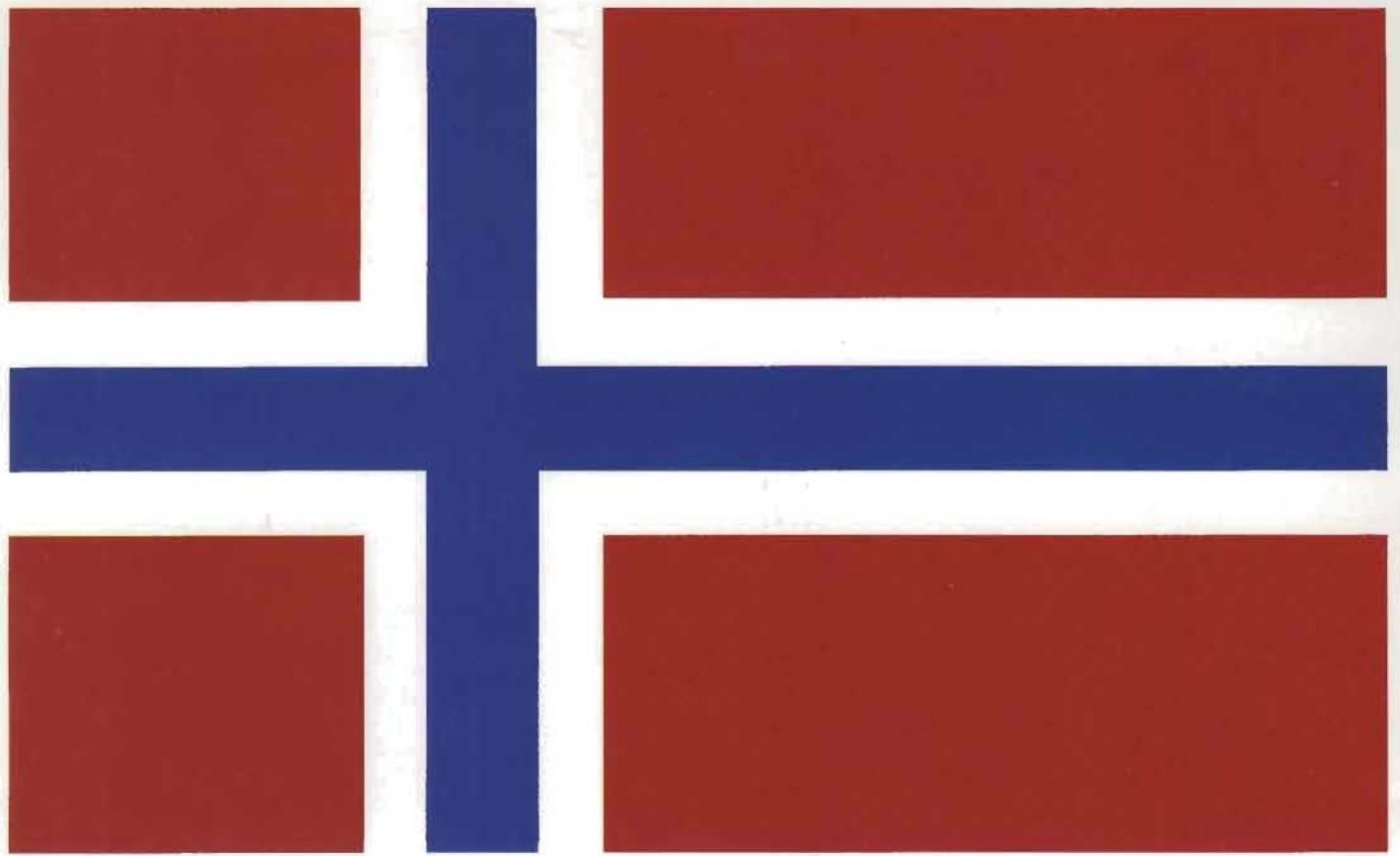
1981



1989

Seattle Souvenir Programs
(1904-1989)

Seattle, Washington July 1, to July 3, 2000



Norwegian Male Chorus of Seattle
Sangerfest 2000
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FDIC 

Sangerfest Schedule of Events

| | | | |
|-------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Friday, June 30: | | Golf Tournament | |
| Saturday, July 1: | 10:00 am | Registration | Cavanaugh's |
| | 3:00 pm | Hospitality Room open | Cavanaugh's |
| | 5:30 pm | Flag Ceremony | Cavanaugh's |
| | 6:00 pm | Social Hour | Cavanaugh's |
| | 7:00 pm | Welcome Dinner plus entertainment | Cavanaugh's |
| | 9:00 pm | Dance time | Cavanaugh's |
| Sunday, July 2: | 9:00 am | Rehearsal | Cavanaugh's |
| | 1:30 pm | Rehearsal | Cavanaugh's |
| | 4:00 pm | Directors' Meeting | Cavanaugh's |
| | 6:00 pm | Social Hour | Cavanaugh's |
| | 7:00 pm | Grand Banquet | Cavanaugh's |
| | 9:00pm | Dance time | Cavanaugh's |
| Monday, July 3: | 9:00 am | PCNSA Business Meeting | Cavanaugh's |
| | 11:30 am | Men's Luncheon | Cavanaugh's |
| | 12:00 noon | Rehearsal and Formation practice | Benaroya Hall |
| | 1:00 pm | Ladies' Luncheon | Space Needle |
| | 7:15 pm | Warm-up and Formation time | Benaroya Hall |
| | 8:00 pm | Grand Concert | Benaroya Hall |
| | 10:30 pm | "After-Glow" refreshment | Cavanaugh's |



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ON FIFTH AVENUE

Male Chorus Singing

by

Dr. Alf Lunder Knudsen

The oldest Male Chorus known were the sacred medieval choruses of priests and monks, their function solely to participate in church services. Since the 17th century Male Choruses have been used in many operas in order to emphasize the main character's social status, such as that of the warrior and his generals, the king and his men, or in describing social background of characters like farmers, hunters, soldiers, sailors or priests. Perhaps best known among these are *March of the Priests* from Mozart's *Magic Flute*, the *Pilgrim's Chorus* from Wagner's *Tannhäuser* and the *Soldier's Chorus* from Gounod's *Faust*.

The Male Chorus as we know it today, came into existence during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. It seems to have evolved simultaneously in several countries, and fraternal movements such as the Freemasons facilitated its development.

Germany and Switzerland have generally been considered the 'birth-place' of the Male Chorus Movement, but towards the end of the 17th century Male Choruses were already organized in Austria with composers such as Johann M. Haydn writing specifically for Male Choruses.

The movement also showed considerable strength in England and France. The annual National Festivals taking place in France in the 1790s, during the French Revolution, attracted thousands of singers to performances of the huge mass choruses, *choeurs universels*. At the Paris festival, *l'Être supreme* (The Supreme Existence), June 8, 1794, a mass mixed chorus of 2,400 voices performed. These performances inspired the organizing of France's first Male Chorus, the *Orpheon* (Choral Society) and the beginning of the Male Chorus Movement in France that same year.

The Masonic movement experienced a tremendous growth about the turn of the nineteenth century and, partly due to its strong affiliation with the masons, the Male Chorus Movement enjoyed a parallel growth. It was also through its affiliation with freemasonry that the Male Chorus was taken under the 'protective wings' of – and favored with compositions by – some of the greatest composers of the time, Mozart, Mendelssohn, Schubert and Schumann among others.

The Purpose

The purpose of the socially oriented Male Chorus organization was to pay tribute to the national symbols and the king. Among the typically nationalistic works specifically written for the *Liedertafel* were Spohr's *Das befreite Deutschland* (The Liberated Germany), Weber's *Kriegslied* (War Song), the collection of songs *Leyer und Schwert* (Lyre and Sword) (1814) and *Kampf und Kriegs- und Heldenlieder nebst Festsongs für Siegestage* (Fight and war- and Heroic Songs including Festive Songs for Victory Days).

While the Male Chorus Movement in Germany was organized on an aristocratic foundation, the movement in Switzerland developed among and for the citizenry and general public – or lower class.

Ancient Greek philosophy considered "that music education fostered civil obedience, good manners and patriotism and influenced behavior, emotions and morals."

Swiss philosopher and educator Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827) based his pedagogy upon the development of "head, heart and body." The Pestalozzian Song Cultivation Doctrine (1809) stated: "The era of music begins only, when not just professional musicians perform

the superior art, but when the superior art has become community property of the people, the nation – yes, even all of Europe – when mankind itself is absorbed in the element of music. This is possible only by promoting the chorus singing.

"Take multitudes of people – take 100, take thousands – and try to get them to mutually understand each other! Where can each individual freely express his individuality in words and feelings, where can he in the most intuitive and multitudeness way realize that he is both an autonomous being and yet has responsibility for others – where can he inhale and radiate love – is there any other realm than choral singing where this can be done? Perform a choral work with hundred singers who sing with the voice mother nature has provided them – and one has a symbol of people's majesty!"

The Male Chorus Movement, with its strong nationalistic influence, also had an overtone of utilitarianism combined with the ideals of the French Revolution, primarily liberty, equality and fraternity, very much in tune with the expressed ideals of the masonic movement.

However, at one time, both in France where Francois Joseph Gosec (1734-1829) wrote "choral works reflecting his political thinking" and in Germany where the "political character of the male-voice choir for which much music to politically inspired texts was provided by German composers" almost became overwhelming.

Austria, fearing the appeal to liberal reformers and revolutionary sentiment, objected to this practice and prohibited for a time the organization of Male Choruses.

Music in Norway

The Male Chorus Movement took separate directions in Germany and Switzerland and traces of the German 'aristocratic' and the Swiss 'democratic' avenues were also reflected in the Norwegian movement. In Norway, both levels worked simultaneously. The class distinction, intentional or not, is also found in the names of many of the choruses such as *Handelsstandens-* (Merchant Class'), *Haandverkerne-* (Craftsmen's-), *Arbeidernes-* (Workers'-), *Fagforenings-* (Labor Union's-).

Norwegian musicologist Ola Kai Ledang points out that: "At the end of the 18th century a middle class music culture amongst government officials, politicians and well-to-do business people developed. In the cities *Musikkselskap* (Musical Societies) were organized by and with dilettantes, often under the leadership of a professional musician and the societies became a leisure time pursuit for the upper class."

In Trondheim *Selskab af Musique-Liebhavere* (Society of Music Fanciers) and *Trondhjems musikalske Selskab* (Trondheim's Musical Society) were organized in 1769 and 1786 respectively. In 1824 *Det Musikudøvende Selskab* (The Musical Performing Society) and in 1832 *Den musikalske Forening* (The Musical Association) appeared on the scene. Still active today is Bergen's *Musikskabet Harmonien* (The Music Society Harmony) (October 8, 1765), the oldest continual orchestra in the world. *Stavanger musikalske Selskab* (The Musical Society of Stavanger) was organized in 1866, although there already had been a music society there in 1850. In 1787 the *Musikalske Selskab* (Musical Society) was organized in Kristiansand. (continues on pg 43)

Sangerfest 2000



Gordon Rye
PCNSA President



Ronald Olsen,
Sangerfest Co-chairman



Erling Skaar
Sangerfest Co-chairman

Dear Singers and Guests,

On behalf of the Pacific Coast Norwegian Singers Association and the Norwegian Male Chorus of Seattle we bid you a hearty welcome to our 91st Sangerfest and thank you for helping us keep the tradition alive.

With your cooperation, hard work and enthusiasm we will execute the Forbund business. Performing in a brand new and already world famous concert hall the PCNSA Singers and internationally acclaimed soloists will be a treat of a lifetime.

