

GALA INAUGURAL BALL



More than 1,000 guests attended the Inaugural Ball to celebrate the opening of Scandinavia House. (L-r): Their Majesties King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia of Sweden; Frederikke Borge; H.R.H. Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden; Victor Borge; H.R.H. Princess Benedikte of Denmark; H.R.H. Princess Märtha Louise of Norway; H.E. Kimmo Sasi of Finland and Mrs. Sasi; Dorit Moussaief and H.E. Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson, President of Iceland.

A highlight of the weeklong celebration to mark the dedication of Scandinavia House was the Inaugural Ball on Wednesday, October 18, 2000, at the New York Grand Hyatt Hotel. More than 1,000 guests attended the festive gala dinner-dance held in the presence of ASF Patrons and Patrons' Representatives, political and cultural leaders, representatives of Nordic and American corporations, and many others.

Trustee Harri Holkeri with Finnish soprano Karita Mattila, who performed at the Inaugural Ball



H.R.H. Princess Benedikte of Denmark; H.E. Kimmo Sasi, Minister of Foreign Trade of Finland; H. E. Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson, President of Iceland; H.R.H. Princess Märtha Louise of Norway; Their Majesties King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia of Sweden; and H.R.H. Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden were among the dignitaries attending the Inaugural Ball. Other notables included the late Danish-American entertainer Victor Borge, who was an Honorary Chair; H.E. Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the United Nations; and H.E. Harri Holkeri, an ASF Executive Trustee who was President of the United Nations General Assembly for the year 2000-2001.

The keynote address by President Grímsson was a



Trustee Hilppa A.K. Pirilä Roby and Joe L. Roby



Trustee Lena Biörck Kaplan and ASF Chairman Kristján T. Ragnarsson



Trustee Hon. Edward E. Elson and Susie Elson



Trustee and Past Chairman of the Board Albert R. Dowden and Carol Dowden



Trustee and Opening Events Committee Chair Linda Nordberg and Gerald Nordberg

high point of the evening. He called Scandinavia House “a splendid manifestation of Nordic cooperation, of our determination to present our cultural heritage to the American people, to show the variety of modern Scandinavia in the arts and sciences, in business and technologies, in food and exquisite design, in creativity and innovation.”



Schuyler Chapin, Commissioner of Cultural Affairs for New York City, was Master of Ceremonies, and there were special performances by Victor Borge and Finnish soprano Karita Mattila.

Inger G. and William B. Ginsberg were also Honorary Chairs for the event. The evening raised more than \$1 million for ASF's educational and cultural exchange programs.

H.E. Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson, President of Iceland, gave the keynote address at the Inaugural Ball.