



SONS OF NORWAY

Edvard Grieg Lodge 657 District 5

Cincinnati-Dayton, Ohio & Kentucky

- First Lodge in Ohio -

Sons, Daughters and Friends of Norway Newsletter

| Jan 2021

Notes from Lodge President

Dear Edvard Grieg Lodge members,

Godt nytt år! 2020 has been a rough year for all of us. We started the year with great plans for our social gatherings, including Syttende mai, Julefest and celebration of our 20th Anniversary of the lodge (along with the 125th anniversary of the Sons of Norway). While the COVID pandemic has moved all of our meetings and events to Zoom, I am proud to say that we remain strong and viable. I am pleased we were able to offer inspiring meeting topics, remote Syttende mai and Julefest events, and even start a new spin-off 'baking' group that meets regularly outside our monthly events. I am even more pleased that we were able to connect and re-connect with members that have moved from the region or find travel problematic, an unexpected benefit of our situation. I look forward to transitioning to live meetings as it becomes safe, perhaps by fall if the vaccination program is successful, but plan to have a Zoom connection to each meeting for our members who are at a distance.

I would also like to thank our Board, who were able to rapidly adapt to remote meetings and help keep moving forward despite all obstacles and all of our members for their dedication and flexibility in these hard times. I look forward to the next time we can get together in person, but in the meantime, we plan to continue to offer interesting cultural programs and get together to chat via Zoom. Here's to 2021!

Jim Herman, Lodge President

Birthdays

January

Aimee Russell[4], Connie Holmen[10], Anders Russell[26].

February

Nancy Johnson[2], Ava Powell[2], Richard Vinnece[7], Lee Luiso[12], Adam Sokol[14], Sylvia casas[15], Mark Kosobud[20], Karl Halvorson[21], James D. Herman[22].

March

Nancy Cooper[2], Elisabeth Sonoff[12], Larry Bannick[17], Kathy Johncox[19].

Membership

We are delighted to introduce two new members.

First, we have Noel Julnes-Dehner, her Norwegian connection is on her father's side of the family. We will have her give us some more information about herself in the next newsletter.

Our other new member is Evelyn Hetzler, who is Susan Herman's sister.

Do remember that if you know of someone that might be interested in our lodge, let me know of them and I will contact them.

Esther Charlton, Membership Secretary

Membership Service Pins

At the end of each year we present service pins for years of membership in Sons of Norway. The pins are given for each five years of membership. This year, as this was our 20th anniversary, there were 15 people that received 20 year pins. Normally these would have been presented at our Julefest. But because of circumstances Esther will make arrangements to present your pin to you.

5-year pins – Monica DuShane, Lyndsey Heatherton, Liv Ramstad

10-year pins – Chris Butterworth, Laurie Johnson

20-year pins- Larry Bannick, Nelda Chandler, Ed Charlton, Esther Charlton, Jean Crocker-Lakness, KJell & Lois Evensen, Jorgen Jorgensen, Kelly Lawson, Glenn Mikaloff, Sandy Nelson, Konrad & Pam Nelson, Katherine Sanders, Clare Williams

A great big thanks to the dedication of all our members.

January 2021

Board Meeting (Zoom): Saturday, January 9
All members are welcome at the meeting.
Contact Jim Herman,
jpherman.edvardgrieg@gmail.com

Lodge Meeting (Zoom): Saturday, January 16
Officer Installation and short program.

Social Cooking/Baking (Zoom): Friday, January 22, 1:30pm EST

Topic is “Substantial (hearty) Soups”. If you wish, feel free to share a recipe with us that you like to make in winter. **Ask questions in advance** (preferable) to Elisabeth:
epsonoff@sonoffconsulting.com

February

Lodge Meeting (Zoom): Saturday, February 20
Details TBA on lodge website

Social Cooking/Baking (Zoom): Details TBA on lodge website, or contact Social Director.
Topic is “Fastelavn and traditional buns for Sunday before Lent”, along with other non-food traditions.