Enjoy your stay in Seattle ... enjoy the beautiful song and music ... and enjoy the camaraderie.

Med sangerhilsen,

Gordon, Ron and Erling

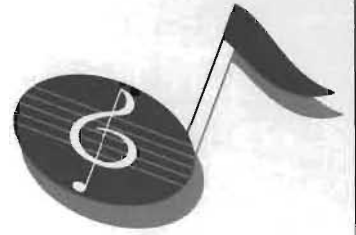
*Med sangerhilsen fra
Pacific Coast
Norwegian Singers
Association*



Pacific Coast
Norwegian Singers
Association

Sangerfest 2000
Seattle, Washington

... a little historical note of Nordmøndenes Sangforening



The Norwegian Male Chorus of Seattle was organized December 6, 1889, just three weeks after the State of Washington was admitted to the Union. In that 'year of excitement' we also find the first 17th of May celebration in Seattle; the exact date the first issue of the *Western Viking* rolled off the presses; and the major Seattle fire, which almost destroyed the entire business district of the young city.

Male Chorus singing can be 'addictive' as proven by Harry Solheim who has been a member of the Seattle Norwegian Male Chorus for 62 years and has held various offices of responsibility within the organization. His father Gustav Solheim, immigrant from Norway, sang with the Seattle chorus for many years and was no doubt responsible for Harry's membership. Nearly 60 years later, Harry is responsible for his son Ken Solheim, our current Assistant Director, joining the chorus.

The Svendsen family has been a major force in the NMC with Clarence, son Robert, grandsons Arthur and Erik singing, while Olive Svendsen and daughter Julie served as accompanists. Reaching back a few years we also find Clarence's two brothers Roy and Ragnar as members of the Seattle chorus.

Erling Berg is the only one of the 'Berg clan' still with the chorus. At one time uncle Christ Berg, brothers Jarle and Kristian Berg, as well as cousins Kåre Berg and John Falmyr filled the ranks of our chorus – all six at one time.

Other veteran singers include Ray Sperline who joined in 1942. Gordon Moe first joined the Seattle chorus in 1934 and attended his first

Norwegian Male Chorus of Seattle - Nordmøndenes Sangforening - in 1889.

Sangerfest in 1935. After 12 years with the Los Angeles chorus he again returned to Seattle.

Cousins Ted Ormbrek and Harold Edwards, two of today's singers are grandsons of Gilbert Ormbrek, one of the 20 founding members from 1889.

Halvdan Rode served as the first director of the Seattle chorus. Other notable directors include Rudolph Hagbarth Møller (1906-34) and Prof. August Werner (1935-46 & 1950-73). Dr. Alf Lunder Knudsen was elected director in 1974, and accompanist Mahlon Ness has 'tickled the ivories' for the men for over 20 years.

Officers in 111th anniversary year are: Ron Olsen, President; Erling SkaarVP; Jørgen Torgersen, Secretary; Ken Solheim, Treasurer; Hans Mueller, Financial Secretary; and Ralph Federspiel, Marshal.

Despite its 'ripe old' age, the Seattle NMC is hosting the first of the new millennium *Sangerfest Y2K*, July 1-3, 2000. Co-Chairmen for this 91st annual event are Ron Olsen and Erling Skaar. This is the 13th time the Seattle chorus is hosting the event, while Dr. Knudsen is serving as Director-in-Chief for the 10th time. He has also served as Assistant Director-in-Chief eight times.

The Cavanaugh's on Fifth Avenue Hotel serves as our headquarters and the Grand Concert takes place in the world famous **Benaroya Hall**.

See you at Benaroya Hall July 3!

Norwegian Male Chorus of Seattle



BACK ROW: Hans Mueller, Ottar Hreinsen, Gene Fear, Ron Olsen, Per Sandsmark, Martin Lode, Gary Larsen, Alvin Blindheim, Henry Peterson, Larry Peterson, Ken Lake, Robert Svendsen, Don Vadset;
THIRD ROW: Erling Skaar, Harold Edwards, Ted Ormbrek, Richard Olsgaard, John Rognrust, Jim Thode, Bjarne Harestad, Dan Baines, Odd Isaksen, Bob Kelly, Robert Johnston;
SECOND ROW: Erling Berg, Ken Solheim, Harry Solheim, Larry Solheim, Kim Gronvold, Jorgen Torgersen, Ole Lie, Steven Johansen, Tore Driflot;
FRONT ROW: Bernt Satre, Ray Sperline, Gordon Moe, Dr. Alf L. Knudsen, Mahlon Ness, Art Ogland, Lars Steinnes, Chris Aaro and Ralph Federspiel.





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*FIRST ROW: Aud Nielsen, Liv Skaar, Beth Lie, Rannveig Torgersen, Else Driflot, Jeanette Steinnes, Evelyn Sperline.
 SECOND ROW: Nancy Solheim, Rita Knutson, Liv Aaro, Oddny Johnston, Etta Major, Elva Rodley, Laila Lie, Lillian Hagen.
 THIRD ROW: Tordis Solheim, Hjordis Berg, Gudrun Utz, Linda Olsen, Eleanor Moe, Maxie Yamada.*

LIFE MEMBERS: Myrtle Beaman, Hjordis Berg, June Bjørnstad, Della Comfort, Else Driflot, Marjorie Gronvold, Serene Gunderson, Lillian Hagen, Olga Hansen, Grace Hanson, Ena Klaboe, Alma Knudsen, Rita Knutson, Beth Lie, Eleanor Moe, Aud Nielsen, Elva Rodley, Marian Severa, Evelyn Sperline, Anna Tellevik, Magda Solheim Torghede, Lillie Waale.

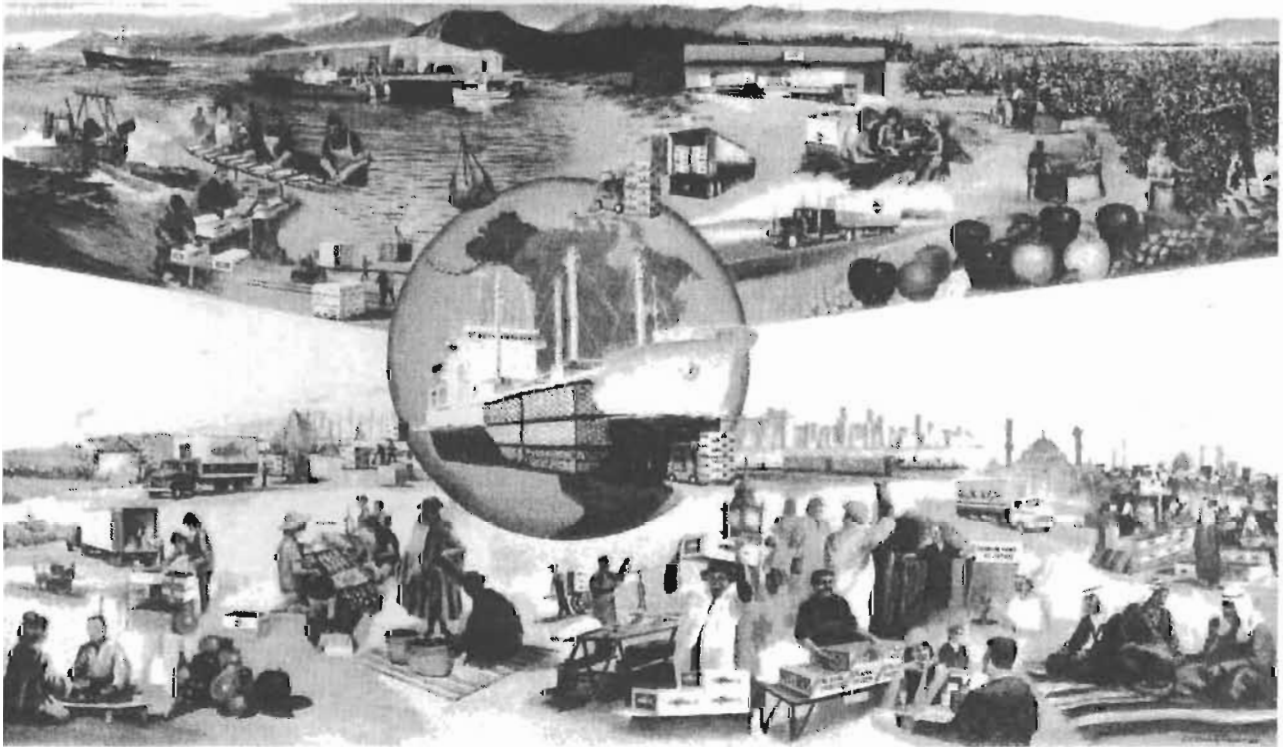
The Singers' Helpmates

It has often been said that behind every successful man there stands a strong, loyal and devoted woman. This old and famous quotation can also be applied to the Norwegian Male Chorus of Seattle, because it was just 91 years ago in 1909 – the year of the Alaska-Yukon Pacific Exposition which was held in Seattle on the site of our present University of Washington campus – that the auxiliary to the Chorus, The Singers' **Helpmates** was organized.

Throughout the past 91 years the **Helpmates** have greatly assisted the Chorus in all its endeavors. They have undertaken many fund raising projects on their own, many of which have directly benefited the Chorus.

Like the Chorus, many of their functions have long become traditions in the Norwegian community. The Norwegian Male Chorus of Seattle is very fortunate to have such a dedicated and supportive group as these wonderful ladies who devote so much of their time and effort to the **Helpmates** organization.

Happy
SANGERFEST



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THE WHITE HOUSE
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Warm greetings to everyone gathered in Seattle for the 91st annual Sangerfest, hosted by the Norwegian Male Chorus of Seattle and the Pacific Coast Norwegian Singers.

Music is a universal language that speaks to the heart and uplifts the soul. Whether reinforcing the message of faith in houses of worship or bringing enjoyment to our everyday lives, choral music fills an important role in our religious ceremonies and our national culture.

This annual singing festival fosters high musical standards and promotes appreciation of Norwegian culture and music, and I am pleased that so many talented artists are participating. You will have an invaluable opportunity to learn more about your art, to develop your abilities, and to meet other groups who share your enthusiasm for choral music. I commend all of you for your skill, hard work and discipline.

Best wishes to all for a wonderful festival.



Greetings from the Governor

July 2000

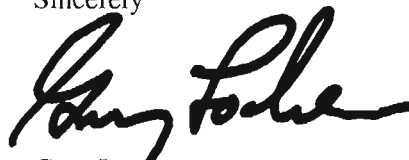
As governor of Washington, I am pleased to welcome you to Seattle for the 91st annual Sangerfest sponsored by the Pacific Coast Norwegian Singers Association.

I applaud the hard work and dedication that have gone into bringing Sangerfest to the people of our state. Music is an extremely important part of our nation's culture, and I commend each of this event's organizers and participants for their strong commitment to the arts. This delightful celebration is sure to provide fun, lively, family-oriented entertainment for all in attendance.

Whether you make your home in Seattle or are visiting from abroad, I hope you will find time to enjoy your surroundings. Located in one of the Pacific Northwest's most impressive natural settings, Seattle boasts spectacular views of Mount Rainier, the Olympic and Cascade Mountains, and the waters of Puget Sound. The Space Needle, Pike Place Market, the International District, and Pioneer Square are just a few of the sights to explore in this colorful and exciting city. With a wide variety of entertainment, recreational and multicultural opportunities, Seattle offers something for everyone.

Best wishes for a successful event!

