A Message from the Chair, Kirsten Wolf

At this time of the year, late April, faculty, staff, and students are typically busy wrapping up courses in preparation for exam week followed by a somewhat less hectic time, the summer months, devoted primarily to research and course preparation. This year is for the Department somewhat unusual in that the busy time will continue throughout the summer: the Department will be hosting the National Institute for Summer Scandinavian Studies (NISSS). The year 2005, an auspicious year for Scandinavia which marked the 100th anniversary of Norway becoming independent and the 200th birthday of Denmark’s Hans Christian Andersen, was the first year that UW-Madison hosted the event.

The Department will be offering intensive full-year language courses in Norwegian and Swedish in eight weeks. Students who take the summer course can transition into third-semester language in the fall. Classes for the first semester of Norwegian or Swedish begin June 16th and run through July 13th. Classes for the second semester of Norwegian or Swedish begin July 14th and run through August 10th. Optional film evenings and field trips will be available. In addition, an intensive 3-credit course on the Vikings and a distance course on the writings of Hans Christian Andersen will be offered; these two courses will run from June 16th to July 14th. The courses are sponsored by the Department, with major support from the UW-Madison Center for European Studies, in conjunction with its partners, the Center for West European Studies at the University of Washington, the European Studies Consortium at the University of Minnesota, and the Inner Asian and Uralic National Resource Center at Indiana University (all Title VI National Resource Centers funded by the US Department of Education).

Our spring newsletter offers insights into not only some of the activities of the Department’s current faculty, staff, and students, but also information about some of our alumni. Several alumni are generous donors to the Department. The gifts of these alumni and also those of others, which are vital to helping the Department take advantage of special opportunities, are greatly appreciated.
A n Interview with Alumna Carol “Orange” Schroeder, MA 1974 in Danish Literature and Co-Owner of Orange Tree Imports

How did you get interested in Scandinavian Studies?

My interest started when I met a Danish girl who was on a private exchange in my high school. We became and continue to be very good friends to this day. As an undergraduate at Tufts University, we could create our own majors and I really wanted to major in Scandinavian Studies. A group of three or four of us wanted to learn Danish, but there was no Danish teacher, so we staged a sit-in to get the German Department to fund a woman to teach the Danish language in exchange for a sewing machine. There were also two history instructors teaching courses on the Vikings at Tufts. This was a time when people taught what they felt like teaching, in the early 70s. In addition, I did some independent study courses, and I spent my last year of undergraduate work at the University of Copenhagen.

Can you explain how Scandinavia influences your life, despite the fact that your career is not in academia?

When Orange Tree Imports started we were a branch of Bord & Stol, a Scandinavian furniture store. I was the manager of this branch for six months, and then Dean (my husband) and I bought it, switched from furniture to accessories, and renamed it Orange Tree Imports. The store is 33 years old now. Having spent a lot of time walking around Copenhagen while studying there, I was strongly influenced by Scandinavian design and also the ambience of Danish stores. It might have made more sense to get a degree in business or retailing after returning to the U.S., but I think that learning about more Danish culture and honing my analytical skills through studying literature was very beneficial; it was also a degree that I have never regretted because it has enhanced my life and my appreciation of Scandinavian culture. The items that we sell in the store, even if they are not made in Scandinavia, have a Scandinavian bent that I think is influenced in a subtle way by the Scandinavian culture that I studied.

Do you make trips back to Scandinavia?

We try to go Scandinavia every other year. We have close ties there, and my Danish friend Annette made me Godmother to her daughter. We also have the chance to look at shops in Scandinavia and see what the trends are that will be coming to the United States before they come over here.

Do you still read Danish?

Yes, I get a Danish-American newspaper and I always try to read what I can in Danish. I find that when I go back to Denmark, my Danish skills come back to me very quickly and I find that I am able to read magazines and newspapers.

In addition to working in the store, I did translation work for almost twenty years after I graduated, so that allowed me to keep my hand in the language skills that I had learned at the University of Wisconsin.

You are a long-term asset to the Department in fundraising. Tell us why you feel that fundraising is so important, especially for a Department of our size.

I have really enjoyed being able to help raise funds for the Department over the years, including sponsoring a few special events such as a concert by Victor Borge. I feel very strongly that the smaller languages are threatened and that it is important that they continue to be taught. I am encouraged by the talent and skill of the current faculty in the Department, and by the enthusiasm of the graduate and undergraduate majors. And I’m very pleased that the Scandinavian Studies Retreat is about to have its 35th anniversary. I fervently hope that Scandinavian Studies has a bright future at the Midwestern colleges that participate in the Retreat, and especially at the University of Wisconsin.
Electronic Media in the Classroom—Our Lecturers Lead the Way

Multimedia technology has been the new frontier in education since the beginning of the computer age. This has perhaps been truer for those working in the hard sciences and mathematics than it has been for those in the humanities, but today it is hard to find any discipline that is not dependent upon electronic media in one way or another. The Scandinavian Studies department here in Madison has been experimenting with electronic media in the classroom for quite some time, so we wanted to talk to our academic staff members to see how they are integrating these learning tools into their classrooms.

