



NYHETER BREVET

-A NEWSLETTER-

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MAY-JUN 2020

ORD FRA DIN VALKYRIEN LOSJE PRESIDENT

(Words from your Lodge President)



Dear Sons of Norway Members,

At this time, my thoughts are about all of our lodge members. How are they doing? Here's hoping they are staying healthy and safe. My family is fine and following the protocol for avoiding the virus. I was recovering from Shingles during this time so I didn't feel like doing anything but to stay at home. It is unknown at this time if our lodge can have a June meeting. I will have my Norwegian pictures ready in case we can meet. Keep walking or exercising for those miles to Norway. By the end of March, we had totaled 2,946.5 miles toward our goal of 4,036 miles.

The Sons of Norway International Board voted to postpone the 2020 Sons of Norway's International Convention to 2022. The location will need to be rebid so the convention city is unknown at this time. Our district convention was also cancelled until 2022 and it will probably be in the Madison, WI. area. The District also sadly voted to cancel Masse Moro camp for this year for the protection of campers and staff.

If you are looking for something to do during this time, the district is holding a photography contest of Norwegian scenery and places to be used on playing cards that will be sold by the district for our D5 Foundation. Look at your Norwegian photos and see our district website for information: www.sonsofnorway5.com.

Varm ønsker til deg,

P.S. I thought you could use a little bit of humor ... so here it is some thoughts about the virus:

- The world has turned upside down. Old folks are sneaking out of the house, and their kids are yelling at them to stay indoors
- This virus has done what no woman had been able to do...cancel all sports, shut down all bars, and keep men at home!!
- Since we can't eat out, now's the perfect time to eat better, get fit, and stay healthy. We're quarantined! Who are we trying to impress? We have snacks, we have sweatpants - I say we use them
- Does anyone know if we can take showers yet or should we just keep washing our hands???
- I never thought the comment "I wouldn't touch him/her with a six foot pole" would become a national policy, but here we are!

Audrey Severson

*President
Valkyrien Lodge*

Happy Birthday

Our best wishes for a Happy Birthday go out to these members. Below are the remaining birthdays for the month of June and through the 15th of July.

JUNE: John Mikkelson - 6/17 *
Phyllis Kraft - 6/22 *
Rosina Hendrickson - 6/22

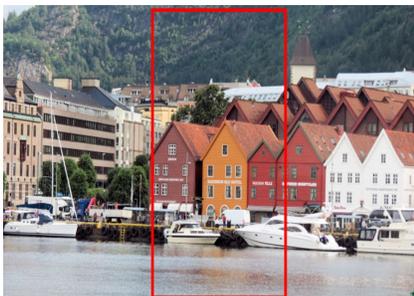
JULY: *Through the 15th)*
Theresa Odalen - 7/03
Sandra Calvert - 7/11
Gary Hoffman - 7/15
Audrey Halverson - 7/16

**GM designates that this individual is 65 years old or older and been a member of the Sons of Norway for 30 years or more.*

District 5 Scandinavian Photo Contest

Your Scandinavian photo can be part of a deck of Nordic playing cards, which Sons of Norway District 5 will be making available for purchase in time for the 2020 Christmas season

To enter, you can submit up to five of your best Nordic photos, so the district can choose which photos are best for the playing card deck. Deadline is July 5, 2020.



Each lodge which participates will have at least one card in the deck. If every lodge in the district participates, we will be able to fill almost the entire deck with one card per lodge.

The winner's name and lodge will be printed at the bottom of the card. Winners will receive a deck of Nordic cards, plus a special certificate. There will also be special "People's Choice" awards. See pages 7-8 for the entry and rules.

2020

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Nyheter Brevet is published six times yearly beginning with the Jan-Feb issue. Please submit any news items to Arlys Olson, Editor, by the 30th day of the months of December, February, April, June, August and October to be included in the following month's publication. Email your submissions to: olsondon@hughes.net

The mission of the Sons of Norway is to promote and to preserve heritage and culture of Norway and to celebrate our relationship with other Nordic countries and provide quality insurance and financial products to our members. For information contact: www.sofn.com



HISTORY OF MAY 17TH

A special thank you to Mike Wick of District 1 who sent this to us.

It's pronounced "SET-nuh MY" (Syttende Mai means 17th of May in Norwegian) Syttende Mai, or 17th of May (or Constitution Day) celebrates the day the Norwegian constitution that was signed in Eidsvoll on May 17, 1814. Syttende Mai "SET-nuh MY" is an annual celebration of all things Norwegian. It celebrates Norway's declaration as an independent nation from Sweden in 1814 although full independence would not happen until 1905 from Denmark.