Sincerely



Gary Locke
Governor

The Scandinavian Hour

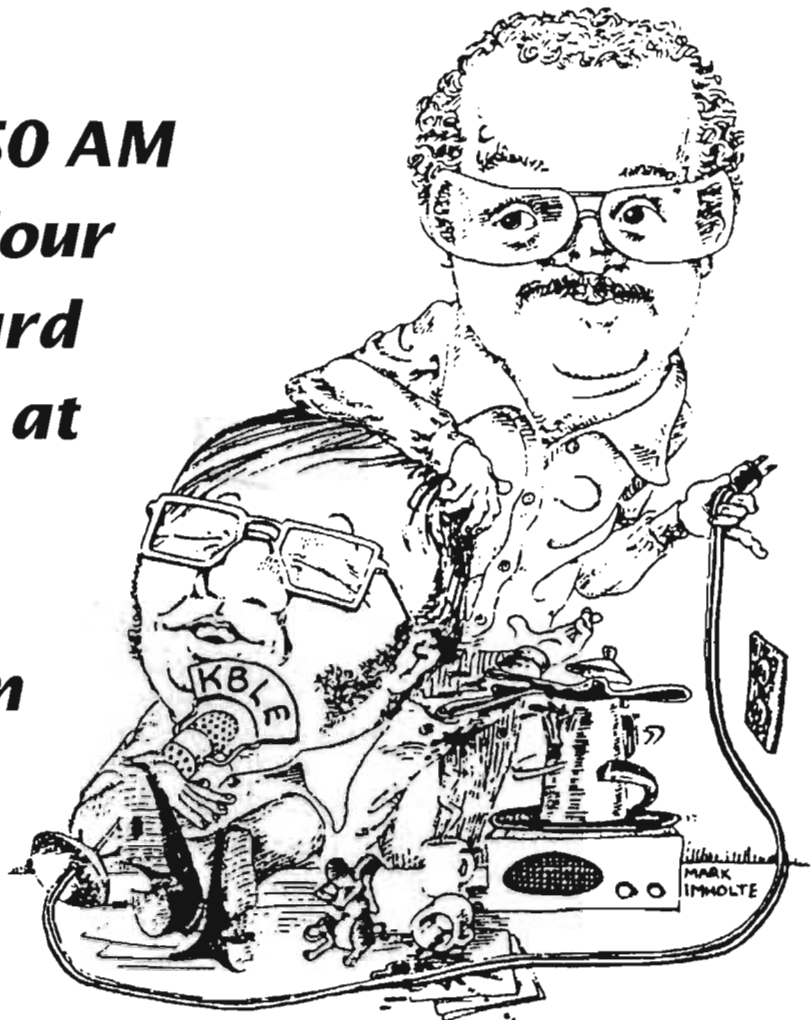


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The Ambassador



Dear fellow music lovers,

It gives me great pleasure to greet the Norwegian Male Chorus of Seattle and the Pacific Coast Norwegian Singers Association at the 91st annual Sangerfest. The Sangerfest is an event that brings both pride and joy to Norwegians and Norwegian-Americans alike.

Pursuit of the cultural arts transcends borders and contributes significantly to the development of strong, enduring relations between countries. Through the universal language of music and song, the Sangerfest provides a forum for sharing musical excellence and friendship.

Music has always been essential to the cultural identity of Norwegians and Norwegian-Americans. The Seattle Chorus is now in its 111th year with a rich tradition in bridging Norway and the United States through song and celebration. I am very pleased to send my regards on this festive occasion. I extend my sincere compliments to all participants at the Sangerfest for their tireless work to preserve the rich cultural heritage of Norwegian-Americans.

Tom Vraalsen

**ROYAL NORWEGIAN
CONSULATE GENERAL
SAN FRANCISCO**



Greeting to the Sangerfest at the turn of the Millennium

Dear Singers, and friends of song and music,

It is a great pleasure for me again to send a greeting to this famous West-Coast event – Sangerfest.

The Sangerfest is built on solid Norwegian and Norwegian-American traditions. Song and music have always played very important roles in our cultural lives and heritage. Singing brings joy and fun to everyday life, is a natural part of any occasion, of celebrations as well as of more difficult situations in life. Singing brings laughter and tears, and is one of the most important means we have to express our emotions. It has been said, “Take time to laugh – it is the music of the soul.”

The Sangerfest, I believe, is to the Norwegian-American choirs the “Soul” of music. Having taken part in it, I know how much fun it is. This year I will be in Norway at that time.

So maybe you will let me be your voice in the Old Country, to bring the well-known message “Hils til dem der hjemme.”

With warm regards, and the best wishes for Sangerfest 2000.

Sincerely,

Hans Ola Urstad, Consul General



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Royal Norwegian Consulate

Greetings to the Pacific Coast Norwegian Singers and Guests,

The culture of a people is preserved through their art, literature and music, and presented to the rest of the world in the same manner. For well over a century the Norwegian Male Chorus of Seattle has been doing an outstanding job in perpetuating Norway's music in this area and presenting it to us for our enjoyment. They are to be congratulated for their work and for bringing all the Pacific Coast choruses to Seattle for their 91st Sangerfest.

We extend to all our best wishes for a great concert and a successful Sangerfest.

Med hilsen,

Thomas A. Stang
Consul



Royal Norwegian Consulate

KIM NESSELQUIST
VICE CONSUL OF NORWAY



Dear Singers,

It is a great honor and pleasure to welcome all of you to the 91st Annual Sangerfest.

Norwegian Male Chorus of Seattle is hosting this event for the 13th time in the same year the chorus is celebrating its own 110th Anniversary. What an incredible achievement by many outstanding people.

Your promotion of song and music, this very important aspect of our Norwegian heritage, is indispensable. We are looking forward to the Grand Concert in the world renown Benaroya Hall on July 3, 2000 with soloists Einar Steen-Nøkleberg and Lisa Knudsen-Ganung.

Lykke til.

Med vennlig hilsen

Kim Nesselquist



Svelvik Mannskor

The Svelvik Male Chorus was founded on October 29, 1916 and has been active ever since, with the notable exception of the war years, when such activity was banned by the occupational authorities. We have ranged in number from 12 singers back then to an all time high of 38 active singers, plus our director, who is an Honorary Member of the chorus!

The chorus sings the traditional male chorus "stand up and shout" kind of songs, as well as traditional church and holiday songs, as well as lighter shanties and pub songs - however, the last 12 to 14 years, the emphasis has shifted to more modern swing and cabaret songs which we use in our annual Spring show *Vårbruset*. We have a number of soloists, a quartet within the choir, as well as a small orchestra that plays on festive occasions.

An important side of Svelvik Male Chorus is its community work - we sing not only at the Rest Home and for retirees, but also on *Syttende mai*, at Christmas time and at church functions and gatherings. We also participate in projects with other choruses, as well as being a constant presence on *Svelvikdagene*, our local weekend celebration every fall.

Svelvik Male Chorus has traveled extensively: Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Lithuania as well as a lengthy trip throughout Europe - not to mention all over Norway! We are excited about our first trip to the American continent this summer and look forward to singing in Canada and the United States.

We seem to be in a renewal process and have recently gained some younger members, due to the concerted effort from the Board lower the average age. We hope this trend continues!

Last but not least. Most of the success of Svelvik Male Chorus is due to our very talented and experienced director, Petter Bjaarstad, who also happens to be our piano accompanist, composer, arranger, producer and over all inspiration!

Med sangerhilsen,

Arne Uglum
Chairman
Svelvik Mannskor



City of Seattle

Paul Schell, Mayor

Office of the Mayor

As Mayor of Seattle, I am pleased to send you my warmest greetings as you hold your 91st annual Sangerfest. Seattle is proud to host your event in July.

The City of Seattle is blessed with a rich variety of cultures and values, and with the contributions and talent that our diverse citizens bring to our community. Music is a language that provides a link for many cultures and many people to come together as one.

While your participants are visiting our fair city, I am certain that you will receive a wonderful Northwest greeting from the people of Seattle. Best wishes on a successful song festival in sunny Seattle.

Very truly yours,

Paul Schell



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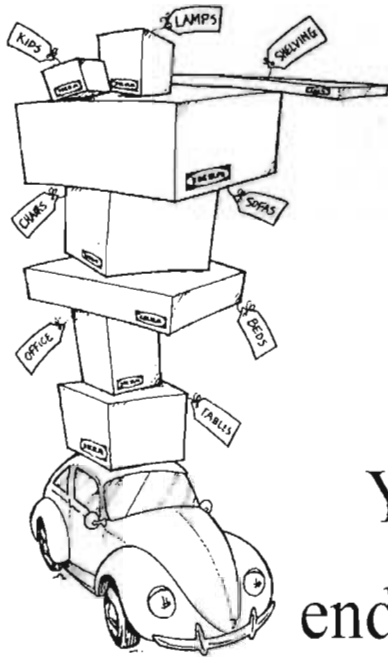
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row 1: Jerry Lysne, Robert Mendez, David Grandi, Bjarne Anthonsen. row 2: Sig Stautland, Glen Hagen, Phil Overlund, Erwin Knapp, Kraig Alexander.
row 3: David Boe, Jon Allen-Romberg, Maury Lee, Ed Masse, Erling Nyhammer. NOT PICTURED: Roger Adams, Fred Jacobsen, Don Rye, Roy Tobin, Myron Walhood.

SAN DIEGO MANSKOR ❁ PRESIDENT: Erling Nyhammer ❁ DIRECTOR: David Grandi ❁ ACCOMPANIST: Kraig Alexander

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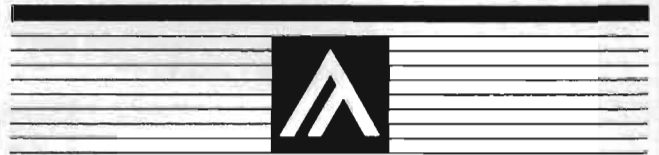


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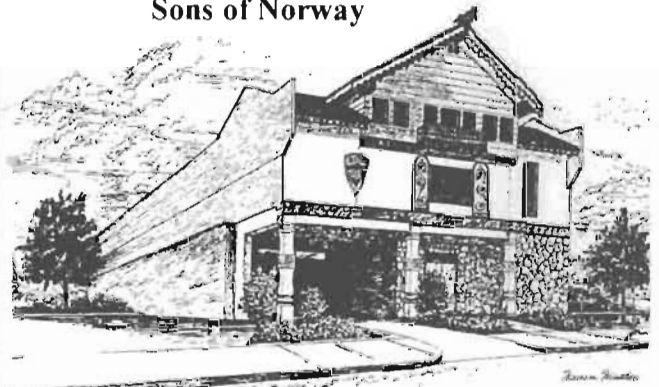
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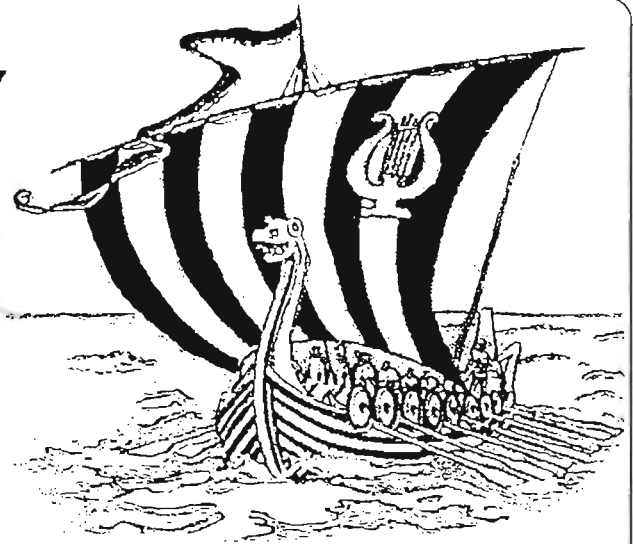


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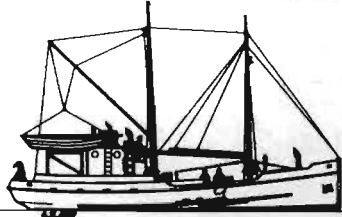
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Einar Steen-Nøkleberg is today considered one of Norway's leading pianist, having made several international appearances and more than 20 recordings. He studied with Nicolai Dirdal and Hans Leygraf, and in 1968 he won the German High School Piano Competition, the *Hochschelwettbewerb*. Among other prizes and distinctions, some of the most important are the Norwegian Piano Prize for the Best Performance in 1975 (at the Bergen Festival), the Norwegian Recording of the year in 1976 for a recital of Norwegian Baroque Composers in the "Classics from Norway" series and the Lindeman Prize (Performer of the year) 1984, and the Grieg Prize 1985.