Peggy Hager, Lecturer in Norwegian language, uses electronic media in her classroom in a variety of ways:

I began to use wireless in the classroom about 5 years ago when finding a connection was cumbersome and unreliable. Now, improvements in technology and in our building allow me to have instant wireless access every day. Wireless allows me to bring authentic, current and interesting materials into my classroom smoothly and reliably. Hosting different types of media on a course webpage (songs, grammar exercises, power point, sound clips, VODcasts), allows us to readily access this information in the classroom or from home. Some specific examples of what I can bring into the classrooms are: current print news, weather, TV and radio. We have done on-line grocery shopping, used on-line dictionaries, viewed YouTube clips, video clips and sound clips. I can post student essays or other work. The audio material of our 1st year Norwegian text is all accessed on-line.

More recently I have been experimenting with electronic media to be accessed and used primarily outside the classroom. In both Beginning and Intermediate Norwegian I have used voice email software called Wimba (a licensed program purchased by UW’s Language Institute and Learning Support Services) to give students feedback on pronunciation and oral fluency and provide additional listening comprehension. In Intermediate Norwegian I introduced VODcasts into their homework. (See my website for more information about this project: http://web.mac.com/pehager/iWeb/Peggy/About%20Me.html) In addition, I have experimented with WIKIS for journaling. Student feedback has been very positive.

Lecturer in Swedish language as well as Scandinavian literature and mythology, Scott Mellor, has also used electronic media to keep his classes current.

In my smaller classes I use media to give the students access to things Swedish in real time. The students this year have been very excited by the soap opera Andra Avenyn, which we are able to watch streamed on-line. This soap opera gives the students access to relevant, up-to-date cultural issues and is an excellent point of departure for conversation about Sweden, as well as having given the students a good grasp of real, albeit sometimes colorful, Swedish vocabulary.

In a course like The Tales of Hans Christian Andersen, I podcast the lessons in order to reach a large audience often not physically present in Madison. The students download the lessons and watch them from wherever they happen to be. The critical thinking component of the course is in the on-line discussion boards and essay exams.

The real danger with electronic media is knowing when the technology is enhancing learning and when it is only a gadget. In Masterpieces of Scandinavian Studies: 1800-1890, I have brought in music and art in order to illustrate the concepts from these earlier eras. I learned, however, that overdoing the amount of text in a PowerPoint lecture was not useful. The students scrambled to read and write what was on the slide and were no longer listening to the lecture. Brief words for the concepts were fine, longer quotes work less well.

In the future, the trick will be for the instructor to constantly ask whether the media is enhancing the learning experience; and as long the answer is yes, it will be a good thing.

Nete Schmidt, Lecturer in Danish language and Scandinavian literature, has recently published a book, Beginner’s Danish, which is intended for classroom and independent language learning. Nete’s book is accompanied by two CDs, which follow the lessons and assist in pronunciation. Here, Nete discusses her continued use of electronic media in her classes and her work.

I began including technology in 1999 after having taught Danish for little over a year. The first step was on-line tasks, such as quizzes, puzzles, cross-words, and picture descriptions, and I have kept expanding the menu of various tasks. Following that I created a link with a Danish junior college, where the students once a week chatted with Danes in real-time. All students were assigned a “partner”, and we did this for a year. It was a wonderful experience,

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Interview with Emeritus Professor and Dean Howard Martin

Dr. Howard Martin retired from the department last year after being a member of our Executive Committee since 1986. Born in Doncaster in the United Kingdom, Dr. Martin holds a BA in German and Modern History from the University of Durham in the UK, and a MA and PhD in Germanic Languages and Literatures from the University of Wisconsin. Dr. Martin’s dissertation was entitled “The Legend of Pontius Pilot: An Edition of Two Manuscripts” and was an analysis of both an Icelandic and a Middle-Low German manuscript. Dr. Martin taught Old Norse on occasion for the department and was happy to lecture in our Scandinavian Life and Civilization course on a regular basis. On his retirement, Dr. Martin held the position of UW-Madison Vice Provost and Dean of the Division of Continuing Studies, having received an award in 1986 for outstanding leadership in faculty governance from the UW Extension and having been a Fellow of the Continuing Education Associations of the US, Canada, and Mexico.

Tanya Thresher caught up with him after he returned from a two-month visit to England.

What is your fondest memory of your time in the department?

