



May: 49th Anniversary of Chicago Torske Klub with Jostein Bakken

May is the last meeting of 2008-2009 Chicago Torske Klub season. We will rest for the summer; golf, fish and spend the 2nd Saturday of June, July and August with friends and family. But we always go out with a bang! This is the 49th anniversary of the first Torske Klub dinner in May 1960. As such, we will appropriately celebrate the event. Dress casual for the day; it is the day to wear the blue Torske Klub golf shirt if you have one.

Our roots in 1960 trace back to the Sons of Norway, so it is with great pleasure that we welcome our own member, Jostein Bakken, to address this celebration as our speaker. Jostein is a Board Director of the Sons of Norway International.

May Birthdays & Member News

May Birthdays include past Norwegian Hon. Consul General Per Ohrstrom, Carl Hansen, Nels Nelson, Board Member Ken Nordan, the Rev. David Langseth, Marv Meyer, Paul Solberg, accordionist Ray Nilsen, Steve Klos, Ron Jacobsen, Henry Hansen, Thor Fjell, Christian von Kirchbach, Andy Andersen, Roger Elmer Jr., Fred Gilbertsen, and Leonard Zielinski of Nelson Funeral Homes. Special greetings to our good member Bob Jaeger who is our oldest member at 97 years. We'll celebrate the birthdays of June, July and August in September. Congratulations and skål.

We welcome John Hardy of Palatine to our group. John is the son of our good member David Hardy.

Our Best Regards to Ted Torgerson, who is recuperating from a hospitalization.

April had a good turnout for Torske

Our program for April featured a presentation about the Marshall Plan for Norway, and a bit of introduction from our boss, Robert Alsaker, and his father Allan Alsaker, who had some involvement with electrification programs influenced by the Marshall Plan. Dinner discussion also yielded that Carl Hansen was involved in Marshall Plan funding in Germany as well. This was a bit of history that ultimately affected us all. Tusen Takk to Rob for the show.

Apologies to those who had reservations lost, due to a technical malfunction that wasn't realized until the check-in at the meal. All was resolved, and we had a good day and a good turnout for an Easter weekend.

Syttende Mai Events

- **Syttende Mai Celebration Concert**-Friday May 15, 7 pm- Norwegian Memorial Lutheran Church in Chicago
- **Norwegian Constitution Day Banquet**—Saturday May 16—Cocktails at 6 pm, Dinner at 7. Chevy Chase CC, Wheaton IL, Greeting from Ola T. Lånke, VP of Norwegian Lagting Dancing with Dave Kyrk Trio. Reservations: Call Carol at 847-358-1527
- **Norwegian Constitution Day Parade**—Sunday May 17— 12 pm entertainment at Hodges Park—1 pm parade steps off from Talcott and Cumberland in Park Ridge. Walk with the Torske Klub this year!



May 9

Our last monthly dinner meeting before summer break will be held on May 9, 2009 at the Des Plaines Elks Club, 495 Lee Street, Des Plaines, IL (847-824-1556). Cocktail hour begins at noon; dinner starts promptly at 1:00 P.M. when, according to our tradition, our BOSS, Robert Alsaker, rings the bell to seat us for dinner.

Make Your Regular Dinner Reservation by

Reservations due by:

Tuesday May 5

NOON

TUESDAY Noon, May 5, 2009

ALL MEMBERS AND THEIR GUESTS ARE REQUIRED TO MAKE A RESERVATION FOR DINNER.

The Elks Club needs time to order the fresh fish. Timely reservations insure that fish and a table space can be reserved for you. Noon means noon. We have been fortunate with our orders when late reservations are received, can that luck continue? Call early and minimize the risk.

Call **630-445-1263** at any time day or night to leave a reservation. If there is voicemail difficulties, call Ken at 630-406-0148. As usual, please leave your MEMBERSHIP NUMBER, NAME, and the TOTAL number of people in your party. The same information is required when you reserve for other members. The phone usually will ring 4 times before answering.

We have reservations from the following members: 3, 13C, 22, 39, 40, 47, 51, 55, 73C, 85, 98, 113, 114, 115, 126, 141, 179A. Board members note that they have a reservation automatically and must call cancellations.

If you prefer email reservations, please send to secretary@torskeklub.org with your number of reservations, including guests. We will respond with a confirmation email.