Since 1975 Einar Steen-Nøkleberg has developed an international career and his activities have included repeated solo recitals in London, Paris, Berlin, Hamburg and Copenhagen. He has also toured the USA and the Soviet Union. International concerto appearances include Grieg Concerto with the London Symphony Orchestra; Mr. Steen-Nøkleberg's recording of the same work was chosen by the *BBC Saturday Review* as the best version of this much-recorded concerto. Among his other records his Grieg *Slåtter* must be singled out; this is a release which has been accorded much praise internationally. Einar Steen-Nøkleberg has recently given several recitals in Norway, programming Bach, Beethoven, Chopin and Grieg to ecstatic reviews. He is also an advocate of contemporary music. Since 1981 Einar Steen-

Nøkleberg has held the Chair of Professor of Piano at the Norwegian State Academy of Music.

Einar Steen-Nøkleberg's recording of Grieg's complete Piano Works on Naxos (London-Hongkong) has received extraordinary critical acclaim. *Aftenposten* put the recordings on top of all productions in 1995 – followed by Royal Philharmonic, London and The Oslo Philharmonic (Dec. 1995). *The Gramophone*, London, made them "Editors Choice", February 1996. *BBC Music Magazine*, March 1996 – (Five Stars of Five Possible). Nøkleberg has tremendous sensitivity to Grieg's multiple nuances of mood, color and character throughout the discs. His playing brims in turn with charm, pathos, nostalgia, simplicity, drama and whatever else is needed – invariably appropriate, straightforward, unaffected and vivid. The Holberg Suite has a performance of unparalleled vigor and charm. It is almost impossible to imagine this music better interpreted. *Turok's Choice*, Classical CD Review, New York, February 1996 The albums of Grieg's piano music can be enthusiastically recommended. Nøkleberg plays with vigor, rhythmic acuity and tender understanding. *Diapason CD Review*, Paris February 1996 (Nine Stars of Nine Possible). Listening to these recordings gave us a musical shock not heard from any other strong pianistic personalities. With delicate nuances Nøkleberg brings out the inner charm of Grieg's music. His brilliant and sensitive interpretations are magic and puts him above the earlier recordings of these works.

Lisa Knudsen-Ganung, soprano, a native of Seattle, is well known for her work with Norwegian vocal music, and was the soloist for the American premiere of Grieg's unfinished opera *Olav Trygvason* performed in conjunction with the 1993 Grieg Centennial Festival. She also gave recitals in both Bergen and Seattle as part of the Grieg Year festivities. She has been a Regional Finalist in the Metropolitan Opera Auditions. She has performed with the Seattle Opera Young Artist Program singing Liú in the previews of *Turandot* as well as with the Santa Fe Opera Preview Program as Sophie in *Der Rosenkavalier* and as Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, the UNM Opera Theater as Zerlina as well as Despina in *Così fan tutte*. Ms. Ganung performed for Their Majesties King Harald V and Queen Sonja during their visit to Seattle in October 1995, and for Crown Prince Haakon on his visit in March 1999.

She is currently teaching voice at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, WA.





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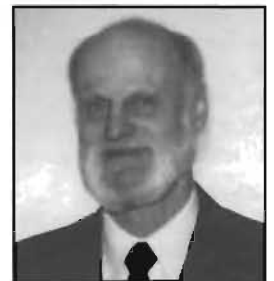
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Program Notes

by Dr. Alf Lunder Knudsen

Ved tjernet ...

And now it is quiet around the pond; Now the tired thicket dreams. / A twinkling star is shining Through the white branches. – / A fluttering bird, a little one, Has settled down under a spruce-branch / And sleeps with lowered head. It sleeps so sweet in ice and snow. / A shining star Is the lamp it dreams by, – it dreams by.

Norge, mitt Norge ...

Norway, my Norway, Theodor Caspari's (1853-1948) famous poem, actually entitled *Vinter i Norge* (Winter in Norway), very aptly describes the country sleeping during the winter months and the longing for a sunny spring. However, when summer departs – and life with it – “*then teach me to wither, oh Norway my Mother and make me a bed in your sacred soil.*” The poem was set to music in 1911 by Alfred Paulsen (1849-1936), Norwegian-born composer in Chicago, Illinois.

I midnattsolen ...

In the Midnight Sun

Out there stands fiery-red a flaming wheel, Blazing on the sea toward land. / It swarms with birds from hidden crevices And below the sea runs along the shore. / The rustle of wings, now they land, – Look, birds on the cliffs like snow. / Midnight sun! Rookery sleeps. Visions. Midnight sun! Here I will kneel before the Lord In thanks for eternal light, And were I like the bird I would fly away Out over the amber sea Toward the red of the rising sun In the space filled with God's peace. Midnight sun.

Skomværvalsen ...

A 'sea shanty' written by Erik Bye set to music by Bjarne Amdahl and arranged by Dag Christoffersen. Delivered in 1890, *Skomvær* was Norway's first barque constructed completely of steel. *The sail ship was named Skomvær from Porsgrunn - Pull the topsail my boys, heave ho! It sings in the shroud and stay again, pull the topsail my boys, heave ho! For ten thousand salty miles she has plowed and the back of many a sailor she has bent and high we've lived and much we've endured, pull the topsail my boys, heave ho! Hear the ship's bell's ring! ... Once upon a time! ... Let's cast off to the old song: The world is small when the wind is good, pull the topsail my boys, heave ho!*

Hil dig, Norge ...

Hail to you, Norway. The lyrics for this patriotic song are by Per Sivle (1857-1904) and music by Rudolph Magnus Forwald (1869-1936). *We hail you, Norway, our land, our fatherland. Your glory is ours, your virtue our sons' forever. By word and by deed you've earned your respect your honor and justice for people prevail. We hail you, Norway.*

Den fyrste song ...

The first song I ever heard, Was mother's song at the cradle. The soft words went to my heart, They could stop the tears. They crooned me so wonderfully, So quietly and softly to sleep They showed me a beautiful way Up from our tiny hut ...

Hav ...

Ocean. Hey, you swooping sea gull; Hey, let me follow you. Carry me on your white wings Over your sea-blue way. Carry me out where the floorboard timber Is the chest-wide blue waves, The sky for a roof arching above, Carry me out there where the ocean's – Broad-minded proud song sounds Through the desolate cathedral dome As the only melody's pitch. There I will ride the waves, sail o'er the shiny sea, Splashed by the salty sea-spray! Alone out there, die.

Albertine ...

My ship is made in the North / Yes, Albertine is the ship's name, the ship's name / Albertine let it be – Albertine in my honor / Yes, Albertine is the ship's name ...

Sigurd Jorsalfar ...

Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson's historical drama *Sigurd Jorsalfar* was written

in 1872 and set to music by Evard Grieg Opus 22 much in the same manner as he had to Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*. The world premiere took place April 10, 1872 in Oslo and due to its immediate success, was performed nine times that spring alone. When King Magnus (II) Bare-foot died in the beginning of the 12th century his two sons Eystein (I) Magnusson and Sigurd (I) Magnusson became rulers. The former was peace-loving, the latter a warrior. Sigurd left Norway with 60 ships for a four year crusade to the Holy Land. Eystein stayed home and proved to be a wise ruler. The drama opens with the return of Sigurd the Crusader in all his glory. On one occasion their vassals met in the palace of King Eystein and as was customary the men had a *mannjamning* – measuring of their masters' accomplishments. The 'winner' is awarded by the assemblage or a 'fair maiden.' Borghild – the maid Eystein loves, but believes he has forgotten her – is asked by Eystein to judge between the two. She casts her lot with Sigurd. The breach between the rulers seems irreparable, but through the words of his taper-bearer, Sigurd is made to see that he has wronged his brother.

Norrønafolket (ends Act 2)

The Norsemen will travel, They will bring strength to others The battle's sword throws luster, The honor increases the people's work.

Kongekvadet (conclusion of the of the final – Act 3)

Hail to you heirs of Harald's tribe, Hail to you brave brother-kings, One in the beautiful wrapping of peace, One with the battle's crown of victory. Norway's past, Norway's future In their handshake meet. Hail to you brave brother-kings! Hail! Hail! Hail!

Naar fjordene blaaner ...

When the Fjords Turn Blue – depicts the re-awakening of nature as yet another spring arrives in Norway. It is a praise, not only to the blue fjords, the beautiful and fragrant flowers, the rushing brooks and the singing birds, but to the hard working men and women of Norway as well. In seven words, *Gud signe dig Norge, mitt deilige Land* (God Bless You Norway My Beautiful Land), the lyricist John Paulsen of Bergen, has braided into this song a simple prayer for the homeland. The Norwegian emigrant composer, organist and choral director Alfred Paulsen of Chicago, helped immortalize the song with perhaps his best known tune, which he wrote in 1907.

Landkjenning ...

Landsighting. Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson's collaboration with Edvard Grieg was to include an opera, *Olav Trygvasson*, the Viking king; however, when Grieg started composing the music to Henrik Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*, a 16 year break developed between Bjørnson and the composer. The opera was never completed, but *Landkjenning* still remains alive.* The original score calls for male chorus, baritone soloist, band and organ. May 17, 1872 was a memorable day as the world premier of *Landkjenning* took place at the Akershus Fortress in Oslo. The occasion was a fundraising bazaar held for the restoration of the Nidaros Cathedral in Trondheim. Bjørnson had written the poem for this occasion basing his text on Snorre Sturlason's account of Olav Trygvasson's plan to build a church in Nidaros – the medieval name for Trondheim – upon his return to Norway in AD 995. Young Olav had become a Christian in England and wanted to bring Christianity to Norway. In his solo Olav expresses his faith in the Almighty and his men reiterate his prayer in a rousing grand finale.

* At the time of this writing, *Olav Trygvasson* has finally been completed by Norwegian composer Ragnar Söderlind and lyricist Knut Moe. The opening number of the opera is *Landkjenning*. The world premiere takes place in *Grieghallen* September 26, 2000 in Bergen, Norway and the modest budget is NOK 11 million.

