

Sons of Norway selling headquarters

New development on the site will include a new SON headquarters to open in 2020

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After 55 years at 1455 West Lake Street, Minneapolis, the Sons of Norway International headquarters building and its surrounding property have been sold to Ryan Companies and Weidner Apartment Homes. Considered to be a premier location in the Uptown neighborhood, the property has been home to Sons of Norway since 1962. The Sons of Norway plans to continue business operations on the current site when redevelopment is complete, including its financial services and international cultural associations and opportunities.

"After an extensive process to ensure the highest and best use of our primary asset, the clear choice was to sell the property that has served us so well," said Eivind J. Heiberg, CEO of Sons of Norway. "Considering the advantageous market conditions in the Uptown neighborhood and the challenges of an aging facility, it was time to make the most forward-thinking decision for the long-term health of our organization, employees, and the community, and to continue our presence in the vibrant Uptown neighborhood."

The property covers 2.17 acres, including the headquarters building, which comprises 60,000 square feet. Ryan Companies, along with Weidner Apartment Homes, plans to develop, design, and construct or re-construct the property. Ryan has been involved in many successful iconic property redesigns, such as the Midtown Global Exchange, Grain Belt Brewery, Foshay Tower, and many others.

According to Tony Barranco, Ryan's vice president of real estate development, "Working with Sons of Norway has been fascinating as we have grown to understand the organization not only as a business but as a cultural icon. As much as we'd like to



Photo courtesy of Sons of Norway
After 55 years, the Sons of Norway International headquarters building and its surrounding property in Minneapolis, Minn., have been sold to Ryan Companies and Weidner Apartment Homes.

save the headquarters building, it is old and riddled with hazardous materials. To put it back in functional form would be very difficult. Our current thinking is that it will have to be deconstructed. Furthermore, we must take into consideration that it is located in an urban fabric that has grown around it, and we want the next generation of Sons of Norway members to be as impactful and vibrant to the area as the last.

"However, there is a lot of groundwork to be done before final plans are released," Barranco continued. "We need to talk to commercial and residential neighbors and, of course, to the City of Minneapolis to discuss zoning requirements. But be assured that throughout the planning process a Norwegian theme will lead our design in honor of the impact Sons of Norway has made on Lake Street."

Although design ideas are merely pre-

liminary, Barranco envisions a mixed-use building, including commercial and residential space, assuming the zoning laws allow for it. He also sees Sons of Norway as the anchor, a long-term tenant on the first floor with a destination café or restaurant and plenty of green space. He feels it will offer Sons of Norway a very visible presence in Uptown, which recognizes its contribution to the area. The other parcels currently owned by Sons of Norway most likely will be residential, since the property is adjacent to apartment buildings and single-family homes.

"We found Ryan and Weidner to be excellent partners," said Heiberg. "They respect Sons of Norway's history and contributions in Uptown. With what they're looking to develop for us we feel this is an absolutely natural fit. We love the folks in Uptown and we're extremely pleased to stay here long term."

Within six to eight months, Sons of Nor-

way will move to a temporary home, which is yet to be determined. Along with it will move the Minneapolis Honorary Consulate General of Norway, which is currently housed at the Sons of Norway headquarters. Both Sons of Norway and Ryan Companies expect Sons of Norway to be back on Lake Street by early 2020, just in time to celebrate the organization's 125th anniversary.

Sons of Norway's mid-20th-century strategic planning included building its current headquarters. "We've had great renters and have financially benefited from them," said Heiberg. "However, with an aging building and our long-term tenant building its own facilities across the street, it was the perfect time to consider selling the headquarters and adjoining properties. The proceeds of the sale will be re-invested with the advice of our investment managers and approved by our international board of directors. The income will help ensure the well-being of both the business and fraternal sides of Sons of Norway."

Although the final purchase price will not be disclosed until closing when it becomes public record, Hennepin County assesses Sons of Norway's five parcels at \$7.5 million, with the Sons of Norway building accounting for \$3.6 million of that total. In most cases, county assessments are lower than actual selling or purchasing amounts.

Sons of Norway, founded in 1895, is a fraternal life insurance company devoted to supporting people through every stage of life, while providing opportunities for a vibrant social experience around Norwegian culture. Ryan Companies, founded in 1938, is a builder, developer, designer, and real estate manager based in Minneapolis. Weidner Apartment Homes, founded in 1977, acquires, builds, and manages apartment and townhouse communities and is based in Kirkland, Wash., with a regional office in Minnetonka, Minn.

< THIRST

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Harry soon realizes, however, that he has an obligation to society. When he picks up the bloody trail, he becomes even more motivated. He recognizes the guilty party as Valentin Gjertsen, the only criminal who has ever eluded him. He has been brooding about him for the past four years. If he wants to eliminate this major irritant in his life, he must not let him escape. He has to take him out of society once and for all.

This novel moves quickly with many sudden and surprising twists and turns, right up to the last page. As usual, Nesbø creates characters with depth. The reader is never quite sure who can be trusted inside police circles or among professional collaborators such as psychologists and physicians. Most readers will, at one time or another, put some of the characters in the wrong camp.

This novel is one of Nesbø's best. However, one complaint can be lodged. The final pages add too many new twists. The book could end earlier without the additional plot material. Did Nesbø want to add just a little more excitement for a possible screen play?

A movie based on the seventh Harry Hole book, *The Snowman*, will be released in the U.S. this October.

ScanFest brings new acts and old favorites to New Jersey

SPECIAL RELEASE
ScanFest

The largest Nordic festival on the East Coast, ScanFest returns for its 33rd year with six performance areas, dozens of food and craft vendors, and of course the field of Viking contest and combat.

Among other contests, including the eighth annual wife-carry, medieval and Viking combat reenactments, and an all-day demo of a Nordic encampment and ax-throwing demo by "SloshBucklers," the group Telge Glima from Sweden will recreate Norse contests of skill and strength. Their performances in 2013 and 2016 were a smash hit.

New acts in 2017 include the Oskar Stenmark Trio, which performs polskas, waltzes, and walking tunes mixed with contemporary sounds from New York; Eric Olsen's ReVision Accordion Quartet; the Scandinavian Women's Chorus of Rhode Island, a small, powerful group that wows audiences with raucous Swedish drinking songs and haunting Icelandic hymns; and Vidar Skrede and Randy Gosa from Milwaukee, who play fiddle, Hardanger, guitar, and bouzouki to

combine Norwegian folk music with the rhythm of Irish accompaniment.

Returning favorites include Jaerv Unique Quintet; RuthAnne Cunningham; Marcia Boyesen and Roger Latzgo; and many more.

In addition, a huge range of reenactors will demonstrate Norse wrestling, ax throwing, and Viking combat, and visitors can try their hands at many of these. Visitors are also encouraged to sign up for the wife-carrying contest—winners will receive her weight in beer!

ScanFest takes place on Sunday, Sept. 3, rain or shine. For more info, visit scanfest.org.

Photo courtesy of ScanFest
Reenactors demonstrate Telge Glima at ScanFest.