Every city and town in Norway has a children's parade (how Syttende Mai started) to celebrate Syttende Mai "SET-nuh MY" Children and their adult counterparts march down the streets of their neighborhood in bunads or their best formal clothing, waving flags or playing their instruments as if they are a part of their school's marching band. In larger cities there are often parades for the adults to march in celebration of Syttende Mai. The largest parade on Syttende Mai is in Oslo, the Norwegian capital and includes more than 75 schools and marching bands. The Oslo parade route includes a trip past the Royal Palace, where the Norwegian Royal Family greets parade participants and people passing by from the main balcony.

Outside of Norway, Norwegians and Norwegian descendants all over the world celebrate Syttende Mai "SET-nuh MY" This celebration of Norwegian statehood marks one of the occasions every year Norwegians wear their traditional outfits called bunads "boo-nags" The U.S. also has the largest Syttende Mai parades outside of Norway. In the United States, parades, speeches and fun runs are held in towns and cities with sizable Norwegian emigrant populations such as Seattle-Washington, Brooklyn-New York, Wisconsin, Minnesota, the Dakota's, Iowa, Canada, Montana, Texas, even Nevada and more. The Syttende Mai parade in Seattle lays claim to being the third largest in the world behind Bergen and Oslo.

Ice Cream, Hot Dogs and Lots of Cakes (like 4th July) ... Norwegians celebrate Syttende Mai "SET-nuh MY" by eating of ice cream and hot dogs during the parades or shortly after. Later in the day, after the parades have finished, Norwegians tend to gather with other family members for (open-faced sandwiches) served with milk, juice and carbonated water as well as coffee and tea. Several varieties of cakes are also served on Syttende Mai. More coffee is of course served to help wash it all down.

How did the signing of the Norwegian Constitution happen? The best way to picture May 17th is our signing of the United States Constitution of 1776. Weeks of debating among a group of men about the wording with an historic signing. It all started when Norway entered the Kalmar Union with Denmark and Sweden in 1397 as a combined Nation. Only once has Scandinavia been united politically, from 1397 to 1523, under the Danish crown.

The Kalmar Union came into existence essentially to allow the three Scandinavian states of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway to present a united front against foreign, primarily German, encroachments.

<https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/europe/kalmar-union.htm>

The Kalmar Union came about when Haakon V of Norway died 1319 and for some years shared a king with a Swedish Prince. In 1349 the Black death raged in Norway with greater violence than in any other Land. Norway was reduced by a third. The Germans merchants basically took over the country after the black death. During the dark years Norway accepted the king of Denmark and the Kalmar Union came about.

Sweden left the union in 1523 and Norway became the junior partner in Denmark-Norway. The Reformation was introduced in 1537 and absolute monarchy imposed in 1661.

During the Napoleonic wars in Europe, Denmark-Norway become an ally of France. Denmark had sided with France in the Napoleonic Wars after Britain had bombarded Copenhagen in 1807. The Swedes became allies with England and fought alongside the Allies (Britain, Russia, Prussia and Austria) Denmark-Norway was on the losing side when Napoleon was defeated in 1813 by the British. As punishment for the Danes siding with France, Norway was given to the king of Sweden by the Treaty of Kiel in Jan 14, 1814.

(Continued on next page)

HISTORY OF MAY 17TH

Should Norway become an independent nation? YES! Prince Christian Frederik, the Danish vice-regent in Norway (who ruled the country on behalf of King Frederik VI - was the heir to the Danish throne of his cousin Frederik VI) he decided to make himself King of Norway.

The Danes had to give Norway to Sweden and he knew the Swedes needed someone to rule Norway; Prince Christian Frederik gambled the Swedes would let him be a king. Leading an uprising against the complete union with Sweden he sought the advice of leading Norwegian figures at a meeting at Eidsvoll on 16 February 1814. 112 representatives (mostly business owners). Here it was decided to summon representatives to a Constitutional Assembly who would declare Norway an independent nation, frame a constitution and elect a king. Norwegians quickly got together and declared its independence from Sweden with a constitution 4 months later on May 17th 1814. The Constitution of 1814 was created by men who wanted Norway to secede. It was modern and forward thinking for its time, inspired from the US Declaration of Independence of 1776 and the French Revolution of 1789.

The main principles of the Constitution are:

- * Peoples Sovereignty (People's right to rule through elected representatives)
- * Separation of Powers (Power balance between the legislative, judicial, executive power)
- * Human Rights (Rule of Law, voice and speech)

However, no foreign powers recognized the Norwegian independence but supported the Swedish demand for Norway to comply with the treaty of Kiel. The foreign Powers refused to recognize the election of Prince Christian Frederik, and it became increasingly evident that they would not recognize the complete independence of Norway.

