

The American-Scandinavian Foundation's Gala Dinner

Photos by: Bill Wang



In an evening celebrating the close bonds between the United States and Finland on the occasion of the 90th Anniversary of Finland's Independence, the American-Scandinavian Foundation (ASF) held its Annual Gala Dinner at the Pierre Hotel. The ASF warmly welcomed H.E. Tarja Halonen, President of Finland, as the special guest of honor. President Halonen was introduced by The Honorable Henry A. Kissinger.

The ASF was also pleased to welcome H.E. Jan Eliasson, Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for Darfur, who was presented with the ASF Award for Distinguished Public Service. This award recognizes individuals or organizations whose leadership in public or humanitarian service has significantly furthered the understanding between the United States and the Nordic countries.

Jan Egeland, Special Advisor to the UN Secretary-General for Conflict Resolution, also received the ASF Award for Distinguished Public Service.

Proceeds will enable the ASF to continue its mission of promoting international understanding through educational and cultural exchange between the U.S. and Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. For more information please visit: www.amscan.org

ASF President Edward P. Gallagher, Jan Egeland, H.E. Tarja Halonen, H.E. John Eliasson, Bard Bunaes, Chairman of the ASF Board of Trustees



H.E. Ambassador Osmo Lipponen, H.E. Kirsti Lintonen and H.E. Pekka Lintu



H.E. Jan Eliasson, H.E. Tarja Halonen and The Honorable Henry A. Kissinger



Bard E. Bunaes, Chairman of the ASF Board of Trustees, Edward P. Gallagher, ASF President, Hon. Robin Chandler Duke, Jan Egeland, H.E. Tarja Halonen, H.E. Jan Eliasson, Jane Erkko and Lena Kaplan

Gunnar Sonsteby Norway's Most Decorated Civilian Gets Statue in His Honor



The Norwegian Society's (Det Norske Selskab) Memorial-Party (Frigjoringsdagen, 2007 in Oslo. Inge Steensland (War Veteran), Ove Hoegh (Leif Hoegh's Stiftelse), Abel Abrahamsen (War Veteran) and Gunnar Sonesby (Freedom Fighter). Photo courtesy of Abel Abrahamsen

Gunnar Sonsteby - Norway's most decorated civilian and probably the one with the most aliases was in focus when a statue in his honor was unveiled in Oslo, on Solli Square by King Harald V.

"Actually I should have come here today on my bicycle, but unfortunately one of the tires was punctured," 89 year old Gunnar humored guests and spectators, during his short speech at the unveiling of Per Ung's characteristic statue of the Norwegian war hero. The statue pictures a young Gunnar, cloth cap on his head, one in his pocket and the other supporting his trusty diamond bicycle. Bicycles were the most practical form of transportation during the war times, the brave men could easily toss the bikes and run away from the Germans.

Sonsteby is the only Norwegian awarded the War Cross with Three Swords, the highest award given by Norway during the war. Sonsteby was also awarded a number of medals by other Allied nations. In 2001 he was also awarded the American-Scandinavian Foundation's prestigious culture award.

For more information about Gunnar Sonsteby please visit: www.no24.no