On the lighter side I well remember the so-called “martini-tours” that I arranged in the mid-seventies and undertook with Dick, Harald, Niels and occasionally Faith, Kim, and others. These tours went on for almost a decade and we would drive around the State and lecture on various Scandinavian topics, stopping off for martinis on the way home. The lectures were often so popular that we had to close the doors to people. This was a wonderful experience that reflected the collegiality and the teamwork that exists in the department.

More recently I was very proud to help Niels and the rest of the faculty get Folklore more established in the department and in welcoming Jim Leary as a faculty member.

What role do you think that the Department of Scandinavian Studies plays in academia and in Wisconsin?

We have the leading Scandinavian Studies program in North America, never mind the oldest. We have always prided ourselves on the strong ties we hold with the Scandinavian communities in Wisconsin, in particular with the Norwegian-Americans. I am happy that we continue to have a strong commitment to working with these groups.

What are your future plans?

I hope to work more on my land here in Wisconsin and spend more time at my home in Tickhill, a village in South Yorkshire, England. It’s nice to have some time to relax and spend with my family and see friends in the many places I have visited as well as travel to places on my dream list.

Photo: Dr. Howard Martin

Electronic Media continued

(Continued from page 3)

but unfortunately proved very time-consuming and too dependent on long-distance cooperation with professors in Denmark. Next step was working with virtual media such as clips from movies and music videos. The students write subtitles and analyze the plot, characters, and language. Then came podcasting based on interviews conducted among a variety of Danes of different age groups, and geographical locations. The podcasts are uploaded and accessible on my webpage, along with questions.

Technology helps me create the virtual, authentic classroom, which generates and stimulates an interest in the language as a living, culture-bearing entity. It also provides variation in the daily lessons. I continually want to include new media for the benefit of my students. I strongly believe in using technology as a supplement to the classroom instruction.

In October 2007, my book Beginner’s Danish was published by Hippocrene Books, New York. It is, naturally, based on my many years of Danish instruction at UW. It includes 2 audio CD’s and is meant both for self-instruction and for classroom use. It tells the story of an American exchange student living in Århus for a year. I included basic grammar – in English – and lots of cultural background and information. So far, my students like the book.

To learn more about Nete’s work at the University of Wisconsin and to access some of her technology-based activities (which are accessible to everyone), please visit her website at: www.scandinavian.wisc.edu/schmidt/danish.
Students’ Experiences Abroad

The department and the university in general offers many opportunities for study abroad. Here are some of the various experiences of our current students that reflect the range and importance of studying in a Nordic country.

Carrie Roy, Reykjavik, Iceland, Fall 07 - Spring 08:
Since arriving in Iceland in late August, my experience with the MA program in Medieval Icelandic Studies has been very positive and my experience with Icelandic weather has been rather negative. Perhaps this "worst winter in decades" for Reykjavik has not compared with the 100+ inches in Madison, but I have experienced more 40+ mph sideways freezing rain than I ever care to recall. However, the hot pots and lap swimming have been invaluable in helping me stay motivated through the dark winter. In my courses ranging from archaeology to hagiography, paleography, Old Norse, and Nordic religion, I have enjoyed an opportunity to research the relationship between certain cultural beliefs and material culture in the Viking and early medieval period. I am also planning visits to museum collections in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark this summer to conduct research for my dissertation on a Viking period art motif and I am looking forward to presenting my current research at several conferences in the upcoming year.

Photo: Statue of The Oyster Catcher, The Faroese National Bird, Tórshavn

Charles Webster, Tórshavn, Faroe Islands, Summer 07:
This past summer, I had the amazing opportunity to attend the Faroese Summer Institute at the University of the Faroe Islands (Fróðskaparsetur Føroya) in Tórshavn. This three-week program consisted of Faroese language instruction, field trips throughout the islands, and cultural activities designed to expand our knowledge of this small island nation. My journey began as I flew from Copenhagen to the airport at Vágar. As we started our descent, I caught sight of green, rocky cliffs, jutting out from the ocean into the grey mist. I traveled to Tórshavn to observe the festivities for Ólavsøka, the Faroese national holiday. The capital was swarming with people dressed in traditional costume. After a parade, a choir sang folksongs and hymns in front of the Tinghúsið, where parliament would soon convene. Morning language classes at the university allowed me to explore basic Faroese language and linguistics, while afternoon lectures exposed me to diverse topics, such as Faroese literature, geology, fishing and international relations, and music. Field trips included a boat tour of the bird cliffs near Vestmanna, a visit to a fisherman’s festival in Klaksvík, and a hike to the church ruins at Kirkjuber. I also had the opportunity to sing medieval ballads while dancing the Faroese chain dance. As I left on a ferry bound for Bergen, I witnessed a pod of pilot whales being driven to the shore, according to the Faroese tradition. My entire experience in the islands was enlightening and enriching, and my encounter with this unique Scandinavian culture is one I will remember for years to come.

