



SONS OF NORWAY

Edvard Grieg Lodge 657 District 5

Cincinnati-Dayton, Ohio & Kentucky

- First Lodge in Ohio -

Sons, Daughters and Friends of Norway Newsletter

January 2017

From the Outgoing President



Esther Charlton & Susan Herman

As I turn over the gavel to Susan Herman, our new Lodge President, it is time to reflect. There are some people that deserve an extra, extra round of thanks:

Susie and Glenn Makaloff graciously host several of the lodge meetings each year.

Nelda Chandler has been like my right arm as we have taken care of the booth at the Viking Festival for many years, too often it has been raining and cold.

Larry Bannick comes and helps us set up the booth at the Viking Festival and we applaud him for kindness in helping.

Then there is Tim and Connie Holmen who come and help us at the Dayton International Festival each year.

Finding Mike and Kim Pillman's home for a lodge meeting at their house was kind of like Little Red Riding Hood going to grandma's in the woods. They live on a long wooded lane. Every time we thought we might have missed the house we saw

another sign that Mike had put along the road. Luckily he saved his signs for our second meeting at their house.

In my new Social Director position on the board, I will help plan the programs for the lodge meetings.

Last on my thank you list is my wonderful supportive spouse of 53 years.

Esther Charlton, Outgoing President

From the Incoming President

As we ring in 2017, let us look forward to a year full of fun and informative programs, foods that celebrate our Norwegian heritage, cultural events, Syttende Mai, spending time with friends, reaching out to new members, topped off by Julefest in December!

With the officer installation at our January 14 meeting, I will do my best to serve as lodge President for the next two years. It is my hope that I can count on you and your support to help make things happen, share ideas, invite others you think might enjoy what SoN has to offer, and help to preserve Norwegian heritage in America.

Tusen takk to Esther Charlton for her past 4 years serving as President, and also to Carol Luiso, Teresa Lowen, and Trine Wernes for their service as officers on the Board. Thanks to Board members continuing on another 2 years (in same or different office): Nelda Chandler, Sharon Smythe, Esther Charlton, Karl Halvorson, Susie Mikaloff, Lois Evensen. Finally we are thrilled to welcome these members to the Board: Liv Ramstad, Lindsey Heatherton, and Charlotte Ellingson.

Our January meeting (more details elsewhere in newsletter) will be a mini tour of Norway thru slides and narration by Jim and Susan Herman. We

planned our first trip to Norway by ourselves (with very few glitches in real time), took our adult children along, and have memories for a lifetime!

Godt nyttår (Happy New Year)! Hope to see you on January 14.

Susan Herman, Incoming President

White Elephant Auction

We thank Susie and Glenn Mikaloff for hosting our October lodge meeting. There was a delicious potluck to enjoy. Then the auction began. Glenn is great as our auctioneer and there were some items that generated spirited bidding. We raised over \$300.00 this year. The auction has become our annual event in October. It is a wonderful fundraiser for the Sons of Norway Foundation. Sons of Norway, considers October as Foundation month.



Susie Mikaloff showing some items to be auctioned

Julefest Celebration

Thanks to all that attended, we had another wonderful Julefest celebration. There were Norwegian meatballs, lefse and many other delicious dishes. We Sang holiday songs and danced around the yule tree once again. One special feature this year were the personalized table settings that some of our members put together.





Birthdays

January

Francis Kodobud[1], Connie Holmen[10], Anna Reeder[11].

February

Sylvia Casas[15], Bob Bowman[17], Linda Burge[17], Mark Kosobud[20], Karl Halvorson[21], Jamie Herman[22], Sasha Blaine[26].

March

Nancy Cooper[2], Bob Charlton[11], Larry Bannick[17], Ray Olson[26].

Returning Member

Welcome Charlotte Ellingson! Charlotte has recently moved back to the area from Portland Oregon and has rejoined our lodge. She will be our new Foundation Chair Person. While in Portland, Charlotte was a member of the Grieg lodge, which is a very large lodge with its own building. She was a member of their reading group and would share their reading lists with our reading circle. Our reading circle welcomes her with all of her past book reviews.

January Meeting

Saturday, January 14 – 2:30 p.m.

We will be at the Symmes Township Library located at 11850 Enyart Rd, Loveland, OH 45140, for our biennial installation of new officers. After the installation, Susan and Jim Herman will present the highlights of their recent trip to Norway. Please bring a snack to share. Please RSVP for the lodge meeting to Esther Charlton 513-923-3798 or esthersofn@aol.com.