Sweden then attacks Norway: A brief war was fought in the Østfold region, close to the border with Sweden. Norway's King Christian Frederik lost to Sweden's Crown Prince Carl Johan (formerly General Jean Baptiste Bernadotte, Marshal of France), who had command of his country's army. Peace negotiations between Norway and Sweden at the Convention of Moss was a ceasefire agreement signed on 14 August 1814

The Norwegian patriots were therefore glad to accept the offer of Charles John Bernadotte, Crown Prince of Sweden, to recognize the constitution of Norway on the condition that that kingdom should submit to a loose union with Sweden. King Christian Frederik did succeed in securing Sweden's agreement that Norway could retain its constitution more or less intact, but had to promise to renounce the Norwegian throne.

The new Norwegian parliament (called the Storting) met in Christiania (now called Oslo) for the first time in October. The Storting drew up the amendments necessary to adapt the Eidsvoll Constitution to union with Sweden and a Swedish king: On 4 November the Storting adopted the amended Constitution and Norway entered into a union with Sweden. At the same time, Sweden's King Carl XIII was elected king of Norway

The good part was the constitution was retained, but was slightly modified to accommodate the new union with Sweden. The main principles of the Constitution were upheld, and laid the foundation for the union's dissolution in 1905 and the development of Norwegian democracy. The original constitution document is a short piece of paper. It lies safely in the Parliamentary archives, where the right temperature and humidity process slow down the natural degradation. The Constitution is digitized, so those who wish can study the document .

Written at Eidsvoll, the Constitution was probably penned by Trønder native, Johan Matthaeus Buschmann. It is apparent in the text of the Constitution that the work was rushed in the spring of 1814. For the Constitution to become what it is he wrote with very simple Gothic handwriting, without ornamentation of any kind, and one will find some typos. The legal text is written in a simple notebook like paper. The document is seen in a heap of 12 sheets of paper that are fastened together to 24 pages with a linen thread. All together it is 48 pages. The text has 110 paragraphs and is divided into five chapters. Following the legal text is the authorization from the National Assembly designated by 112 representatives' signatures with red wax seals. The last thing is the signature from the king.

(Continued on next page)

HISTORY OF MAY 17TH

By the act of November 4, 1814, the union was acknowledged by the Norwegian Storting. According to a speech of the King to the Swedish Rigsdag, perfect equality was to obtain between the two kingdoms, but this "perfect equality", was, nevertheless, not established in practice, as diplomacy and foreign affairs, as well as the representation of both kingdoms at foreign courts, remained in the hands of the Swedish Government. But this was a practice based on no express right, as no such privilege was granted Sweden by the Act of Union.

The two countries were loosely joined, each having its own constitution, but the two being united under one king. This arrangement lasted throughout the nineteenth century, because of the moderation and prudence of the rulers, but the interests of the two peoples were incompatible and divergent. The Swedish kings always desired to make their state stronger by bringing about a closer union of the two countries, and having the two peoples cherish the same interests in common; the people of Norway, with different ideas and desires, wished that there were no union at all, and strove to have it made looser. Sweden was larger and more populous, but while there was more wealth in the country, wealth and power were concentrated in the hands of nobles and aristocracy, leaving the mass of the people without property or political power. The government was vested entirely in the hands of the king, checked, when at all, only by an assembly of estates, something like those which had disappeared in England and Spain long before, and like those which had been resurrected in France in 1789.



The Norwegian Constitution with the seals and signatures .

I'm in the process of creating a daily post of each days invasion of Norway from April 9th to June. It's being posted daily at <https://www.facebook.com/Sons-of-Norway-District-1-Norwegian-Heritage-and-Culture-148130308566588/>

Mike Wick

“CORONA TIMES”

These are certainly difficult and trying times for all of us. We hope that you are safe and healthy and finding ways to keep busy while at home. I thought this might be a good time to write down some of my thoughts.

Don Olson, Co-Editor

None of us have ever experienced a pandemic like this, but our parents may have. My father, Alf Olson, was at an Army camp south of New Orleans, Louisiana, during the influenza epidemic of 1918. I vividly remember him telling me how he helped carry the sick and dying to a large mule barn that served as a field hospital. Many perished but he never got sick! It is reported that 675,000 souls were lost in the United States during this pandemic. However, my father never said anything about deaths in the local community from the virus. My father, however, did talk about outbreaks of diphtheria during his childhood and could point out abandoned farms where the toll from this disease was horrific.



In more modern times, many of us recall childhood bouts with measles, mumps and chicken pox which many times resulted in the whole family getting sick. Some of these diseases also prompted an official “quaranteed” sign being placed on the premises which was pretty scary for youngsters. Probably the most frightening of all diseases that I remember when I was young was polio. Pictures of children in “iron lungs” were *really* scary. Everyone was so glad when a vaccine was developed for this illness.