Griffin Jones, Bø and Oslo, Norway, Fall 07 - Spring 08:
Over the past 3 years I have taken advantage of two great study abroad programs in Norway. I have recommended Norway to every student that has asked me about my experiences due to the overwhelming satisfaction that I have gotten out of my time abroad. The UW offers a great program in Bø Norway, which is a small college town that offers classes that focus on culture. It was an incredible experience that gave me a broader knowledge of Norway and what makes Norway unique. I also have attended BI - Norwegian School of Business Management in Oslo. This business school is very international and provides students with opportunities to learn about fellow students from many different nations around the world. I have made friends from every continent on earth and learned a lot about my place in the world. The international offices and student groups at both universities sponsor great trips, both cultural learning experiences and wonderful social activities. The structure of the Norwegian education system allows for independent learning as well as structured in-class lectures. This informal structure also allows students the flexibility to explore Norway and the rest of Europe as well. Both of these programs have given me a diverse view on what life is like in Norway.

Annie Ingebritson, Oslo, Summer 07:
While I was in Oslo, I had the pleasure of taking Professor Sheffield’s course on Scandinavian design and architecture. I came to realize that art is everywhere in Oslo. Funkis or Functionalism overtook the 20th Century as the predominant design movement. Its effects can be seen in modern buildings, kitchen design and even on the subway trains. Other noteworthy art forms can be found at Vigeland’s Sculptor Garden and the National Art Museum.

Photo: Arne Korsmo’s Villa Stenersen 1937-39

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Andrea Larson, Oslo, Norway, Fall 06 – Spring 07:

With the help of a scholarship from the Sons of Norway-Madison, I was able to embark on what was to be one of the greatest life experiences I have had the chance to enjoy in my short 21 years. I went with a program called the Higher Education Consortium for Urban Affairs (HECUA) on their Scandinavian Urban Studies Term (SUST). The program examined Norway's unique political system in a time of intense globalization and immigration. This was accomplished, however, in a non-traditional classroom; the city of Oslo. Our classes took place in the city and we met with various experts in the fields which we were learning about such as immigrant groups, community activists and several trips to parliament to meet with politicians. Additionally, I was placed at a small elementary school once a week to complete a volunteer internship. Not only did my Norwegian improve greatly by having to help teach eight-year-olds in Norwegian, but I was able to better understand the challenges facing educators in Norway in regards to the high proportion of immigrant students. This was incredibly challenging as it opened my eyes to a Norway that I did not know existed, a Norway which is not entirely perfect but which does what it can to meet daily changes in its society. Beyond being a completely eye opening experience for me that encouraged me to think critically in my education and life, this experience also gave me an advantage as I prepared to move on from college and into the real world. The job interview process was intense, but I found that almost every employer that I interviewed with was most interested in my study abroad experience, and I believe that it played a significant role in attaining a job. I will be graduating in May, working as a business analyst for Target, but my experience in Norway will stay with me forever and will continue to help me be a better student, employee and person.

William Banks, Aarhus, Denmark, Spring 08:

I am residing in Aarhus, Denmark, where I am a guest researcher at the university, continuing work on my PhD dissertation concerning utopianism in Danish literature and in the foundation of the welfare state. I attended the Nordic Translation Conference in London in early March, and in August will make my Euro-debut at the IASS annual meeting in Gdansk, Poland. In addition to enjoying the initial tantalizing hints of his first "jysk foraar," I am closely watching the machinations of Herr Bernanke and his colleagues at the US Federal Reserve, who seem particularly committed to annihilating the finances of every American studying abroad.

John Eason, Stockholm, Sweden, Fall 07 – Spring 08:

Though I have spent much of my time in Stockholm researching in various archives and writing on my laptop at "Hurtigs Konditori," some of the most invigorating experiences I have had involve those friends I have made through the so-called "schlagerworld." Though schlager music and schlagerfestivals are certainly things you can enjoy on your own, they are without a doubt even more fun when enjoyed in the company of others. New friends Kalle Westerling (author of A for Dark, a book about Sweden's most famous drag duo and Peter Tai Christensen author of Schlagerb"og (Schlager Queen) have given me much insight into this prominent aspect of gay Swedish culture. I recall two recent schlager moments with friends that have given me a glimpse into what has arguably become the single most important phenomenon in all of gay Swedish culture. The first was a schlagerfest Peter threw at his apartment together with his boyfriend and a few close friends. It was the night of the second semi-final, and everyone was geared up and ready for an enjoyable time in front of the television. I imagine what we did was not unlike what thousands if not millions of others were doing in Sweden that very evening. While sipping wine and munching on snacks we watched the performances, critiqued the songs, made fun of the outrageous outfits and cheered on our favorite artists all of which were vying for a coveted spot in the final. After the last song had been sung and the last vote had been cast Peter popped his schlager CD into the Playstation and we sang Karaoke style in pairs into the wee hours. Though perhaps nothing special to Peter for me it was a chance to partake in what has become an huge part of gay culture in Sweden. Attending Melodifestivalfinalen a few weeks later with my friend Erik was also a highlight. The atmosphere at Globen was electric and infectious, and we were both captivated by the enthusiasm and frenetic energy of the crowd. The artists' performances were mesmerizing, and the voting at the end was equally entertaining at times. Erik who had never taken any more than a passing interest in schlager was amazed to find out that people had come from all over the world to attend the Swedish preheats to the Eurovision Song Contest. Reflecting on both these experiences momentarily, while they may initially seem to have little in common, I have decided that whether you are sharing in the experience...
Swedish Author Khemiri visits Department:

In October, our department was excited to play host to the Swedish author Jonas Hassen Khemiri. Khemiri’s first novel, Ett öga rött (An Eye Red) came out in 2003, and Montecore: En unik tiger (Montecore: A Unique Tiger) followed in 2006. Both novels explore the intersections of language, culture, power, and identity and are notable for their creative use of Swedish. During his stay in Madison, Khemiri spoke in visiting professor Ingeborg Kongslien’s multicultural literature class and addressed the Bradley Learning Community as well as the International Learning Community and Norden, the Scandinavian language housing. Students of Swedish had an opportunity to speak with Khemiri at a lecture given in Swedish. He also gave a public lecture entitled “Red-Eyed Swedish Tigers.” Khemiri discussed his experiences growing up in a multicultural, multilingual family in Sweden—his mother is Swedish; his father Tunisian—and how those experiences influence his writing today. He described the surprising reactions he received to Ett öga rött, in which the fifteen-year-old narrator claims an identity as a foreigner by writing in an approximation of an immigrant dialect—despite speaking perfect Swedish. Khemiri’s visit provided a welcome opportunity for us to reflect on the ways in which some of our common interests—literature, language, storytelling—come together.

Students Abroad continued:

(Continued from page 6) with eleven-thousand or with a half dozen new friends, schlager and schlagerfestivals have a unifying effect the causes of which I have only just begun to understand.

Kjerstin Moody, Helsinki, Finland, Fall and Winter 07; Uppsala, Sweden, Spring 08: Happy spring, all! It’s been a productive research year so far. My fall and winter at Helsinki University helped me bring a clearer focus to the subject, structure, and theoretical framework of my dissertation. I also benefited from the chance to attend seminars and workshops where Finnish doctoral students presented sections of their dissertation work; these fora proved rich not only by giving me the chance to become better aware of the current research being done and scholarship being produced about literature and culture in Finland, but also encouraged me to reflect on my own material and methods. I’ve been at Uppsala University since the beginning of March and found the academic life here, as in Helsinki, engaged and engaging. One highlight of the spring was attending the Nordic Translation Conference held at University College London in early March. At the beginning of June I’ll present a paper at the “Nature and Culture - Addressing the Boundary” Summer School in Cultural Studies to be held at the University of Jyväskylä in early June. Soon thereafter I plan to head back to Madison, and I look forward to catching up with folks back home and continuing my writing over the summer.

Photo: Snow Theater and Bar, Siida Museum, Anár, Finland

Tim Frandy, Oulu, Finland, Spring 07:
Located deep in the great forests of northern Finland, approximately 200 miles north of the Arctic Circle, the small village of Anár (or Inari, in Finnish) remains among the most important places is Sápmi. The town has approximately a thousand inhabitants, a gas station, two hotels, a small grocery store, the Siida museum of Sámi culture, and an outstanding shop that sells Sámi language books and duoddji, or traditional Sámi handicraft. Though many in town speak Finnish and North Sámi, the community is known for its speakers of Inari Sámi, a relatively stable language spoken by only 250 people in the world. Anár is

Norden House 2008-2009:

What is Norden House?

Norden House is a part of the International Learning Community, located in Adams Hall, along Lake Mendota. It is a place where undergraduate residents can improve their skills in speaking and reading Nordic languages, interact with other students interested in Scandinavian Studies, partake in Nordic-oriented programming every week.

For more information please visit the following URL:
http://www.housing.wisc.edu/ilc/languageprograms.html
Click on “Continuing Students” or “Returning Residents.”

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Some Alumni News

Here are updates on the activities of some of our alumni. If you are an alumnus and have any information you would like to share with the department, we’d love to hear from you.