March Meeting

Saturday, March 18 – 2:00 p.m.

This will be our regular lodge meeting at 2:00 p.m. We will be at a new location, the Blue Ash Library, which is at 4911 Cooper Rd. The library is a block east of Kenwood Rd. The details of the program are still in flux, but we will announce them at the January lodge meeting. Please bring a snack to share. RSVP to Esther Charlton 513/923-3798 or esthersofn@aol.com

Upcoming Meetings

Jan 7: Reading Circle 2-3 PM followed by Our Board Meeting 3-4 PM. All are welcome to attend. Panera Bread, E. Kemper Rd, Cincinnati.

Jan 14: Installation of new officers and Norway presentation, 2:30 PM, Symmes Township Library.

February: No Meeting.

Mar 18: Program to be determined, 2:00 PM, 4911 Cooper Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45242.

The Marzipan Pig Question



I can't remember who brought it up, but at Julefest the question was asked what the marzipan pig tradition is all about. No one had an answer, so we suggested people look into it and report back. First of all, if you don't know what we are talking about, in many Norwegian households there is a tradition of getting a marzipan pig during the Julefest / Christmas holiday, as recounted by one Norwegian:

"We celebrate Christmas on the 24th of December. Many families eat porridge at noon with an almond in it. The one who gets the almond will get a present, and usually that is a marzipan pig."

Sharon Smythe wrote in with her two cents, and I have to say I love this answer because the last part sounds so Norwegian:

"You've probably gotten a slew of responses on the pigs. Here's my input.

In Germany, Denmark and Norway marzipan pigs were given between Christmas and New Years to wish a person a good year. The Germans would say "I've had a pig" at the end of a good year.

The pigs were fashioned from marzipan because it is a malleable food product and is a confection.

I didn't find out why a pig, but it could be because pigs are important members of the farm culture. They are very intelligent, can be tamed and have large litters of piglets, which make them very productive."

I came across this little bit of information about "Jul" posted on the national SoN Facebook page by Tyr Neilsen, author of the book *Viking Wisdom, Hávamal, The Sayings Of Odin*. It also gives a brief mention of the pig (Yule boar) tradition which may be partly why a marzipan pig is used:

Jól - Jul - Yule

The Yule tree, holly, mistletoe, yule log, and tree decorations, all have Scandinavian origins.

The Norse people celebrated a midwinter feast which is now called Jul in Scandinavia and Yule in other countries.

The Old Norse words Jól was used to describe a feast, and Jólablót was a midwinter festival associated with the rebirth of the sun. Blót or blot does not mean blood as many believe, but means ritual of sacrifice or worship. The verb blóta meant "to worship with sacrifice" or "to strengthen".

During the celebration of Jól the community would take up the drinking horn, and drink mead, beer and wine. This is called "å drikke jul" meaning to drink Yule and celebrate the Norse gods, dead friends and relatives, and peace and harmony.

*The traditions of the Yule log, Yule goat, **Yule boar (Sonargöltr)** reflected in the Christmas ham, Yule singing, and other such traditions, stem from Pagan Yule customs.*

The Yule tree, known as Jultre in Scandinavia, and Christmas tree in other lands, is usually an evergreen conifer such as spruce, pine, or fir. The use of evergreen trees symbolized eternal life to many ancient cultures. Tree worship was common among pagan Scandinavians and Europeans, and survived their conversion to Christianity.

Scandinavians cut down trees to cut into firewood. The top of the tree used to keep the people of the cold North warm during the Yule period, was used as both decoration and sacred symbol. The Yule log was important because it kept fire in the world and helped to ensure the next harvest would be good.

The noun Yuletide is first attested from around 1475, and the Germanic and Scandinavian customs of decorating the house and barn with evergreens began to spread in the 15th and 16th centuries. This custom blossomed in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The famous Trafalgar Square Christmas tree is a Jultre donated to the people of Britain by Norway each year since 1947. Every year the city of Oslo sends this gift as a token of gratitude for British support of Norway during the Second World War. The tree is typically a 50- to 60-year-old Norwegian spruce, generally over 20 metres tall, and prominently displayed in Trafalgar Square from the beginning of December until 6 January.