Grand Concert Program

Dr. Alf Lunder Knudsen, Director-in-Chief • Steve Jensen, Assistant Director-in-Chief
Dr. Jeffrey Highland, Piano Accompanist

I

Sangerfest Grand Chorus

- Let There Be Music M. Elliott/ F. Williams
Ved tjernet Th. Caspari/O. Ekhaugen
Winter Song R. Hovey/F.F. Bullard
Ken Solheim, Directing
Norge, mitt Norge T. Caspari/Alfred Paulsen
Lisa Knudsen-Ganung, Soloist
I midnattsolen Sture Odd/Alf Wold
Skomværvalsen E. Bye/B Amdahl/ arr D. Kristoffersen

II

Einar Steen-Nøkleberg, Piano

- Holberg-Suite, Op 40 Edvard Grieg
Preludium • Sarabande • Gavotte • Air • Rigaudon
From Lyric Pieces: Notturmo • Wedding Day at Troidhaugen Edvard Grieg

III

Sangerfest Grand Chorus

- Hil dig, Norge Sivle/R.M. Forwald
Den fyrste song P. Sivle/L. Søråas/arr Butler
Peter F. Butler, Directing • Janet Jensen, flute • Steve Jensen, guitar
Hav Oscar Borg
Albertine arr A. Werner
Sigurd Jorsalfar: Norrønafoelket/Kongekvadet B. Bjørnson/E. Grieg
Peter F. Butler, Baritone Soloist

IV

Lisa Knudsen-Ganung, Soprano

Einar Steen-Nøkleberg, Piano

- Med en Primula veris, Op. 23 #18 Edvard Grieg
Våren, Op. 33 #2 Edvard Grieg

Einar Steen-Nøkleberg, Piano

- From Slåtter, Op. 72: Gibøens Brudemarsj • Røtnams Knut (Halling) Edvard Grieg
Ballade i g-moll Op.24 (Variations on a Norwegian Folk Melody) Edvard Grieg

V

Sangerfest Grand Chorus

- This Is My Country Raye/Jacobs/arr Ringwald
Beautiful Dreamer arr Wallingford Riegger
The Lost Chord A. Proctor/A. Sullivan/Brewer
Naar fjordene blaaner J. Paulsen/A. Paulsen
Landkjenning B. Bjørnson/E. Grieg
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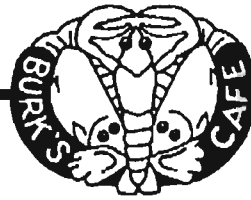
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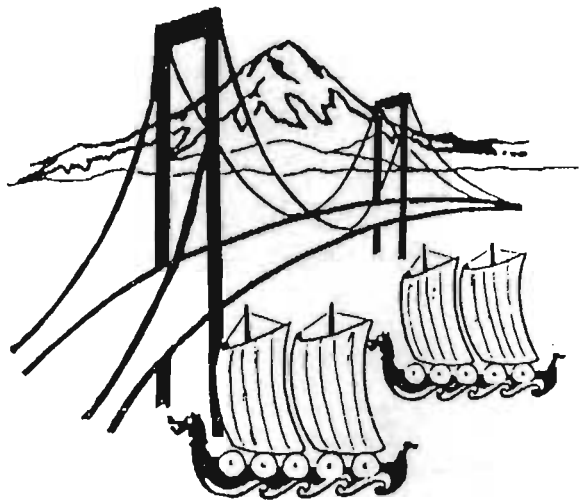
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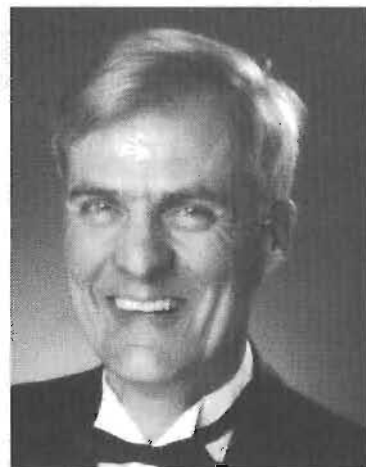


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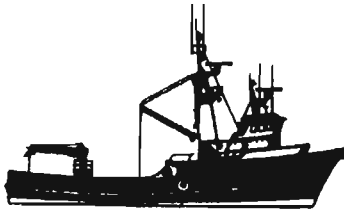
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MALE CHORUS SINGING ...

(... continued from page 4)

Ledang claims that the Music Association (*Musikk Foreningen*) was the embryo for the new medium in which composers like Edvard Grieg and Johan Svendsen later felt comfortable.

One of Norway's foremost composers at the time, Waldemar Thrane, uncle to the later famous labor leader, Marcus Thrane, also found his inspiration in the Norwegian folkmusic, as did violin virtuoso and composer Ole Bull, who is regarded by many as the foremost champion of promoting Norwegian culture. He certainly helped put Norway on the map by concertizing throughout the European and American continents for almost 40 years.

Contrary to common practice, Bull, a trained concert violinist, had worked closely with many of Norway's outstanding fiddlers, the majority of whom had no formal training on the violin. One fiddler in particular, Torgeir Audunsson (1801-1872), known more commonly as *Myllarguten*, had been of great inspiration to Bull and taught him many folk dance tunes (*slåtter*).

When *Myllarguten* made his official concert hall debut in Oslo in a joint appearance with Ole Bull on January 15, 1849, before what has been described as a 'sophisticated, upper class, big city' audience, "the sound barrier between country dance music and classical music was torn down."

Student Singers

This musical class distinction was not unique to Norway; it was also noticeable in the other Scandinavian countries and it was through the universities that Male Chorus singing was introduced to Scandinavia. On May 30, 1813, students at the University of Uppsala, Sweden, organized a chorus. By 1833 the University of Lund, Sweden, had its first chorus, and

in 1839 the University of Copenhagen, Denmark, joined ranks with *Studentersangforeningen* (The Student Singing Society).

Norway's first university was founded September 2, 1811, with a grant from the Dano-Norwegian King Frederik VI and opened its doors in Oslo in 1813. Song has probably always belonged among the fun-loving youth and this new university's students were no exception. Part singing was used relatively early, but no doubt more for parties and fun than for public performances. Already in the 1830s the student body published books with songs arranged in three part harmony for use at meetings and festive occasions.

Norwegian Identity

One aspect of the Male Chorus Movement especially important in Norway, where the union with Sweden after 1814 led to Norwegian efforts to establish a separate identity, was the wave of patriotism which it fostered. The celebration of a glorious past, pride in heritage, promotion of nationalism and loyalty to a free nation, were all important factors during the political and cultural struggle which eventually led to full independence in 1905. The imagined or real strength and power of the Male Chorus, the music of which touched off conviviality on one hand and revolutionary determination on the other, became an integral part of that struggle.

Obviously aware of events elsewhere in Europe, Norwegians were inspired to organize choruses. In 1819, an article appearing anonymously in *Morgenbladet* claimed that choral singing was "the art whereby the Spirit is elevated, the Heart is touched, the Body is strengthened, the Person is ennobled, yes, the entire Society prospers." (... *den Konst, hvorved Aanden opløftes, Hjertet røres, Organet styrkes, Mennesket forädles, ja hele Samfundet trives*). The article concluded by challenging a musician named Lars Roverud (1777-1850) to organize choruses. Roverud accepted the

(Continues on page 45 ...)

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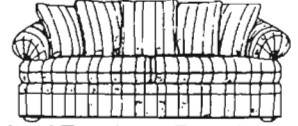
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MALE CHORUS SINGING ...

(... continued from page 43)

challenge – unsuccessfully – but it appears that quartet singing was nevertheless quite popular in the following decades.

The Norwegian Male Chorus

Frimurenes Sangforening was organized in 1842, and although it was a good size chorus, this secluded group appears never to have performed publicly and is usually left out of chorus chronologies. In 1843 Johan Gottfried Conradi (1820-1896) organized a quartet at the University of Oslo and a chorus of about 20 academicians and craftsmen in the city.

Bishop U. Vilhelm Koren, former President of the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church Synod in America, has claimed that “students from Bergen organized the first student quartet in Oslo in 1844 – with Behrens as their leader – Pastor Jens Mikel Lund 1st tenor, Koren 2nd tenor, Hartvig Lassen 1st bass and Chr. Hartwig 2nd bass.” The following year the quartet, which had prepared a few songs for the occasion, participated in the first Nordic student meeting in Copenhagen, but on the way down they heard the impressive *Uppsala studentkören* (The Uppsala Student Chorus) perform in Lund and became so discouraged that their quartet never performed one song on the entire trip.

In spite of the previous attempts made by a number of people to organize Male Choruses, it is *Den Norske Studentersangforening*, (The Norwegian Students Singing Society) which is recognized as Norway’s first Male Chorus. Organized by Johan Didrik Behrens (1820-1890) in Oslo on July 13, 1845, he had conceived the idea of *Den Norske Studentersangforening* on his way home from the trip to Lund and Copenhagen.

Although Behrens was neither the greatest musician nor a great con-

ductor, he was a highly gifted organizer; three of Norway’s first Male Choruses, *Den norske Studentersangforening* (1845), *Christiania Handelsstands Sangforening* (Christiania Merchants’ Singing Society) (1845), *Christiania Haandverkersangforening* (Christiania Craftsmen’s Singing Society) (1845), all organized by Behrens – all still in existence – giving him the title of “father of the Male Chorus movement” in Norway.

Behrens continued the German *Liedertafel* movement, whereas Conradi followed the Swiss popular direction eventually becoming the leader of *Arbeidernes Sangforening* (Workers’ Singing Society).

There was cooperation among different Male Choruses, such as the ‘Three Great Ones’ which Behrens directed in the 1850s in Oslo, *Studentersangforeningen*, *Håndverkernes* and *Handels-standens*. Almost at a moment’s notice, Behrens could stage a chorus of from 16 to 170 men, which on several occasions he did.

Sangerfest in Norway

On April 16, 1850, Behrens held a joint concert of these three choruses in Oslo. It was, incidentally, such a ‘mass chorus’ under the direction of Behrens which first performed *Ja, vi elsker*, Norway’s National Anthem, on May 17, 1864 in front of the Eidsvoll building and repeated the performance at the Palace Square in Oslo that same evening. Not to be outdone, Conradi organized an outdoor *Sangerfest* on *Bastöya*, an island in the Oslofjord, on August 25, 1864.

The *Sangerfest* or *Sangerstevne* era in Norway had already begun.

Den Første store Sangerfest (The First Great *Sangerfest*) was held on June 1, 1851, at Asker, west of Oslo, with the participation of the ‘Three Great’ Oslo choruses and two from Drammen, *Drammen Sangforening* (Drammen Singing Society) and *Drammens Haandverkersangforening*

(Continues on page 47 ...)

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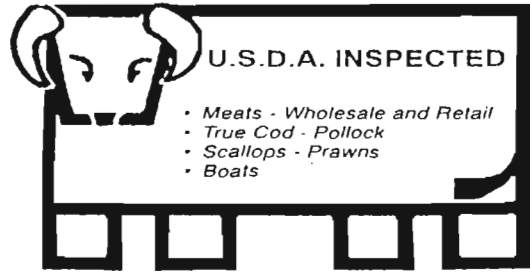
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MALE CHORUS SINGING ...

(... continued from page 45)

(Drammens Craftsmen's Singing Society). At the concert the participating five choruses and their 173 singers performed under the direction of Behrens.

The rivalry between Behrens and Conradi continued, and simultaneously with Behrens' Asker festival, Conradi arranged a *Sangerfest* in the city of Tönsberg, with participation from Holmestrand, Larvik, Moss, Porsgrunn, Skien and Tönsberg.

The immediate success led to yet another *Sangerfest*, also led by Conradi, the following year, 1852, this time in Horton, with participation from Drammen, Holmestrand, Horten, Moss and Tönsberg.

