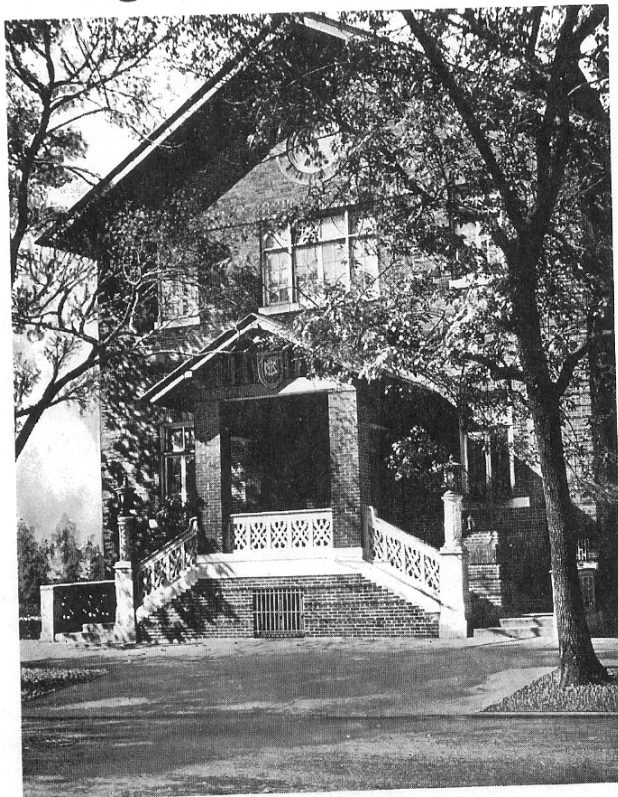


Chicago Norske Club



Chicago Norske Klub
2350 N. KEDZIE BOULEVARD

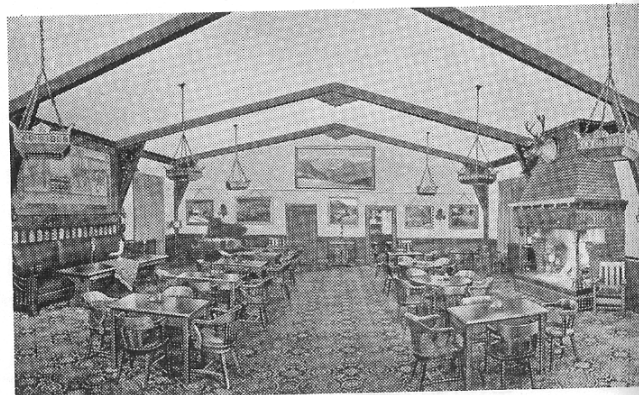
Chicago Norske Klub had its beginning with "Den Skandinaviske Kvartett Klub" founded in 1890. The name was changed to "Den Norske Kvartett Klub" in 1897. Emil Bjørn, an artist and a musician, served as the instructor and leader of the chorus for a great many years. Later Alfred Paulsen, a musician and composer, was engaged as their instructor. He composed the melody of "Naar fjordene blaaner", which is beloved here as well as in the Scandinavian countries.

In 1905, a social club called, "Den Norske Klub", was founded. By 1911 the membership in both clubs had dwindled and the two clubs decided to merge in 1911, and thus "Chicago Norske Klub" came into being. The new club was to retain the history and traditions of both clubs and the age of the older (1890). Suitable quarters were found at the north west corner of Milwaukee Avenue and Kedzie Blvd., where a second story was added to a house owned by a Norwegian. By 1916 the members found that their own clubhouse was needed. A building committee was appointed with Birger Osland as chairman. A lot on Kedzie Blvd., close to Fullerton Avenue was

purchased, and since the club was fortunate in having fine architects, builders and artists as members, they all contributed to make their new clubhouse a "thing of beauty." Giaver and Dinkelberg made the plans, Chr. V. Bagge designed the fireplace, Emil Bjørn the lighting fixtures. The Club emblem was by Einar Kling, and Bagge and Bjørn deserve credit for the impressive decorative scheme. It was officially opened on July 4, 1917. The Dramatic Society was founded in 1919 and its history of plays is impressive. Mr. and Mrs. Koht were in charge and gave the Norwegian Colony many wonderful theater evenings. The Club Orchestra also helped and their Tivoli evenings were popular. In 1920 a tradition of annual art exhibits started, which gave the artists of the colony an opportunity to exhibit and sell their work. The exhibits were judged by a jury of well known American artists. Later there were "one-man shows" of Karl Ouren's and Ben Blessum's paintings. The club also has a fine collection of paintings in all their rooms. The famous "peisestuen" has a high seat with a decoration above it by Emil Bjørn, in Norse tapestry style, depicting the discovery of North America. There are also decorations on the third floor by Ben Blessum.

There have been many famous visitors to the club and the renowned "peisestue": Roald Amundsen, J. L. Mowinckel, Jane Addams, C. J. Hambro, Fritjov Nansen, Johan Bojer, O. E. Rolvaag, Herman Wildenvey, Tore Segelcke, Dr. Halfdan Koht, Sonja Henie, Bjørn Bjørnson, Kaia Eide Norena, David Knutsen, Betzy Kjelsberg, Johan Hambro, Erik Bye, and so many, many more. Queen Marie, Prince Nicolas and Princess Ileana of Rumania visited the Art Exhibit in 1926.

The Fourth of May, 1939 a soupé was given in Honour of Their Royal Highnesses Crown prince Olav and Crown princess Märtha. The club's 50th anniversary was held on





Chicago Norske Klub

THE HIGH SEAT ON FESTIVE OCCASIONS



Chicago Norske Klub

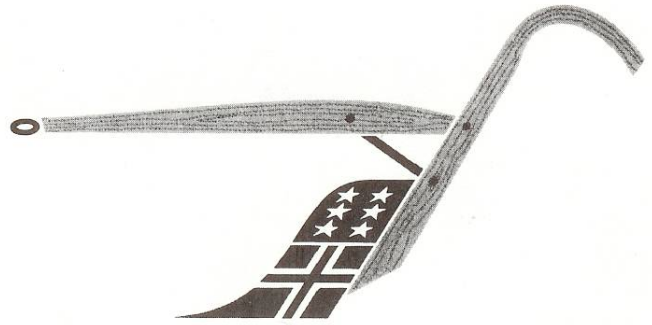
THE FIRE PLACE (PEISEN)

Chicago Norske Club

February 24, 1940 with John A. Hille as chairman and Alf Kolfiat as President.

The club continued its dinners and fine programs. During World War II it gave considerable help to Norway. It was one of the originators of the Society for Preservation of the Norwegian Culture, under the leadership of Ole Stangeland. It also held a cultural program for the benefit of this society.

Gradually the membership again dwindled and in 1971 the venerable building was sold to the Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson Lodge of the Sons of Norway. It is now called Norway Center and is still the meeting place for celebrations of Seventeenth of May and Leif Eriksen Programs as for receptions, weddings and other festive occasions. The colony is proud of the beautiful Norwegian club and happy to have a "living" clubhouse that can show the Norwegian heritage.



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