The “Black Death” (Svart Dauden) arrived in Norway in 1349. Legend has it that it was introduced from European ships arriving in Bergen, Norway. This was a catastrophic event for the country and is used as a time marker for discussing Norwegian history. The fatality rate from this disease in Norway may have been as high as 1/3 to 1/2 of the population. Many farms were abandoned among them was the Tærud farm in Telemark from where my mother’s ancestors immigrated. Tærud was listed under a larger farm in the area for the next 300 years!

Northern Norway (Nordland) did not escape the ravages of the Black Death. A relative of mine, who co-authored the book *Bleikvassli-ei bygd og ei slekt* (Bleikvassli-a community and a family) chronicled what little was known about the area before the Black Death. One legend describes a place called “Storjorda” in Nordland where smoke was seen from 400 chimneys’. The actual location of this place which vanished in the Black Death is unknown. This legend also describes the effect of this plague as follows; “*Han feide Landet og gjorde det tom, der blev ikke mange tilbage.*” (It swept the land and made it empty, there were not many left)

Finally I can relate a story told to me by my father’s cousin, Lyman Olson, who spent some time with my great-grandfather, Benjamin Olson. He immigrated from Nordland in the 1860s. Lyman said that Benjamin told him how many corpses were laid out in one day in the Trondheim Cathedral during the Black Death. Of course this story may not have been passed down generation to generation, but if it had been, then it survived more than 600 years!

Now for a little humor to end this article. “Social distancing should not be a problem for us Norwegians, since we hardly ever get closer than 6 feet to each other anyway!”



Han feide Landet og gjorde det tom, der blev ikke mange tilbage.

SCANDINAVIAN PHOTO CONTEST ENTRY FORM



Lodge _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/St/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Hometown newspaper _____

I certify that I am an up-to-date Sons of Norway member in District 5. The photos which I am entering in the District 5 Scandinavian Photo Contest were taken by me in a Scandinavian country. I give rights to District 5 to place a cropped version of my photo on the District 5 website and to use the image for a Nordic playing card deck. I will allow my submitted photos to be displayed at District 5 events and to be used for other Sons of Norway District 5 purposes, including as part of a press release to my hometown newspaper.

x (Signed): _____ Date: _____

District 5 includes all Sons of Norway lodges in WI, IL, IN, MI, OH, TN, and District 5 members in Central Lodge (000) and Spirit of the New Century (999).

=====

If I win one of the 10 "People's Choice" awards, I want (choose one):

___ District 5's "Explore your Nordic heritage" sweatshirt, size _____ (M, L, XL, 2XL)

___ District 5's "After a hard sea voyage" apron

ENTERING THE PHOTO CONTEST?

Information you need to know ...

SOME SUBJECT ITEMS TO CONSIDER:

- 1.) landscapes or scenery
- 2.) transportation including railroads, highways and bridges
- 3.) people and cultural events
- 4.) museums, churches, government and historical buildings
- 5.) folk creatures (trolls, nisse, etc.) (for use as Jokers)

Because "portrait" (tall and not wide) photos will be used on the playing cards, not "landscape" (wide and not tall), consider this in how you select photos to enter in this contest.

RULES:

- 1.) You must be a up-to-date Sons of Norway member in District 5.
- 2.) You must have taken the photos in a Scandinavian country.
- 3.) Up to five photos may be submitted.
- 4.) Photos can be digital or print. Digital photos should be a resolution of at least one MB or larger, and 300 dpi or higher). Submit digital images via email in JPEG format. Use a separate email for each picture you enter.
- 5.) Print photos can also be submitted by mail as a physical 5 X 7 copy of the photo. (A digital image is preferred vs. physical photograph.)
- 6.) After your submission, the photo will be cropped for the aspect ratio (0.566) needed for a playing card. This will be done by the district, and the cropped photo will be emailed to you for approval.
- 7.) You may also submit your photos in the 0.566 aspect ratio, if you wish. (At 300 dpi, the digital image will be 857 pixels wide x 1507 high.)
- 8.) A lower resolution version of your photo will be put on the District 5 website, so a "People's Choice" vote can be done.
- 9.) Submit a short write-up (3 to 5 sentences) to accompany each photo, to explain the subject of each photo.
- 10.) Your entry must be postmarked or emailed by July 5, 2020, 12:59 PM.
- 11.) The winners will be selected based by the "People's Choice" voting on the District 5 website, as well as by the District 5 Photo Contest Committee.

Submit your entry to:

Christina Fairchild
226 W. River St.
Rockton IL 61072
email: SOFND5Contests@gmail.com
Email subject line should be: "Photo contest - *Your Name*"