Emily Borzcik BA (07)
Since graduating in May, I have put my degrees to good use by continuing to work as an LTE in both positions I held as a student (in the International Admissions Office and at the School of Human Ecology). Though I work full-time, I like to look at this year as a little bit of “time off” before embarking on a new adventure. It’s been relaxing, but I am very ready to begin a new chapter, which I will do in May when I start a 27-month-long stint in Armenia with the Peace Corps. I will be working in the Community Health Education field, probably placed in a secondary school or a clinic. If only my Danish language skills could be more useful in that part of the world! Additionally, I still try to keep up with the Danish and all things Scandinavian…this includes regular practices with my Scandinavian folk band, Gigungagap (the rest of the band consists solely of fellow Scandinavian Studies Becky Olson). Anyone out there who would like to be kept informed of the goings-on in Armenia should feel free to contact me; I certainly don’t discriminate in my correspondence and will be happy to take all the emails I can get!

Anna Koob BA (07)
After graduation, I stayed in Madison until the end of September and then went to England for 3 months. I have family who lives in Cambridge and so I stayed with my grandfather while I was there and found a job at a tea room to keep myself occupied. It was interesting to be an American working in such a quintessentially British setting and I really enjoyed being surrounded by so many scones and tea cakes. Unfortunately I didn’t make it over to Scandinavia but I did manage to do some traveling around England and I took a trip to Southern Spain which I found to be especially beautiful.

Now I am back in the United States - Chicago, specifically. I’m looking for a “real job” in the nonprofit sector so that is taking up much of my time. Interestingly, I recently discovered that I live directly across the street from ‘Minnekirken’ which is the last remaining Norwegian language church in Chicago. I’m not really at my most motivated on Sunday mornings, but I really do intend to go to one of their Norwegian services eventually.

Kirk Samson BA (92)
I graduated from the Scandinavian Studies Department in 1992, and then came back to the UW for law school after my MA from Minnesota. I was very blessed to find such an interesting and friendly section for my undergraduate years and mentors—such as Niels Ingwersen, Dick Ringler and of course Judy—that were not only inspirational, but helped take care of their students’ careers. In the years since my education, I’ve lived mostly overseas; working as a JAG for the Air Force, and then as a diplomat with the US State Department, serving in Prague and now in Oslo (where I’m working with, among others, Harald Naess’ son Petter). Throughout Europe, I’ve bumped into people associated with the UW Scandinavian Studies program and it’s a pleasure to see that it still has an excellent reputation for scholarship as well as a great sense of community. Madison is always home for me and I look forward to seeing folks in the section while my family and I are back this summer before our next assignment in Tunisia.

Kirsten Srinivasan (03)
(formerly Kirsten Jensen before marriage) graduated in 2003 with a Journalism degree. She regrets not completing a second major in Scandinavian Studies, especially since Danish has come in handy while recording her grandfather’s World War II and other memories on tape. Since graduating, she has worked at a series of newspapers and trade magazines. Currently, she is the Illinois staff writer for The Times of Northwest Indiana and lives in Chicago.

Andrew Stevens BS (04)
After I graduated BS EE/Scandinavian Studies from UW-Madison in May 2004, I had a summer internship (via IAESTE) in Finland. I was at Stanford September 2004 - December 2005 getting a Masters in Electrical Engineering. I started an Entrepreneurial Fellowship at NTNU Technology Transfer AS in January 2006, and co-founded the first Tech Transfer spinout from NTNU later that year. I moved to San Francisco in March 2007 where I write patents for startup companies and evaluate early stage technology investment opportunities for a boutique intellectual property and private equity firm. In San Francisco, I attend Young Scandinavians Club (ysc.org) events every few months, and I go to a Scandinavian event in Berkeley about once a year. I always speak with the Norwegian tourists I meet around San Francisco.

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Barbara Morgridge—The Woman behind the Fellowship

The Morgridge Family name is well-known at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The Department of Scandinavian Studies is fortunate to have a fellowship entitled The Barbara Morgridge Distinguished Graduate Student Fellowship, and this year I was a recipient of this award. In my curiosity, I found out that John and Tashia Morgridge had generously donated the money to the department in the name of John’s sister, Barbara. For those who don’t know, John Morgridge, himself an alumnus of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is former CEO and President of Cisco Systems, Inc. and now Chairman Emeritus.