On May 15 and 16, 1853, the '2nd Great *Sangerfest*' was held, also in Horton, but this time under the leadership of Behrens. The number of participating choruses – from Asker, Kristiania (3), Drammen, Halden, Holmestrand, Horten (2), Røyken and Tönsberg – had grown to 11 with a total of 300 singers.

For the 1856 "3rd Great *Sangerfest*" in Halden, twenty-eight choruses were invited, but only ten and a total of 298 singers attended. A most memorable event from this *Sangerfest* was the *Sangerferd* (Singers' Voyage) on board the paddle wheel steamer *Foldin* which left from Oslo early in the morning picking up singers at various ports before it finally docked in Halden in the early afternoon. It is noted that the writers Andreas Munch, Johan Sebastian Welhaven, Magnus Brostrup Landstad, Björnstjerne Björnson and Lorentz Dietrichson and composers Friedrich August Reissiger and Johan Didrik Behrens all attended.

In 1859 the "4th Great *Sangerfest*" took place in Arendal and, again, the singers sailed on *Foldin* from Oslo, this time they were joined by the steamship *Victor* which sailed alongside to Arendal. In addition to ten

choruses and 300 singers, the writers Henrik Ibsen, J.S. Welhaven and Aasmund Olavsson Vinje and composers Kjerulf, Reissiger and J.G. Conradi also attended.

Four years later Bergen became the site for the "5th Great *Sangerfest*", the first one to represent the entire country, with thirty-five choruses and 528 singers attending the three-day convention from June 14 to 16, 1863. Among writers and composers attending were A. Munch, H. Ibsen, B. Björnson, Kristofer Hanson, O. Bull, F.A. Reissiger, M.A. Udbye and A. Maczewski. Because of the logistic problems involved in hosting the ever growing *Sangerfest*, only cities of considerable size could do so. The frequency with which the event could be held was also of concern to many.

After a 20 year respite the "6th Great *Sangerfest*" was held June 16-18, 1883, this time in Trondheim. There were 28 choruses and 698 singers in attendance at a time when there was an estimated 200 choruses in Norway. Grieg's famous song *Sangerhilsen* (Singers Greetings) to the text of Sigvald Skavland was performed by a 200 voice *trønder* chorus under the direction of Conradi. The song was an immediate success and it has since become a tradition that *Sangerhilsen* is sung by the *Sangerfest* host chorus greeting fellow singers.

Although the repertoire for the Norwegian Male Chorus had been for the most part limited to songs by lesser-known German composers often set to Norwegian texts, by the 1880s more Norwegian patriotic material became available and new songs were introduced at every *Sangerfest*. Gradually the *Sangerfest* programs took on a more distinctive Norwegian flavor and at the June 16, 1883, concert in Trondheim, a total of 11 Norwegian compositions were performed.

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(Continues on page 50 ...)



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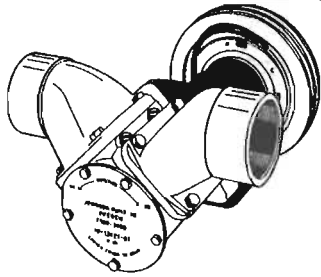
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MALE CHORUS SINGING ...

(... continued from page 47)

hall, with a seating capacity for an audience of 5,400, plus room for an additional nine hundred standing and a stage to hold 1,400, was built for the occasion. For this *Sangerfest* it had been decided by the arrangement committee that only choruses with a minimum membership of 35 singers could participate, thus eliminating several smaller choruses. What at the first glance seemed rather harsh and counterproductive, nevertheless did have beneficial consequences. Many of the smaller choruses, determined to participate, joined together and not only qualified for participation, but through their cooperative efforts, concurrently and almost unwittingly organized local Singer's Associations (*Sangerforbund*).

After ten years of careful planning, however, the Stavanger singers hosted the "8th Great Sangerfest" in 1909 with an estimated 1,000 singers in attendance. The invitation stipulated that choruses with less than 20 singers would not be permitted to perform individually at the concerts. It had almost become customary for the host city to build a hall for *Sangerfest*.

Immigrant Choruses

The ethnic Singing Societies in America offer a unique musical repertoire of which the Scandinavian is still rooted in the National-Romantic period of the 19th century. Song and music have played an important role in the Norwegian immigrant life in the United States since the 1850s.

The Norwegian Male Choruses (NMC), contrary to most immigrant churches, have maintained use of the Norwegian language. Indications are, however, that in the 21st century, they will face a struggle to maintain the language and keep alive the NMC tradition itself. Of the 382 choruses which have existed in the US and Canada, 28 currently survive with a total of less than 1000 singers, distributed over nine States and Canada, considerably less impressive than the numbers of the past.

Some NMCs such as the *Kolbrunarskjald* of Minneapolis – which lived for a total of three weeks – had a rather short life span, whereas others have survived for over a century. Regardless of how long time a chorus existed, the fact that it did exist at all means it contributed to the development. Each was a link, however small, in the continuous chain stretching from the 2000s back to the 1850s.

In the early days, choruses representing all three Scandinavian countries joined together to form the first national organization, The United Scandinavian Singers' Association (USSA) in 1886. As G. Bie Ravndal, a singer activist around the turn of the century and first President of The Norwegian Singers' Association of America (NSAA) in 1910, later put it: "We would recognize no distinction between Americans of Swedish, Danish or Norwegian extraction; they were all equally interested in Scandinavian Song in America as well as legitimate co-heirs on an equal basis to any cultural heritage from their old countries."

From Immigrant to Chorister

The early Norwegian immigrants faced bitter daily struggles and after a long day's work, there was seldom time or energy left for 'frills and frivolities.' There were few if any Norwegian centers or activities available where the immigrants could replenish their 'cultural needs'. The Norwegian language was maintained as much and as long as possible. Bibles, hymnals and songbooks were more often than not their only books and the extent of their literary experience.

As the stream of immigrants increased, the settlements grew and living conditions improved. Increasingly more time and attention could be turned towards the cultural and spiritual aspects of life. Congregations were formed, churches and schools were built, a prolific Norwegian press evolved and writers emerged, often using the new press as a vehicle for exposing their literature to the public. In times of despair and when they most needed consolation, **song** was a way to reestablish contact with

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Norway. Singing at home or with friends was soothing medication for many a longing heart.

A. Iversen, a writer for *Vinland*, a Norwegian-American newspaper in Chicago, in describing the Scandinavian immigrants settling in America in the 19th century claimed that "the first two things they did when they formed a new community were to build a church and start a men's chorus. Then they built their home."

A mainstay in Norway's cultural life for many years, the Male Chorus very early gained respect and status throughout Norway, like it had in the rest of Europe. It is not surprising that the NMC also became a significant cultural institution in so many of the Norwegian communities throughout America.

Getting started in the US

To pinpoint a specific time or place as the starting point is difficult, the NMC movement appears to have developed in many places simultaneously. It is a misconception that NMC singing has centuries of tradition. The fact is that the movement did not start officially in Norway until 1845.

Det skandinaviske Selskab of Philadelphia, PA, was founded in 1768 and is thought to be the first Scandinavian organization in America. On September 19, 1853, the oldest Norwegian Society in America was organized in Boston, MA. During the second half of the 19th century Scandinavian organizations of various kinds – from church and sports clubs to temperance and labor organizations – were formed in every region of the country where Scandinavians settled. The membership of new choruses was drawn from many of these organizations.

The purpose of the NMC "shall be to work for the presentation and preservation of special Norwegian, as well as other Scandinavian songs for male chorus, and also of American songs for male chorus to the extent dictated by good American citizenship and the of the members," as

stated in the Brooklyn NMC bylaws.

To date 382 Norwegian Male Choruses have been identified in North America, six in Canada, with the remaining 376 in the US, distributed over 23 states and 156 cities.

J. R. Nannestad of Albert Lea, MN, a prominent organizer and leader of the singers' movement in America at the turn of the century, thought that all choruses "in the final analysis are resting on memories from Norway. Someone or another, who at one time had been member of a singing society in Norway spearheads, gets other men interested and so they organize a singing society. Perhaps an inefficient method, but the only one usable here in the West."

There are reasons to believe that Boston – where *Nordmændenes Sangforening* was organized in 1871 – must have had some quartet activities in the 1860s or earlier. It appears that La Crosse, where *Normanna Sangerkor* was organized in 1869, had the only true Male Chorus, but there are also some indications that there may indeed have been a NMC in Chicago as early as 1857: "A small men's chorus, the Norwegian Singing Society (*Den norske Sangforening*), had entertained at Nora's first meeting in July and was invited to unite with Nora, which shortly arranged a flower festival in the German Hall to mark the singing society's anniversary, perhaps its second, on July 27," if it is the NMC referred to in *Wossingen* in June 1859.

A quartet named *Luren* whose members were: O.A. Nelson, first tenor; N.E. Nelson, second tenor; Teodor Møller, first bass, and H. Engbertson, second bass, was organized in Decorah in 1868. There also was a quartet, *Lyren*, in Minneapolis, consisting of Andrew Slotten, Bernt Sannerud, John Gjedde and Louis Solberg, which performed at various Scandinavian functions as early as 1869. It was last mentioned in *Budstikken*, a Norwegian language newspaper in Minneapolis, on December 27, 1875.

The growth and development of the NMC movement did not follow

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any particular pattern in the early years, although it was related to, and to a great extent dependent upon, the general immigration pattern. In the 1860s, choruses were also organized in Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin. During the next four decades, traces of the NMC movement could be found from coast to coast. New choruses appeared in Massachusetts, New York, Oregon, North Dakota, California, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Washington, Nebraska, Rhode Island, Wisconsin and South Dakota.

The first Canadian chorus came in 1908, when the *Norwegian Glee Club* was organized in Winnipeg, Manitoba; Montana joined the movement in 1910; Utah's contribution to keep the tradition alive was Salt Lake City's *Voice of Norway* in 1913, and the last state to take up the cause was Wyoming in the 1930s, when *Norden* was started in Casper.

Chorus Distribution

Looking at the distribution by states, we find that the state of Minnesota has had 90 NMCs in 24 different cities or towns, but only two choruses survive. Minneapolis alone has had close to 50 NMCs. While the state of Washington can lay claim to only 52 NMCs in 15 different locations from 1888 to 1988, the city of Seattle has had well over 30 men's singing societies at one time or another since 1889, the year the NMC was organized in that city. These were not exclusively NMCs, of which there have been six, but ethnically mixed, with all Scandinavian countries represented as well as German, Swiss and American participants.

Sangerforbund

From a modest beginning of quartet singing, choruses were formed and rapidly spread throughout America. The next step was to organize regional Singers' Associations, *Sangerforbund*, the main functions of which were to arrange Song Festivals, *Sangerfester*.

In 1885 C.M. Machold, a Danish-born businessman and member of the *Scandinavian Quartette Club* in Philadelphia, came up with the idea

of an American *Sangerforbund* for all Scandinavian singers. He wanted to unite Singing Societies of the three Scandinavian nations "into a Musical Union and thereupon arrange Singing Festivals at stated intervals." He also wanted to 1) bring the Scandinavians of the United States into closer relation and harmony; 2) bring the Scandinavian composers and their works before the American public; 3) "by these means to demonstrate to the country at large the intellectual standing of the Scandinavians and especially their musical and vocal gifts."

At the monthly meeting of the SQC in October, 1885, Machold recommended that a committee be appointed, to assemble all Scandinavian singing societies into one central organization. The first committee meeting was held November 15, 1885.

