

NORDIC AMERICAN PSALMODIKONFORBUNDET

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ANNUAL MEETING NOTES

Mark your calendars now to reserve the date of September 19th for the 2nd annual meeting of Psalmodikonforbundet. It will be held in Granite Falls, MN. It is hoped that many will be able to attend and there is a possibility that we will have visitors from Sweden attending our meeting. Your input is needed to help plan this year's events- **let Beatrice know what you would like to do, see and experience.** A Saturday evening dinner and program is a possibility ; workshops and "jam sessions" and perhaps playing at Sunday morning worship services!

More on page 6...

YEAR END MUSINGS BY BEATRICE HOLE

The Psalmodikon and I have wound through a whirlwind finish of a very busy 1997.

What a terrific year it has been with all the places we have given programs and the wonderful people I have met. The interest continues to grow and so I am also kept very

"the highlight of year was getting the NORDIC-AMERICAN PSALMODIKON FORBUNDET organized."

busy handling correspondence from all over the USA, Canada, and the Nordic Countries.

Already, many performance dates have been scheduled for

1998 with one even scheduled for the year 2001. (I guess the new violin bow I received for Christmas will get plenty of use.)

In addition to the many performances during December, the Psalmodikon and I had the honor of accompanying the Gregorian Singers, under the Direction of Monte Mason, as they sang a beautiful old Norwegian hymn during an Advent Service at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Minneapolis. Another first was when I was asked to provide Psalmodikon music for a Reviewal and Funeral service for an elderly Norwegian lady. A very fine tribute to her many years of carrying on her heritage and traditions. The visits with the young people are always so rewarding as they listen attentively to my story and then try a "hands on" attempt at playing the "one-stringer". It is so important to keep the young children interested in



Beatrice Hole & Lydia Drogemueller play the Tandem Psalmodikon at the Nordic Brunch 1997

our traditions as they are the ones who will carry them into the future.

But the highlight of the year was getting the Nordic-American Psalmodikonforbundet organized! That was a dream come true for me and I eagerly look forward to our association for the years to come. We have had a good response with the Membership Dues and some are still coming in. If you think of someone else who would be interested in joining, it still isn't too late to send in the \$5.00 membership fee. Some folks are giving a membership as a gift. I am sure many of you are busy practicing and learning new songs. Maybe we could have a "jam session" before the next scheduled meeting.

Probably the biggest event for musicians is the **Nordic Fest** in Decorah, Iowa, which will be held on July 24, 25, and 26. If anyone would be interested in helping me demonstrate in the "air-conditioned" Bethania Church during the day, I would really appreciate that. Also, I would like to hear from anyone who would be interested in joining me for a few musical selections on stage at the Viking Theater on Friday and Saturday afternoon. They only give me a 10 minute slot but I think it would be really great if we could have several Psalmodikons playing there this year!

The best to each of you in 1998!

Beatrice Hole "Music-on-a-String"

Letters to the Editor

Dear Beatrice,

I received a Psalmodikon (one that Harlis Anderson made) from my sister, Valborg Fisher, a few years ago. She also gave me your recent Newsletter. Very interesting.

My Dad brought a Psalmodikon from Norway in 1888, it had been given to him by his Aunt in 1883. She also gave him the music book for it. **I'm enclosing one page from it.** (see page 3)

My older siblings remember the instrument but, the youngest of 6, do not remember seeing it. So that instrument disappeared somehow.

I have played this new Psalmodikon at several occasions, in schools and Sons of Norway socials and it has a nice tone.

My Dad said that it was permissible to play the Psalmodikon in the churches but a violin was a sinful instrument and outlawed.

I also have a Hardanger, all inlaid with mother of pearl, made in 1895. I purchased it in Skein in 1971.

My wife and I play for our Sons of Norway folk dances in Bismarck so are kept "on our toes".

I am now 87. My wife 82 and (we) are very thankful for good health.

I think you have started a very interesting project. Keep me posted.

Ha Det Godt. Hilsen

Sig Peterson, Almont, North Dakota

LETTER FROM RODNEY SJOBERG, TROLLHATTAN, SWEDEN (Freely Translated)

Psalmodikons have been a hobby of Rodney Sjoberg since he was 10 years old. He was successful in forming a group of Psalmodikon enthusiasts from Sweden and Norway about 11 years ago and continues to serve as their "President". In addition to collecting Psalmodikons, he also holds Psalmodikon building classes and also makes the "authentic" gut strings. In 1997, he made 45 Psalmodikons and renovated 12 of them. He

also sent 100 gut strings throughout Sweden and Norway.

Rodney was very pleased to hear that there is now a Psalmodikon Society in the USA!

Questions: Are most owners Swedish or Norwegian?; Do any speak Norwegian or Swedish?; What models of Psalmodikon are being built and played?; What kind of strings are being used?; Do you play the same notes as we do?