I still wished to know who Barbara Morgridge was. Last semester, I first learned about Dr. Morgridge from a visiting professor, Ingeborg Kongslien, from the University of Oslo. Through Professor Kongslien’s story of Dr. Morgridge and an interview I conducted with Dr. Morgridge, I learned the following. I hope you enjoy it and are as inspired as I am by this woman, who has made learning a life-long goal. - Todd Michelson-Ambelang

Barbara Morgridge went to the University of Wisconsin-Madison and received a Bachelor’s Degree in Psychology, but her interest in Scandinavian Studies did not begin here. In fact, she wanted to pursue a career in psychology, so she went to the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign to study for a Masters in Clinical Psychology and it was there that her adventure began. While in Illinois, she worked as a volunteer for the American Friends Service Committee, a branch of the Quakers. She became involved and helped with a project there for African Americans who were moving north in search of work after World War II.

One of the group leaders asked her if she was interested in going abroad, to which she said yes. She was one of about 60 students selected from around the country to partake in this project. Her aunt providentially paid for her ticket, and she was sent to Norway. She stated that she would have preferred to go to France, because she had actually done undergraduate work in French, but nobody had asked her. Nevertheless, it was decided that because of her psychology background, she should go to a place called Bakkebø, a converted German convalescence facility during the war, which is close to Egersund in the southwestern part of Norway.

There were four people there from various schools in the US and they stayed six weeks doing work in the buildings and in the fields. After the program ended, she traveled around Norway, and decided to stay on for a year. She returned to the US and after a year back she went again to Norway and this time she worked in Oslo as a substitute sekretær II, translating for Kontoret for mellomfamilig økonomiskamarbeid for two years.

After this, she decided to pursue a degree at the University of Washington. She had learned of this program from a friend of hers from Bakkebø, whose brother was a teaching assistant in the Scandinavian Studies Department there. He suggested that she apply for a TAship, and in 1955, she started as a TA working on a Masters degree in Scandinavian Languages and Literature. She was unable to go on for a PhD, as the department did not offer a PhD until later, but she was able to continue her studies through the Comparative Literatures Program, with a minor in Norwegian.

After graduation, she got a job teaching at the community college in Everett, Washington. To begin with she taught Scandinavian literature and beginning Norwegian courses along with some English literature courses. At some point in the 70’s she was unable to continue teaching Norwegian language courses. She became involved in starting an international studies program, which was geared toward Japanese and International Studies at a satellite campus. As it turned out, she went farther and farther away from the topics she had originally planned to teach.

In around 2000, Dr. Morgridge was in France, and on her way home, she stopped in Norway to visit some of her “accumulated family” from when she had lived in Norway. She picked up by chance, a Norwegian murder mystery and decided that she would like to translate it into English to see how (Continued on page 10)
Regional Meeting of Danish Teachers in Madison, October 18-21, 2007

This year’s Regional Meeting for the Instructors of Danish in North America was hosted by the Danish contingent of the Scandinavian Department at UW Madison, and it was a both cozy and rewarding mini-conference. The theme for the meeting was: “The Arctic Areas and Ethnicity.”

The participants all met on Thursday evening for a dinner followed by a performance by the Danish singer-actress Christina Dahl titled “Two people who love each other”. Friday was dedicated to papers given by the Danish professors, and they covered a variety of interesting topics from movies, poetry, and science fiction to internet based teaching. Friday evening, the keynote Speaker, Professor Søren Thuesen from the University of Copenhagen, talked about “Kalaallit Nunaat - Greenland: A Nation in the Making. Decolonization and Nation-building in Denmark's former colony,” followed by a reception at MMoCA.

On Saturday, the conference was open to the public with the following speakers:


Saturday evening, the participants and invited local Danes enjoyed a dinner at the Madison Club, and the program ended with a visit to Taliesin on Sunday.

The program can be seen here: http://scandinavian.wisc.edu/schmidt/danish/danishclasses.htm

Barbara Morgridge Article continued

(Continued from page 7)

well she could remember her Norwegian. When she got back to Washington, by pure serendipity, she was invited to go on a cruise on Lake Washington with a group of Swedes. Here, she came into contact with members of the Scandinavian Studies Department at the University of Washington.

She had decided at this point that she wanted to update her language skills, so she, with the help of the department, became a student in the University of Oslo’s program for foreign teachers of Norwegian in their own country, and it was through Professor Ingeborg Kongslien that this all transpired. She was not of traditional age, but decided to live in the dorms and in her early 70’s shared an apartment-style dorm with students in their 20’s. She states that she enjoyed her experience in and out of the classroom.

After this experience, she became increasingly interested in the value of American students having experiences living in Scandinavia, so she has supported an exchange fund for them to travel there; she is also establishing a chair in Norwegian Studies, in the name of her major professor at the University of Washington.

Students Abroad continued

(Continued from page 9)

Regional Meeting Participants: Nete, Michael, Henrik, Claus, Karen, Marina, Frej, Karin, Carsten, Søren, Jan and Tove.
The Department of Scandinavian Studies takes pride in its students’ achievements and would like to highlight and congratulate the following individuals on their achievements by winning awards in pursuit of academic excellence and in advancing to the next level of their academic pursuits.