March

Board Meeting (Zoom): Saturday, March 6
All members are welcome at the meeting.
Contact Jim Herman,
jpherman.edvardgrieg@gmail.com

A look back at 2020 Lodge events

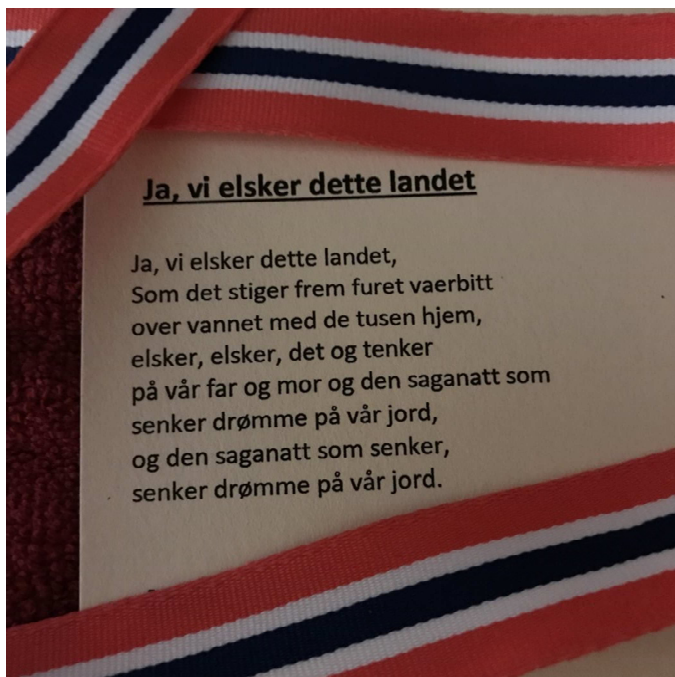


(Troll lefse) A tidbit from the end of 2020.

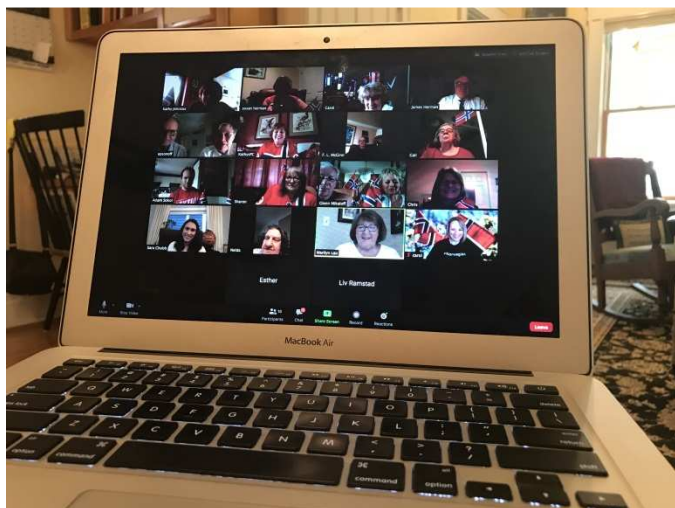
Although 2020 began with an in person meeting in January, it was the only one we were able to have. Due to stormy weather north of Cincinnati, members from Dayton and further north were unable to make the drive that day, but about 11 of us met at a typical location (Sharonville Library) with Carol Luiso presenting on her most recent trip to Norway and we had a lively discussion on learning Norwegian using a number of language programs. Typically we do not have a February meeting, and by March with libraries and everything else closing, we were all trying to figure out what we were going to do and how to do it. All things considered, our new virtual meetings started in April and have been well attended. We added a July meeting to stay connected, and have added a social meeting each month since the Fall. In October we hosted our first Cooking/Baking virtual meeting with Elisabeth Sonoff presenting, and have continued to meet each month with topics on Seasonal Fall Foods, and Christmas Traditions and Cookies. Our group looks forward to continuing in 2021.