****TIP** – Don't know or remember your membership number? Check the mailing label. It is the number by your name.

FREE Raffle Ticket to each member that brings one or more guests to the dinner this 2008/2009 season, excluding father/son/daughter day in March and ladies day in

Dinner Reservation Phone: (630) 445-1263

The Chicago Norske Klub

No it isn't a misspelling. Many of us remember the days when the Chicago Torske Klub, met at the facilities of the Chicago Norske Klub on Kedzie Blvd. in Chicago. As we approach our 50th year of existence, we have only a few artifacts of those early days, and over the years, we have fewer members that remember the magnificent building and hall that we met in for those first dinners.



The head table was the "high seat" for Torske Klub and other functions. The mural is now cared for by the Vesterheim Museum.



The fireplace or "Piesen" was at the back of the Torske Klub diners in those early days of the luncheons.

The magnificent hall had been host to many Norwegian and Norwegian-American dignitaries over the years in government, arts, science and technology. Roald Amundsen, J.L Mowinckel, Jane Addams, C.J.Hambro, Fridtjof Nansen, Johan Bojer, O.E. Rolvaag, Herman Wildenvey, Tore, Segelcke, Dr. Halfdan Kohy, Sonja Henie, Bjørn Bjørnsonm, Kaia Eide Norrena, David Knudsen, Betzy Kjelsberg, Johan Hambro, Erik Bye, and in 1939, Crown Prince Olav and Crown Princess Märtha. You could feel that history in the room.

Did this story stir a memory with you? Do you have some stories or photos of those days or others to share? Help us celebrate our 50th anniversary with memories and artifacts. Forward then to Ken Nordan or myself.—*Ken Larson*

Ref: "From Fjord to Prairie"—Published in 1975 by our late member Larry Nelson

The building was at Kedzie and Fullerton. Kedzie was a tree lined boulevard with restricted parking, but permission from the police and good member Alderman Bernie Hansen allowed parking for that day. As we entered the building, we were presented with the rich history of the Norwegian community in art and photos of Norwegian Kings, dignitaries and events. At the top of the trophy lined staircase was entrance to the great room as you see in the photo to the right, however set for dinner with scores of men. The carpets and tapestries were magnificent and the sense of being in a medieval Norse Viking hall was hard to ignore.

The hall was built by the early Norske Klub members and with no shortage of skilled artisans. Giaver and Dinkelberg were the architects. Chr. V. Bagge designed a fireplace, Emil Bjørn

the fixtures (one is now owned by Rob Alsaker), and they both furnished the hall which opened on 7/4/1917. The Torske Klub started there in 1960.

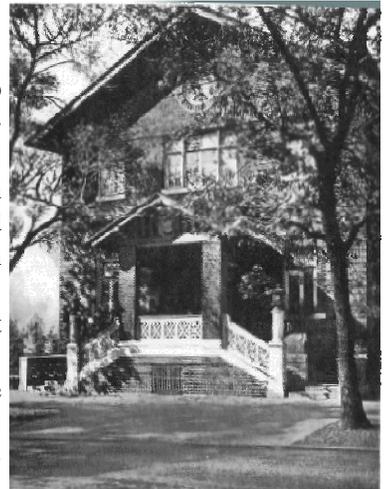
Torske Klub cocktail hour was as we have now, but the choice of many was the imported Ringnes beer.

The dinner bell was rung by the boss, and seats were occupied for the meal; served family style as a feast. Dinner was cooked by Barney Jacobsen. Alfred Newgard managed the facility for 10 years after the building was bought and maintained by the SofN Bjørnson Lodge as the Norway Center. The head table was on the long wall, framed by the murals and flags. It was an impressive setting. A small fire was kept in the "Piesen"; a large fire would have overheated the room and singed the wool in our suits. "Helan Går" was chanted regularly by the many diners.

It was appropriate for us to meet there. The

Future Dates:

- 5/18/2009 —Syttende Mai Parade -Torske Klub marches in Park Ridge
- 9/12/2009 -September Torske Klub Luncheon
- 4/20/2010 - Chicago Torske Klub's 50th Anniversary Celebration



Chicago Norske Klub on 2350 N. Kedzie Blvd. with the large 2nd floor hall where the Torske Klub also met.

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