Congratulations students!

Recent Graduates

Undergraduate Majors
Spring 2008:
Marcia Blackman
Jennifer Cornick
Stephanie Cox
Philip Creswell
Annie Ingebritson
Andrea Larson
Rose Maier
Rebecca Olson
Lindsey Walker

Fall 2007:
Timothy Erlandson
Niels Espe
Christopher Mehls

Spring 2007:
Jeffrey Doerfer

Masters Degree
Spring 2008:
Anna Rue
Charles Webster

The department also wishes to congratulate Jenn Jenkins, Scandinavian Studies MA, 2001 on her tenure track position at Pacific Lutheran University in Washington State.

A alumni News continued
(Continued from page 8)

Katarina Tucker MA (03) PhD (06)
After defending my dissertation, I moved to The Netherlands with my Dutch husband where I have been teaching part-time and working on various translation projects. I teach at a Dutch high school which offers a bilingual education program in Dutch and English.
My translation projects during the past year include a Swedish-English phrase book and a book about the Swedish artist and painter Marie Falksten.

Ingrid Urberg MA (87) PhD (96)
I am currently working on an oral history project—The Norwegian Immigrant Experience in Alberta—which involves recording the stories of first-generation Norwegian immigrants to Alberta. I have been teaching Scandinavian Studies—Scandinavian literature, culture and Norwegian language—on the Augustana Campus, University of Alberta since 1994. Augustana has about 1000 students, and it is an undergraduate liberal arts and sciences campus. Since I am the only person in my discipline at Augustana, I teach a broad range of courses, and I enjoy this diversity. The latest course I have helped develop is an interdisciplinary course called “Explorations of the Canadian North.” I co-teach this course with Morten Asfeldt, a colleague in Outdoor Education, and it involves a two-week homestead stay and dog sledding trip in the wilderness in the Northwest Territories in February. The study of northern personal narratives is a key component of the course, and I facilitate that part of the course. I also lead a variety of seminars ranging from local history to a module on wolves in which we discuss Scandinavian and Canadian wildlife policies, the representation of wolves in literature (fiction and the oral tradition), and public attitudes towards wolves in Canada and Scandinavia. Last August I gave a presentation on this course with two Augustana colleagues at a friluftsliv Outdoor Education conference in the Gisna Valley in Oppdal, Norway.

I am working also with personal narratives from the Arctic region, focusing on narratives by women who have lived for extended periods on Svalbard. I have spent considerable time in Tromso in conjunction with this project, and I have made a trip to Svalbard as well. The fall 2007 issue of NORDLIT contains an article I have written on the Svalbard narratives called “Svalbard’s Daughters”: Personal Accounts by Svalbard’s Female Pioneers.” I have been on sabbatical during this academic year (2007-2008), and this has allowed me the opportunity to get several projects into publishable form. In 2006 I received the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit for the work I have done in promoting Scandinavian Studies in Canada.
Departmental Happenings

- Dan Karvonen, University of Minnesota, September 14, 2007: “The Prosodic Structure of Pseudo-compounds in Finnish.”
- Erkki Määttänen and musician Jukka Karjalainen and his trio, September 26, 2007: Finnish American Folk Culture: Three Films and a Performance.
- Swedish author Jonas Hassen Khemiri, October 10, 2007: “Red-eyed Swedish Tigers” Public lecture at Virginia Harrison Parlor in Lathrop Hall/ 7 PM
- Professor Susan Brantly “Karen Blixen and Hybridity”;
- Professor Kirsten Wolf “Iceland”;
- Professor Niels Ingwersen “Danes in Wisconsin.”
- Professor Ingeborg Kongsløn, Visiting Scholar—University of Oslo, December 5, 2007: “New Voices in Nordic Literature: Contemporary Scandinavian Multicultural Narratives.”
- Professor Susan Brantly, March 4, 2008: “Engaging the Enlightenment: Tournier’s Friday, Delblanc’s Speranza, and Unsworth’s Sacred Hunger.”
- Professor Marianne Kalinke, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, April 10, 2008: “Cultural Transfer in the Norse World: The Case of Klari Saga”
- Professor Tanya Thresher, April 25, 2008: “Norway: Keeping Tradition in a Global World.”
- The Department’s fall picnic will be on 6 September at 4:00 p.m. in the Hoyt Park Shelter, Madison.
- Thomas DuBois will be teaching at the UW program in Florence in the fall of 2008. He will be on sabbatical in the spring of 2009.
- Keep an eye out on the Departmental calendar for the Swedish, Norwegian, Danish and Finnish Language Tables, starting up again in the fall of 2008.