Liv Ramstad and Susan Herman on May 7



Syttende mai gathering



Syttende mai gathering

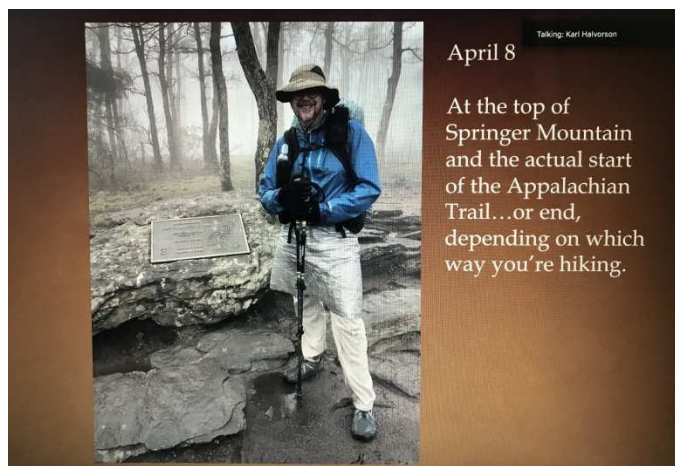


Jim Herman making lompe on Summer Solstice



Board members meeting, July 11

Even though many of us were not able to travel on planned trips as usual, through lodge meetings we have experienced trips hiking the Appalachian Trail, traveling along the Erie Canal, biking the North Sea Cycle Route, and kayaking the Fjords of Norway.



Karl Halvorsen presented on his Appalachian Trail Thru-Hike for Aug. 29 meeting



Nelda Chandler, Sandy Nelson, Esther Charlton, Liv Ramstad gather on October 14 at Winton Woods.



Liv Ramstad and Sandy Nelson checking out the view from the pavilion rooftop



new knitting ideas, outdoors at Winton Woods on November 9!



members waving goodbye at end of November 14 meeting



Presenters for October 17 meeting "Biking the North Sea Cycle Route"



Dec. 5, Liv Ramstad mailing lodge anniversary magnets to members.



cooking/baking group, November 6



Cookies decorated by Katie Herman



Julafest 2020 was sharing memories thru pictures, music, stories. Our annual dance around the Christmas tree, singing Silent Night, was a little different this year, but it was meaningful to see the slide show of pictures over the 20 years of our lodge with members and events, and Silent Night playing in the background.



Elisabeth P. Sonoff making lompe, polar bread, and lussekatter



Juletime hearts

2020 highlights of what Edvard Grieg lodge members participated in:

- Provided cookies and beverages (along with Scandinavian Society of Cincinnati) for reception following the Cincinnati Civic Orchestra's concert on March 1.
- Volunteered to answer phones for the March 6 WMKV fund drive at Maple Knoll Village.
- District 5 Scandinavian photo contest for playing cards
- Our lodge donated \$100 each to two food pantries (Dayton and Cincinnati)
- Lodge members stepped up to the giving challenge in October and our lodge donated \$500 to the Foundation for scholarships and grants.
- Edvard Grieg also donated \$50 to Ski for Light.
- Elisabeth and Raymond Sonoff, Jim and Susan Herman walked a combined 4,687 miles between Nov. 1, 2019 and Dec. 14, 2020 for the District 5 Virtual Walk to Norway challenge (in preparation for the 2020 convention in Ringsaker, Norway, which was later cancelled but the challenge continued and was extended past June).

Thank you to all who presented or helped in any way this past year, and all who were able to join us at meetings or participate and stay connected in other ways.

Happy New Year!

Susan Herman, Social Director

susan.herman3501@gmail.com or 513-227-8790

Julenissen



Many of us have decorated with "Julenisser" for the holiday. However, how many of us know what a "Nisse" really is? We may think that he is a Norwegian Santa Claus, but that is not how he was

originally known in Norway or other Scandinavian countries.

A Nisse, or Tomte or Tomtenisse in Swedish, or Tonttu in Finish, was a mythical figure associated with the winter solstice and the Christmas season. The belief in nisse may go back to pagan times. The Old Norse meaning of Nisse is "dear little relative". People respected him and set out offerings of food for him to ensure good crops, fertility and peace. The belief in Nisse survived when Christianity was introduced in Norway around year 1000. Many stories and fairy tales from this period mention Nissen. However, from around 1500 to 1800 the clergy preached that Nissen was false religion and superstition. It was not until around 1800 that the old stories about Nissen were saved by authors publishing the old stories and fairy tales about Nissen.



Nissen was described as being a small, elderly man no bigger than a child. He was dressed in farm clothes, wore a red cap and had a long beard. He lived in the barn and was generally helpful to the farmer. He would help taking care of the farm animals, especially if he were served good food and drink on Christmas Eve. It was important for the people on the farm to stay on good terms with him for he could stir up a lot of turmoil if neglected or got mad. Many stories are

told about what happened when he thought he was not treated well:

Nissen loved to get a big bowl of porridge with a big "smørøye" (butter eye) in the middle for Christmas. One Christmas the milkmaid put the butter in the bottom of the bowl. Nissen got angry and killed the best milking cow. Then he ate his porridge and discovered the butter at the bottom. To make amends he went over to the neighboring farm and stole the best cow to replace the one he had killed.