Norrøn Jul – Norse Yule

The long white-bearded Norse god Odin also had the name *Jólfaðr*, which in Old Norse meant "Yule father", and *Jólnir*, meaning "the Yule one".

In Old Norse poetry, the word *Jól* was often used as a synonym for 'feast', such as in the kenning *hugins jól*, meaning "Huginn's Yule" (Hugin being one of Odins ravens).

Yule is attested early in the history of the Germanic peoples from the 4th century. In the 8th century, the English historian Bede wrote that the Anglo-Saxon calendar included the months *geola* or *giuli* (Yule) which were either modern December or December and January. *Ylir* is the name for late November in the Old Norse calendar.

The Old Norse name *jól* is mentioned in the Prose Edda book *Skáldskaparmál*. Here different names for the gods are given and one of the names provided is "Yule-beings". The skald *Eyvindr Skáldaspillir* uses the term which reads "again we have produced Yule-being's feast [mead of poetry], our rulers' eulogy, like a bridge of masonry".

In the Saga of Hákon the Good, King Haakon I of Norway, who was responsible for the Christianisation of Norway, rescheduled the date of Yule to coincide with Christian celebrations held at the time. It is also stated that King Haakon had a law passed that everyone was to have ale for the celebration with a measure of grain, or else pay fines. The Norwegians also had to keep the holiday while the ale lasted.

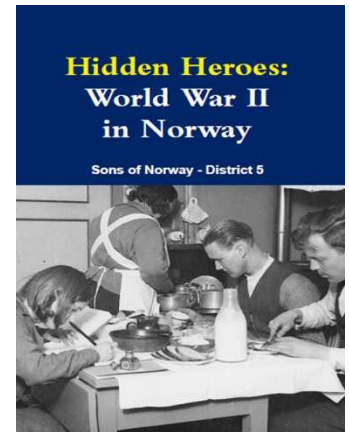
The saga describes how toasts were to be drunk. The oldest written source of the Viking Yule celebrations is "*Haraldskvadet*" of the poet *Þorbjörn Hornklofi* which is presumably composed sometime around the year 900, for King Harald Fairhair. In Old Norse: *Úti vill jól drekka, Ef skal einn ráða, Fylkir enn framlyndi, Ok Freys leik heyja;*

The first toast was to be drunk to Odin "for victory and power to the king", the second to the gods *Njörðr* and *Freyr* "for good harvests and for peace", and third, a beaker was to be drunk to the king himself.

In addition, toasts were drunk to the memory of departed kinsfolk. These were called "*minni* [memorial toast]". One Old Norse toast was "*tíl árs ok friðar*", meaning for a good year and frith (peace). This toast was for fertility, good health, a good life and peace and harmony between the people and the powers.

Recommended Reading

This book mentions, "*Hidden Heroes: World War II in Norway*", was sent into us by Mike Palecek, a SoN member in Racine. He writes "Your lodge members are sure to enjoy this very interesting book. The book is supporting a great cause, Norwegian heritage programming for youth at Masse Moro."



"Hidden Heroes: World War II in Norway" contains twenty eyewitness accounts from those who lived in Norway or were Americans who had extended family in Norway, during World War II. This unique history is told from the viewpoint of children and young adults.

Living in Norway during World War II, you never knew if the person next door was a hero; a Norwegian resistance fighter. The hero next door could be a teenager going with his dad to steal grain from a Nazi train, in order to feed refugees. It could be a girl who hid messages in her instrument case, while going by bike to a violin lesson. It could be the fisherman down the street, rowing a boat full of grenades, with a German U-boat captain sitting on the seat which was hiding them. Many Norwegians risked their lives to thwart the Nazis who were occupying their country. These are their true stories.

This 182 page book is illustrated with over 50 images from the Norwegian National Archives, and uses "senior friendly" large type. "Hidden Heroes" is a Sons of Norway fundraiser to support activities at the annual Masse Moro youth heritage camp, held at Beaver Creek Reserve in Fall Creek, Eau Claire County. Camp dates for 2017 are July 16-29. Make a \$25 donation and receive a copy of the book. \$100 donation gets you five books (shipped to one location) and a \$250 donation gets you 15 books (shipped to one location). The books can be purchased without a donation for \$20. Our lodge currently has 9 books available. If interested in purchasing any of these 9 books for \$20 each or ordering additional books and making a donation, contact Esther Charlton 513/923-3798 or esthersofn@aol.com

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