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settled in the area during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Now, a new park along Astoria's riverfront, seven years in the making, will pay permanent tribute to those ancestors. On Friday morning, the Astoria Scandinavian Heritage Association will officially dedicate the Astoria Nordic Heritage Park with a ceremony.

Among the event's speakers will be Karl Marlantes, author of "Deep River," which chronicles immigrant life in the region during the early 20th century. The ceremony will also include the lur, an ancient horn, as well as dancers in authentic folk costumes.

"The park is really a neat thing that sprung from an idea that Carol Lyngstad had a few years ago," Sundstrom said of another association member. "She mentioned how great it would be to have some sort of monument to the Nordic community. (The association) and the community stepped up," Sundstrom said.

Much of the organizational and fundraising efforts for the park were led by Janet Bowler, Judi Lampi and Loran Mathews.

For Sundstrom, the festival is not only a local tradition but a family one. "I've been involved in the festival since I was a baby," Sundstrom said. "My Swedish father, Sven Sundstrom, who immigrated here in the 1950s, became a fixture at the festival." Though Sven Sundstrom won't be performing this year, his friend, Danish immigrant Jorgen Madsen, will still be greeting visitors with lively tunes.

Though Sundstrom's late mother was not of Scandinavian descent, she was fascinated with traditional costumes. "The first one she bought was Finnish, even though dad was a Swede," Sundstrom said. "He didn't care. 'We're all neighbors,' he said."

Countries, regions, and even individual villages each bring specific traditions and ceremonial folk wear. "Mom tried to find authentic costumes wherever she could. She couldn't stop. She just kept shopping," Sundstrom said. She promoted the wearing of costumes at the festival and helped organize the first Optog, or parade of costumes.

Sundstrom's mother proved to think ahead about acquiring the costumes. "They are hard to come by now and very expensive," Sundstrom said. Unique qualities of the costumes, details as simple as why one has an apron or doesn't, or color variations, speak to their region.

At the festival, children and teenagers don traditional folk wear to represent each Nordic country. A court with ambassadors visits civic groups and lodges throughout the year, promoting and enlightening others about the different cultures.



Lloyd Bowler

**ABOVE: The first night of lights at the Astoria Nordic Heritage Park. A dedication ceremony for the park will be held on Friday morning. RIGHT: Joan Paddock, a professor of music at Linfield University, will play the lur, a traditional instrument, at the festival.**

### Astoria Nordic Heritage Park dedication ceremony

Astoria Nordic Heritage Park, Marine Drive and 16th St., Astoria

10:30 a.m. on Friday

[www.astorianordicpark.org](http://www.astorianordicpark.org)

"I was Miss Sweden at the festival in 1986," Sundstrom said. "Now, all these years later, as our parents age, all of us involved in the festival as children are taking the reigns to assure that our special customs and heritage continues," Sundstrom said. In addition to an ongoing series of

live music and other entertainment at the fairgrounds, the festival will feature plenty of retail booths displaying handcrafted goods, imported items, and, yes, traditional Scandinavian foods.

"Oh, the food," Sundstrom said. "It's such an important part of the Midsummer celebration. You'll get to taste traditional dishes you can't find anywhere else, except in private homes," she added. The festival will play host to a set of breakfast and dinner events, with participants eager to share traditional foods like lefse, gjetøst, pyttipannu and rommegrot.

Sundstrom emphasizes that people of all cultures and backgrounds are welcome to volunteer and partake in the festival. "Just join us for the fun," she said.