It was also decided to approach the 29 Scandinavian newspapers in the US and enlist their assistance in the project. In spite of a less than enthusiastic response from the press, Machold proceeded as planned and invited *Den norske Sangforening* in New York to send two delegates to a December 27 meeting in Philadelphia. The New York delegation pledged support, but added that there was friction between the Norwegian singing societies in New York. Since a grand festival for May 17, 1886, was already planned by all the Norwegian organizations in New York, it was decided that a meeting be held there on May 16.

Five singing societies were present. C.M. Machold was elected chairman and after explaining the purpose of the meeting, he proposed that a new organization be formed and that the name should be *The United Scandinavian Singers of America*. The USSA had been organized, a constitution was adopted with Machold elected the first President.

The first *Sangerfest* was held in Philadelphia July 31-August 2, 1887 with 123 active singers in attendance, 43 of whom represented *Nordmændenes Sangforening* of Chicago, which sang a complete program of Norwegian songs, among them *Olaf Trygvason* and *Serenade ved Strandbredden*. The Grand Chorus was directed by John W. Colberg

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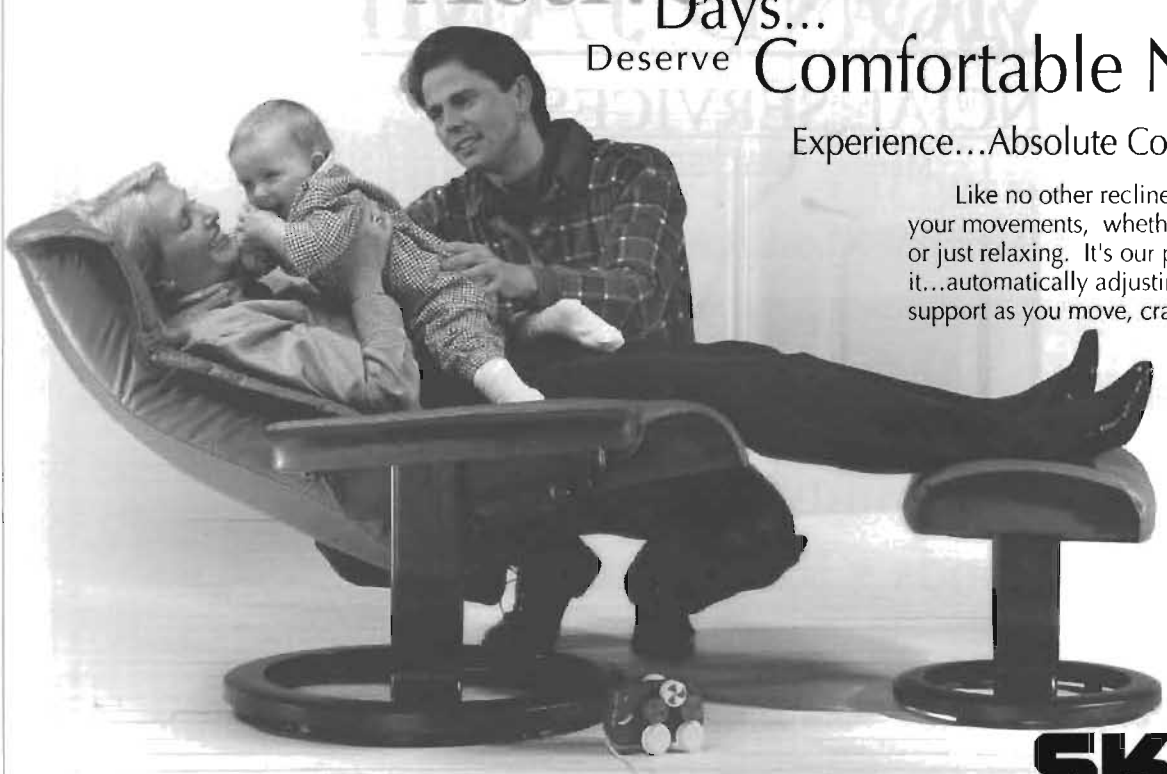
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of Chicago.

At the next *Sangerfest* in Chicago July 14-17, 1889, 24 choruses and over 600 singers participated in the concerts which took place in the Second Regiment Armory on Michigan Avenue.

By 1891, when *Sangerfest* was held in Minneapolis, the USSA had grown to 50 choruses with a total membership of 1,800 singers. Between 1,200 and 1,500 singers took part in the Minneapolis Grand Chorus. According to the notes in the 1891 *Sangerfest* Souvenir Program, the territory now covered by the singers attending embraced the country from Boston to San Francisco.

The Northwestern Scandinavian Singers Association

Perhaps as a result of the split which occurred in Minneapolis, or perhaps for purely practical reasons, the idea of a Singers' Association 'out west' was also conceived at the Minneapolis *Sangerfest* in June, 1891. By September, an organizing meeting was held in Sioux Falls, SD, during the so called *Vindruefest* (Grape Festival), in honor of Leif Erikson's discovery of Vinland.

In addition to the host chorus *Minnehaha Mandskor, Skandia* from Wilmar and *Heimdahl* from Granite Falls, MN, took part and several choruses from other areas were represented by individual singers at the festival. Approximately 60 singers participated in the concert on September 23, 1891 and held their convention the following day.

The convention resulted in the formation of *Det Nordvestlige Skandinaviske Sangerforbund* (The Northwestern Scandinavian Singers' Association). An election of officers was held and it was also decided to hold the new *Forbund's* first *Sangerfest* in Sioux Falls in 1892.

Det Nordvestlige Skandinaviske Sangerforbund lasted 16 years, when the name was changed to *Det Nordvestlige Norsk-Danske Sangerforbund* (The Northwestern Norwegian-Danish Singers' Association) in 1907. Three years later, in 1910, it finally was renamed *Det Norske*

Sangerforbund i Amerika (The Norwegian Singers' Association of America - NSAA), eliminating not only Danish, but Northwest from the name as well. At this time efforts were also made to recruit the East Coast choruses and the Pacific Coast Norwegian Singers Association to join the NSAA.

In spite of its relatively short existence, the USSA had a profound impact on the Singers' movement in America, by organizing three *Sangerfester* and laying the foundation for all Singers' Associations to come, Danish, Norwegian or Swedish.

Scandinavian Singers' Associations in America

Det Skandinaviske Sangerforbund (The United Scandinavian Singers of America USSA), organized May 16, 1886, in New York City, lasted until 1897, 'officially' dissolved at the business meeting in Minneapolis May 18, by 2nd VP T.E. Nelson and Director Erik Oulie being the only two left in *Forbundet*, which in reality had been dead since 1892. Among the many causes for the demise of the USSA was the cessation of the Swedish singers and the founding of their own organization, The American Union of Swedish Singers (AUSS). Charter Member Clubs were *Scandinavian Quartette Club*, Philadelphia; *Scandinavian Chorus*, Boston; *Norwegian Singing Society*, New York City; *Scandinavian Singing Society*, Brooklyn; *Swedish Clee Club*, Brooklyn. Also invited, but not present were, *Odeon* of Perth Amboy, NJ; *Den Svenska Kvartette*, New Britain, CT; *Svea-Nor Sangforening*, Philadelphia, PA, all three of which joined later. *Sangerfester* held: 1. Philadelphia, July 31-August 2, 1887; 2. Chicago, July 14-17, 1889; 3. Minneapolis, July 17-21 1891; 4. Chicago, July 26-28, 1893.

Det Skandinaviske Sangerforbund af Chicago (The United Scandinavian Singers of Chicago) was organized June 15, 1890.

Det Nordvestlige Skandinaviske Sangerforbund (The Northwest-

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ern Scandinavian Singers Association - NWSSA) was organized September 24, 1891 during *Vindrufesten* in Sioux Falls, SD, lasting till 1907. In 1894 it became part of the USSA, withdrew in 1896. The Association encompassed Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota. July 13, 1892, in Sioux Falls, it was voted to also include Colorado, Utah, Wisconsin and Wyoming. *Sangerfester* held: 1. Sioux Falls, July 12-14, 1892; 2. Sioux City, July 10-12, 1894; 3. Omaha, September 2-5, 1896; 4. Duluth, September 18-21, 1898; 5. St. Paul, June 6-8, 1900; 6. Sioux Falls, July 10-13, 1902; 7. Grand Forks, July 6-10, 1904; 8. La Crosse, July, 6-8, 1906.

Minneapolis & St. Paul Norske Sangerforbund (Twin City Singers Union) was organized in 1900.

Chicago Sangerunion (Chicago Singers Union) was organized in 1902.

Stillehavskystens Norske Sangerforbund (The Pacific Coast Norwegian Singers Association - PCNSA) was organized August 26, 1902 in Seattle, encompassing Alaska, Washington, Oregon, California, Idaho, Montana & British Columbia. Utah in 1915. First *Sangerfest* held in 1903.

Chicago Norske Sangerforbund (Chicago Norwegian Singers Association) was organized in 1904.

Det Nordvestlige Norsk-Danske Sangerforbund (The Northwestern Norwegian-Danish Singers Association - NWNDSA) was organized June 1, 1907 in Minneapolis, lasting till 1910. This was simply a name change from, and a continuation of the NWSSA, which in effect had become the successor to the USSA in 1897. *Sangerfester* held, continuing the succession: 9. Minneapolis, August 28-30, 1908; 10. Sioux Falls, July 15-17, 1910.

Red River Dalens Sangerforbund (Red River Valley Scandinavian Singers) was organized January 8, 1909 in Fargo, encompassing Fergus Falls (*Ljom*), Minnesota; Fargo (*Orpheus*) and Grand Forks (*Bjarne*), North Dakota.

Det Norske Sangerforbund i America (The Norwegian Singers' Association of America) was organized July 16, 1910 at the 10th *Sangerfest* in Sioux Falls. This was simply a name change from the NWNDSA, however, by dropping the NW, the name now in effect reflected a national scope. *Sangerfester* have continued to be held biennially since this 10th one in 1910, with the exceptions of the war years 1918 and 1944.

Winneshiek County Norske Sangerforbund (Winneshiek County Norwegian Singers Association) was organized in 1911.

Det Østlige Norsk-Amerikanske Sangerforbund (The Eastern Norwegian American Singers' Association) was organized September 1, 1912, in Brooklyn. Charter member choruses were *Norske Glee Club* Hoboken, NJ; *Nordmændenes Sangforening* Brooklyn and *Nordmændenes*, Harlem, NY; *Andvake* Providence, RI. *Nordmændenes Sangforening* of Boston, MA joined the Association in May 1914.

Det Danske Sangerforbund af Amerika. Although less prolific than

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the Norwegians and Swedes, the Danes also developed Male Chorus. *Det Danske Sangerforbund af Amerika* (The Danish Singers Association of America) was organized in 1913 in Port Chester, NJ by representatives from seven Singing Societies in the east with a total membership of 125 singers.

Sioux Valley Norske Sangerforbund (Sioux Valley Norwegian Singers' Association - SVNSA) was organized April 9, 1913 in Canton. The membership included *Nordmændenes Sangforening* Sioux City, IA; *Grieg Mandskor* Canton, SD; *Minnehaha Mandskor* Sioux Falls, SD and *Nor Omaha*, NA. SVNSA held its first local *Sangerfest* August 27, 1913, and has continued to hold *Sangerfester* on the 'off year' for the NSSA, thus enabling the Sioux Valley singers go to *Sangerfest* every year.


Det Skandinaviske Mandskor af Iowa (The United Scandinavian Male Chorus of Iowa) was organized in 1934, encompassing Decorah, Des Moines, Fort Dodge and Sioux City.