"Just think if we could have a chance to be with you in 1998! Cultural and musical cooperation is fun."

Sjoberg's plans are to seek grants to participate and the rest in the stars to come to the Nordic-American Psalmodikonforbundet. Health and strength are also needed"

Their group (Norway-Sweden Spelstämman) will be meeting in Varmland, Sweden, August 1998 and invite the group, from America, to come. "Think of visitors from USA for this? That would be great"

"Happy New Year and happy greetings to the USA Psalmodikon Society!"

A letter was received from Leif Lochen of Vagamo, Norway, who is also on the Board of the Nordiska Psalmodikonforbundet. He recently held a course in building Psalmodikons and making gut strings near Lillehammer. He, too, sends the invitation to attend the "Salmodikonstamma" in Sweden in 1998. Anyone interested???????

PSALMODKON NEWSLETTER FROM SWEDEN
Beatrice Hole reports that Helena Odvall of Langhem, Sweden, Editor of the Scandinavian Psalmodikon Newsletter, continues to send her their publications. It is very interesting to read of their efforts in carrying on the Psalmodikon tradition. If anyone is interested in seeing one of these publications (written in Swedish) you may contact Beatrice.

Beatrice continues to receive much Psalmodikon information from Scandinavia that she is sure we could learn a lot from, if only we were able to translate these articles more thoroughly. If anyone knows of someone who would be willing to help with translating - let Beatrice know. Beatrice's phone number is (612) 934-4535 and her address is: 6560 Leesborough Avenue, Eden Prairie, MN 55346.

Lloyd Garthus of Sask., Canada writes that he is interested in information on tuning and playing. See Page 4 for some information that may help many of us.

No. 2. Mel. Af dybeste Nød { fader = os } til Gud. (Ev. Chr. Psalms. No. 531).

Tab. 1, a.
5—1.
2

1 | $\overline{7}$ 1 | 2 2 | 1 2 | $\widehat{3}$ 4 | 3 2 | 1 1 | 2. | $\widehat{1}$: || 1 | 2 4 |

Be = bar, o Her = re i vort Sind din him = mel = send = te Læ = re; Og le = be
At vi paa Guds Frygt læg = ge Vind, Og Tro = ens Frugter bæ = re.

3 1 | 2 $\overline{7}$ | $\widehat{6}$ $\overline{7}$ | $\overline{5}$ $\overline{5}$ | 2 3 | 4 2 | $\widehat{1}$ 5 | 3 2 | $\overline{7}$ 1 | 2. | $\widehat{1}$ ||

dig til Bæ = be = hag; Og ber = ved mod = nes Dag fra Dag, til Him = lens Fryd og Gæ = rel

No. 3. Mel. { Af Dybsens } Nød raaber jeg til dig. (Ev. Chr. Psalms. No. 268).
eller: Bæ mig! at jeg saa mangesund.

Tab. 1, c.
3—1 M.
2

5 | 1 5 | 6 5 | 3 4 | $\widehat{5}$ 5 | 6 7 | 6 4 | 3 2 | $\widehat{1}$: || 4 |

Bæ mig, at jeg saa man = ge = sund I Daar = habs I'd har le = vet; Gud

TRANSLATION BY ARDITH K. MELLOH FROM A CHORAL BOOK OF 1863

(To assist in understanding Psalmodikon music)

The numerals over which a dot stand are sung twice as fast as those without a dot, and numerals over which there are two dots are sung twice as fast as those with one dot. This applies to all the parts although the dot appears only over the soprano part. A numeral which has a dot after it is sung a half time longer than one without a dot. The five signature numerals are not numerical notation, but must be observed: +2 +3 +6 +7 means major key, and -2 -3 -6 -7 means a minor key. The capital letter in front of the signature gives the key. It is also the key note: if it is in C Major, then 1 is the same as G. The other numerals derive their meaning from this. A line over a numeral, as $\overline{1}$ $\overline{2}$, means an octave lower, and a line under a numeral, as $\underline{1}$ $\underline{2}$, means an octave higher. $\dot{1}$ is like a quarter note; $\dot{1}$ like a dotted quarter note; $\dot{1}$ like an eighth note; $\dot{1}$ like a sixteenth note; $\widehat{11}$ is a half note; $\widehat{111}$ is a dotted half note, and $\widehat{1111}$ is a whole note. A "+" raises the signs in the measure, a "-" lowers the signs; | is a bar; 0 is a rest. A measure consists of the numbers which appear between two upright lines | | which are called measure lines. All measures in a given psalm must be of the same time length. Two dots :|| near the end of a line is called a repeat sign and means that the melody shall be sung again from the beginning or from a preceding repeat sign. When numbers are bound together with a bow \frown it merely means that one syllable of a word shall be sung on the numbers that are bound together, as $\frown 2 2$, which are held as one note.