Another time a farmer was in need of hay for his animals. He went to the neighbor's barn and stole a little hay to bring back home. Then he notices Nissen with a small bundle of hay following him home. The farmer told Nissen that that was not a big enough bundle to feed his animals. Nissen got angry and the next day the farmer found his barn empty. Nissen had brought the stolen hay back to its rightful owner.

Another story tells about a milkmaid that used to get a lot of help from Nissen. She gave him lots of good food in return. One day she decided to make him new clothes. However, it backfired. One night he came back to the farm in his new clothes and told the milkmaid he was resigning. He was dressed too well to work in the barn any more.

Gradually Nissen became more like our Santa Claus. However, he does not come down the chimney with the gifts and he does not drive a sled pulled by reindeer. And even today, many still put out a bowl of porridge for Nissen.

Although it is Nissen who lives in the barn we hear about most often, there were many other Nisser. One lives in the attic of your house and looks after you and your family if you treat him well. There are also Nisser who live in the woods, on ships and my favorite, Kirkenissen, the Church Nisse. He lives in the bell tower and it is his job to clean the church every Saturday before Sunday church service. How I wish he would live in my house and clean every Saturday!

Elisabeth P. Sonoff,
Cultural Chairperson

The famed sunstones: Did Vikings use an ancient "GPS" to conquer the seas? *Source: Norway Today*

If you've watched Vikings, you may remember a few scenes in which protagonist Ragnar Lothbrok used a

sunstone to navigate the seas. But how much truth is there to the sunstone's ancient use as a navigation device?



"Sunstone" is actually a nickname for various types of feldspar, such as Icelandic feldspar, and other rocks like tourmaline and calcite. Icelandic sagas and early Christian texts do refer to "sunstones" on occasion – but it hasn't been archeologically confirmed whether they were in use during the Viking Age – as a GPS, or at all.

The Eötvös Loránd University in Hungary researched the possibility of using sunstones to navigate in early 2018. Professors Gábor Horváth and Dénes Száz created computer simulations recreating real-life Viking journeys.

They used the exact measurements and building style of Viking longship, currents and weather patterns in the North Sea, and navigation with a sunstone. They ran a total of 36,000 simulations.

Their findings, published in the journal Royal Society Open Science, concluded that it was possible to navigate in such conditions with a sunstone. Sailors could have used the stones to follow the sun's position and successfully reach their destinations over 90% of the time.

The sunstone, then, could've indeed been one of, or even one of the most important, factors that allowed Vikings to harness the seas as they did.

Scientists have confirmed that Vikings successfully migrated, traded, and explored far and wide using the seas as their passageways.

We know that Vikings took sea travels to new heights. But whether their success was due to sunstones, their famous longship designs, some kind of innate oceanic prowess, or all of the above remains to be unraveled.

Officers & Chairpersons

President

James P Herman
513/533-3501
jpherman.edvardgrieg@gmail.com

Vice President

Adam Joseph Sokol
440/823-3735
sokol.adamj@gmail.com

Secretary

Sharon Smythe
937-438-9641
sasmythe43@aol.com

Treasurer

Liv Ramstad
(513) 543-9012
ramstad.liv@gmail.com

Social Director

Susan Herman
513/227-8790
susan.herman3501@gmail.com

Cultural Chairperson

Elisabeth P. Sonoff
859/261-5903
epsonoff@sonoffconsulting.com

Newsletter Editor

Karl Halvorson
513/340-8338
karl.halvorson@yahoo.com

Membership

Esther Charlton
513/923-3798
Esthersofn@aol.com

Webmaster

Lois A. Evensen
513/281-8408
Lois@Evensens.net

Publicity

Open

Foundation

Pam & Konrad Nelson
513/779-7986
nelsonkap@cinci.rr.com

Tubfrim

Nelda Chandler
513/742-9504
nelda4325@gmail.com

Sons of Norway Edvard Grieg Lodge
C/O Esther Charlton
3798 Susanna Dr.
Cincinnati, OH 45251