Midvestens Sangerforbund (The Midwest Singers' Association) was organized in Rockford, IL in 1936, encompassing Northern Illinois and Southern Wisconsin. Charter member clubs were *Norsemen Glee Club* Milwaukee, *Norwegian Glee Club* Racine, *Grieg Male Chorus* Madison, *Björnson Male Chorus* Chicago, *Harmony Male Chorus* Beloit, *Harmony Male Chorus* Rockford. First *Sangerfest* was held in the summer of 1937 in Rockford. Director John Roebuck, Rockford; Assistant Director Sverre Larsen, Chicago; President Gilbert Lee, Rockford; Vice President Joseph Andersen, Milwaukee; Secretary Emil Dyresen, Rockford.

Northwest Division of the NSAA was organized October 5, 1940, at the Hotel Sheridan in Minneapolis.

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West Coast in 1878, when a chorus was established in Portland, OR. It took seven years, however, before a second West Coast chorus was formed, in San Francisco, CA, in 1885. Tacoma received its first NMC in 1888, Seattle joined the movement in 1889, the same year Washington became a State. Spokane came along in 1890, while Everett's first NMC was organized in 1902 and Bellingham's in 1916.

California

Following San Francisco's *Nidaros* of 1885, Norwegian Male Chorus Los Angeles was organized in 1913, as was the Normanna Glee Club of Oakland. The *San Diego Mannskor* came along in 1995 and Sacramento in 1998.

Oregon

Nordmændenes Sangforening af Portland (The Norwegian Singing Society of Portland), later known as the Norwegian Glee Club, had always been among the leaders on the Pacific Coast and it was on the initiative of one its members, Fredrik A. Tomte (1871-1937), that the Pacific Coast Norwegian Singers Association (PCNSA) was organized in 1882.

During its active years, the Glee Club hosted a total of seven *Sangerfester* for the PCNSA; in 1905, 1918, 1925, 1937, 1946, 1954 and its final one in 1964. The chorus survived until the mid-1970s before finally giving up the ghost, literally 'due to old age.' The membership had gotten quite old and there was no infusion of younger members. When the last Director, Bjørn Heglie, left Portland in the 1970s and when the chorus' 'primus motors' for a number of years, David B. Westby and Norman Clifton died, it appears that the Norwegian Glee Club had finally reached the end. A cooperative effort with the Swedish Male Chorus of Portland failed to salvage what little was left of the Glee Club, perhaps due to the disproportionate membership – only three Norwe-

gians and the rest Swedes.

The Eugene Norsemen were established in 1958 and the Salem Thorsmen joined in 1975.

Washington

On October 15, 1888, a group of eight young and prominent business men from Parkland and Tacoma, all immigrants from Norway, met in Parkland and organized the first small chorus in the State of Washington. Although it actually was a double quartet, they called it *Quartetten Luren*. Among the founding members were Judge Johannes M. Arntson, Chris Sather and John Westgrund. The first Conductor was the Reverend Nils P. Xavier and the first President was Arntson, a name which frequently re-occurs in the Tacoma saga.

Already in 1890 a new chorus named *Norge* was started. The Conductor was a *Hr. Sjöquist* and the President Arntson – one of the founders of *Luren* – was also in on the organization of this chorus. *Norge* was essentially a continuation of *Luren*.

But again, in 1891, yet another chorus, *Heimdal*, appeared – also in Tacoma – with the same group of singers and the Director which had started *Norge* recorded as charter members. It appears, in fact, that the chorus was simply *Norge* renamed *Heimdal*.

After three name changes in four years, it may not be surprising that the last one only lasted until 1895, the same group of men were again listed as founders for the new *Nordmændenes Sangforening af Tacoma* (Norwegians' Singing Society of Tacoma), however, this time with a new Conductor. Carlo A. Sperati who had come to Our Saviours Lutheran Church as pastor in 1895 became Director of *Nordmændenes* that same year. When he left for Decorah, Iowa and a position at Luther College in 1905, George Severyn Johnson took over as Director, a position he held

(Continues on page 58 ...)

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| 9. Spokane | 1913 | 45. Portland | 1954 | 81. Everett | 1990 |
| 10. San Francisco | 1915 | 46. Bellingham | 1955 | 82. Salem | 1991 |
| 11. Bellingham | 1916 | 47. Los Angeles | 1956 | 83. Sioux Falls | 1992 |
| 12. Seattle | 1917 | 48. Vancouver BC | 1957 | 84. Eugene | 1993 |
| 13. Portland | 1918 | 49. Everett | 1958 | 85. Oakland | 1994 |
| 14. Tacoma | 1919 | 50. Eugene | 1959 | 86. Bellingham | 1995 |
| 15. Grays Harbor | 1920 | 51. Seattle | 1960 | 87. San Diego | 1996 |
| 16. Astoria | 1921 | 52. San Francisco | 1961 | 88. Tacoma | 1997 |
| 17. Everett | 1922 | 53. Salt Lake City | 1962 | 89. Reno | 1998 |
| 18. Edison-Bellingham | 1923 | 54. Tacoma | 1963 | 90. Salem | 1999 |
| 19. Seattle | 1924 | 55. Portland | 1964 | 91. Seattle | 2000 |
| 20. Portland | 1925 | 56. Oakland | 1965 | | |
| 21. Tacoma | 1926 | 57. Bellingham | 1966 | | |
| 22. Vancouver | 1927 | 58. Eugene | 1967 | | |
| 23. San Francisco | 1928 | 59. Everett | 1968 | | |
| 24. Astoria | 1929 | 60. Santa-Monica/Los Angeles .. | 1969 | | |
| 25. Grays Harbor | 1931 | 61. Seattle | 1970 | | |
| 26. Everett | 1933 | 62. Tacoma | 1971 | | |
| 27. Vancouver | 1934 | 63. San Francisco | 1972 | | |
| 28. Bellingham | 1935 | 64. Vancouver BC | 1973 | | |
| 29. Seattle | 1936 | 65. Oakland | 1974 | | |
| 30. Portland | 1937 | 66. Seattle | 1975 | | |
| 31. San Francisco | 1939 | 67. Eugene | 1976 | | |
| 32. Tacoma | 1940 | 68. Everett | 1977 | | |
| 33. Grays Harbor | 1941 | 69. Oakland | 1978 | | |
| 34. Everett | 1942 | 70. Salem | 1979 | | |
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| August Werner | 1959-1974 |
| GunnarJ. Malmin | 1975-1978 |
| Alf L. Knudsen | 1978-1981 |
| Ed Amundsen | 1981-1984 |
| Alf L. Knudsen | 1985-1987 |
| Jon Malmin | 1988-1989 |
| Dr. Alf L. Knudsen | 1989-1990 |
| Dr. Jon Malmin | 1990-1991 |
| Peter Butler | 1991-1992 |
| Steve Jensen | 1992-1993 |
| Dr. Jon Malmin | 1993-1994 |
| Steve Jensen | 1994-1995 |
| PeterButler | 1995-1996 |
| Dr. Jon Malmin | 1996-1997 |
| Dr. Alf L. Knudsen | 1997-1998 |
| Peter Butler | 1998-1999 |
| Dr. Alf L. Knudsen | 1999-2000 |

PCNSA Active Choruses

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Bellingham, Washington | Norwegian Male Chorus |
| Eugene, Oregon | The Eugene Norsemen |
| Everett, Washington | Norwegian Male Chorus |
| Oakland, California | Normanna Glee Club |
| Sacramento, California | Nordskap Manskor |
| Salem, Oregon | The Thorsmen Chorus |
| San Diego, California | San Diego Manskor |
| San Francisco, California | Norwegian Singing Society |
| Seattle, Washington | Norwegian Male Chorus |
| Tacoma, Washington | Normanna Male Chorus |

MALE CHORUS SINGING ...

(... continued from page 56)

until 1914 and again from 1918 to 1940. From 1914-1916 *Nordmændenes* was directed by a newly arrived Swede, Per Olson, who also directed the Swedish Singing Society, *Svea*, in Tacoma. He was succeeded by John Soley from 1916 to 1918. Soley was Editor of the Norwegian language newspaper *Tacoma Tidende*.

Of the 53 NMCs that have existed in Washington, the other choruses include Everett was organized in 1902, Bellingham in 1916 as *Norrøna*, and Skagit Valley Mannskor in 1999.

PCNSA

In 1902 *Pacifickystens Norske Sangerforbund* was founded in Seattle and held its first *Sangerfest* the following year in Everett, Washington. Participation at this first *Sangerfest* was by Norwegian Male Choruses from the states of Washington and Oregon with the noted musician Carlo Sperati as the Director-in-Chief.

Due to the interest created by the first *Sangerfest* other Choruses were formed from California to British Columbia and these became member Choruses of *Forbundet*. *Sangerfester* were held almost every year with various Choruses hosting the event in their own city.

In 1926 *Forbundet's* singers realized their dream of many years – to visit Norway on a Concert Tour. Forty-seven singers, many with their wives, traveled from the west coast to New York on train where they boarded the Norwegian America Line ship for their trip to Norway. In Norway they traveled by train and boat between cities where the concerts were held. The Concert Tour was considered an outstanding success and it has always been *Forbundet's* goal to repeat such a Concert Tour.

Fifty-five years later this goal became reality when a Concert Tour of Norway in late May and early June of 1981 came about. Some one hundred singers with their wives and two hundred additional associate members and friends. Travel was by Scandinavian Airlines from Seattle to Gothenburg. Here they boarded the cruise ship *M/S Funchal* which was their 'hotel and travel accommodation' as they cruised along the coast of Norway from Fredrikstad to Trondheim, stopping at the cities where concerts will be held. With a group of 400 people it would be difficult in some cities to obtain accommodations so the 'cruise' solved major problems.

Since *Forbundet* was founded in 1902 many changes have taken place. First the name was "Americanized." The present name of *Forbundet* is "Pacific Coast Norwegian Singers Association" which clarifies the group to the English speaking audiences and also the ratio of Norwegian speaking singers to non-Norwegian speaking singers is constantly decreasing. Many of the original Choruses have folded due to a lack of interest or the loss of their director but many new ones have been started for the reverse reasons. At present there are 11 member Choruses in the Association extending from Bellingham, Washington in the north to San Diego, California in the south. Ninety *Sangerfester* have been held through the 98 years of existence of the Association and there have been 12 Directors-in-Chief during this period, some serving two years and the longest being held by Prof. August Werner who held the position for one term of six years and a second term for 15 years for a total of 21 years.

During the existence of the Association there have been many "High-



Grand Chorus from 1909 Sangerfest at the Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition in Seattle.

lights" including the first *Sangerfest* in Everett in 1903; the 1909 *Sangerfest* during the *Alaska-Yukon Exposition* in Seattle; the Norway trip in 1926; the 1951 *Sangerfest* in Seattle when 200 singers performed at the Green Lake Aqua Theater with Lauritz Melchior as guest artist. With a full moon rising over the outdoor bleachers and more than 5,000 people in the audience it was an event never to be equalled; the 1962 *Sangerfest* in Salt Lake City where a Grand Chorus of more than 700 singers performed in the Mormon Tabernacle; the 1981 concert tour to Norway and the subsequent tours in the 1990s; the Seattle 1989 100th Anniversary and *Sangerfest* with the Norwegian Singers Association of America and two choruses from Norway, Breistein Male Chorus and Fana Male Chorus, joined the PCNSA and put on a memorable concert.

Truth be told, every *Sangerfest* is the "best one ever" and each one can honestly be listed as **THE HIGHLIGHT** of the year. Until next year's highlight, enjoy the first *Sangerfest* of the 21st century.

Colophon

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Jens Bæin



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