

**Tor Hegland**  
**Tree Dedication 1992**  
**By Alfred Thompson**

I have been asked to say a few words about my good friend Tor Hegland. He was born at Eydehaven and was the second oldest of four children. His father died when he was five years old. Tor graduated from school at Arendal. He helped on the farm with cattle and chores. He completed officers' candidate school in 1936 and served in the resistance during the war.



He married Magnhild Dokka on January 21, 1938. There was a snowstorm that day which made Magnhild 1½ hours late. They honeymooned at Tromøy Island, six miles out in the bay. They first arrived in America at Boston in 1949. At that time he worked for the Prudential Life Insurance Company, a position he held for 13 years.

I met him shortly after his arrival in Bismarck in November of 1966. He became president of Sverdrup Lodge in 1967, the year he joined the lodge. The first meetings during his presidency were at their home on West Avenue B. The meetings then moved to the World War Memorial Building, later dinner meetings began at the G. P Hotel, then to the Holiday Inn and then to the Municipal Country Club.

Tor became President of the Year in 1968 and he received an award from the Supreme Lodge for bringing Sverdrup to Lodge of the Year status. It was about that same time that he and Dr. Norval Brink began the annual lutefisk and lefse dinners. Within two years we had attendance at the dinners of almost 1500 persons, served over 400 pounds of lutefisk and 700 pounds of potatoes. Much of the rest of Tor's activities with Sverdrup are known to you.

Now for some personal reflections:

As I have already told you, Tor came from South Norway. My relatives on my father's side came from Mo I Rana, just south of the Arctic Circle. Thus I am a Nordlaenging. He was a Surlaenging. They have been known not to be always in agreement with one another, but not so with the two of us. We hit it off from the start.

We hunted deer together at the logging camp ranch near Amidon. This is Louise Kopseng's home. We hunted ducks at Rice Lake, and Tor turned out to be an expert wing shot. We hunted geese at Bottineau but got preempted by some Air Force personnel who knew nothing about hunting. It was then that I learned some Norse which I had never heard before.

We once had a visit from a singing and dancing group from Norway. We were scheduled to have as our host guest a couple from Rukan. They spoke no English and my Norwegian didn't suffice. That couple was traded to the Heglands and we got a young couple from a small town west of there, with whom we could converse. Tor never forgave me. His houseguests spent the whole evening disputing almost everything Tor said. Even saying President Roosevelt was a Republican. This Tor could not stand, so he went to bed and left his houseguest to himself.

We spent many Christmases together, along with our mutual good friends, the Beritans from Turkey. It was something to hear a Norwegian and a Turk engage in stories of youthful experiences, of bravado and intrigue, none of which could be authenticated by either of them. It all ended well with shouts of Skol and Karaffe.

In Conclusion:

I have never known a man more dedicated to Norwegian history and heritage than was Tor Hegland. He made this lodge what it is and we should be forever thankful to him and to Magnhild.

To have known him was both a pleasure and a reward. All our lives have been greatly enriched by having him among us.

It is entirely fitting and proper that we today leave a permanent reminder of Tor Hegland in this park. A tree which with nurture and care should be here for generations to come.

Magnhild Hegland on the  
Day of the Tree Dedication.

