

Sons of Norway

Polar Star Lodge 5-472

Meetings on the first Sunday of the month – Potluck at 1:30 p.m.
St. Olaf Lutheran Church – Douglas Road, Montgomery, IL

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President's Message



President Ken and Barb with grandsons, Nels and Leif

Hilsen Polar Star Lodge!

Our Lodge activities remain on hold as our country battles the Corona virus. I hope you have all been using this time to work on culture and sports medals. I also encourage all of you to reach out to members by phone and letters. This is a difficult time for all of us, but hopefully we will be together soon!

Your President
Ken Johnson

UPCOMING EVENTS

Anderson Farm
Fish Fry

Saturday

October 17th

3:30-6:30

Adults: \$15.00

Kids: 12 and under free

Polar Star Newsletter Deadline
Will be the 14th of every month.
Please submit all articles to Barb Johnson
at barbijohnsonb@aol.com
Follow us on facebook @
Sons of Norway – Polar Star Lodge

Norway Museum Webiste
www.norskmuseum.org.
Polar Star Website
www.polarstarlodge.com

Proclamation on Leif Erikson Day, 2020

Issued on: October 8, 2020

By President Donald J. Trump

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/proclalmantion-leif-erikson-day-2020>

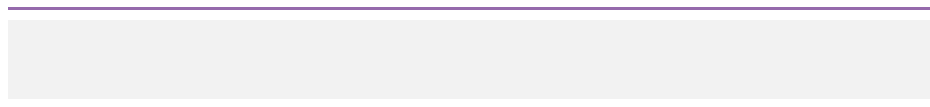
More than 1,000 years ago, the Norse explorer and Viking Leif Erikson made landfall in modern-day Newfoundland, likely becoming the first European to discover the New World. Today, Leif Erikson represents over a millennium of shared history between the Nordic countries and the Americas and symbolizes the many contributions of Nordic Americans to our great Nation.

Accomplished in the face of daunting danger and carried out in service of Judeo-Christian values, Leif Erikson’s story reflects the fundamental truths about the American character. On a mission to evangelize Greenland, Leif Erikson and his crew were blown off course. They had to brave the cold waters of the northern Atlantic to find safe harbor on the North American coastline. In surviving this ordeal, these hardened Vikings tested the limits of human exploration in a way that continues to inspire us today.

In 1825, six Norwegian families repeated this voyage, landing their sloop in New York Harbor in the first organized migration to the United States from Scandinavia. Like the Puritans and pilgrims before them, these people came to our Nation seeking religious freedom and safety from persecution. Now, more than 11 million Americans can trace their roots to Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden, and among them stand Nobel Laureates, Academy Award winners, and Legion of Merit recipients. Across our Nation, from the Danish villages of western Iowa to the Norwegian Ridge in Minnesota and the Finns of Michigan’s Upper Peninsula, Nordic Americans have left their mark on our culture, economy, and society.

Nordic countries remain strong economic partners and military allies of our Nation. They each hold important roles in the Arctic Council, facilitating cooperation on economic development, environmental conservation, and indigenous rights. As North Atlantic Treaty Organization Allies and partners, all five Nordic countries greatly contribute to the peace and

Leif Erikson Day
October 9th
Ingers Språkkrigere
Celebrate Leif!
Skål!



stability of the transatlantic community and the entire world. The United States greatly values their continued friendship.

On Leif Erikson Day, we celebrate Nordic Americans whose firm faith and resolve are woven into the fabric of our Nation, and we commit to continuing our strong diplomatic relationship with Scandinavian nations for years to come.

To honor Leif Erikson, son of Iceland and grandson of Norway, and to celebrate our Nordic-American heritage, the Congress, by joint resolution (Public Law 88-566) approved on September 2, 1964, has authorized the President of the United States to proclaim October 9 of each year as “Leif Erikson Day.”

NOW, THEREFORE, I, DONALD J. TRUMP, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 9, 2020, as Leif Erikson Day. I call upon all Americans to celebrate the contributions of Nordic Americans to our Nation with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and forty-fifth.

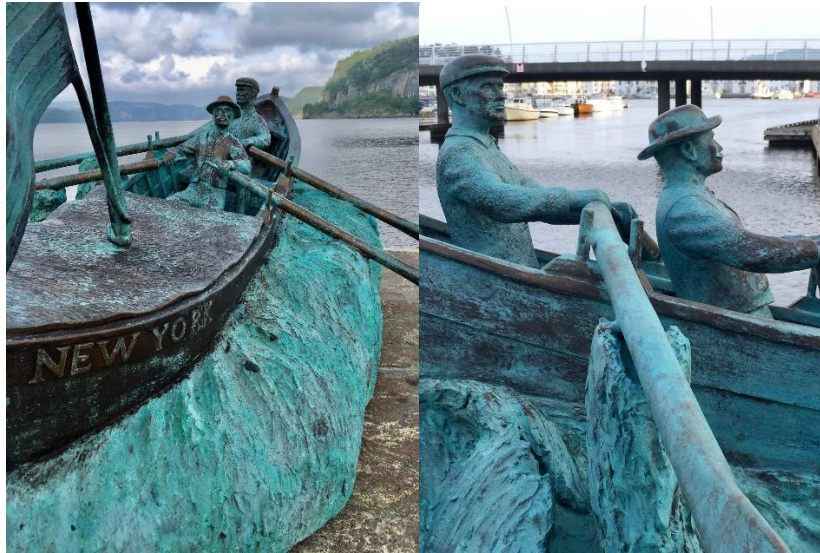
DONALD J. TRUMP



Statue of Leif Erikson, Reykjavik.
Stuart Cox /Getty Images

Harbo and Samuelsen

Submitted by Nancy and Art Andersen



So Sven and Ole were fishermen, and they got this great idea. They would row across the wide Atlantic Ocean alone in a little rowboat, and that would make them famous, and they would get rich telling about it!

Well, it really did happen, but their names were George (Gottlieb) Harbo and Frank (Gabriel) Samuelsen. Oh, and they didn't get rich. Harbo was born in Sandar, Sandefjord in Vestfold, Norway in 1864, and Samuelsen was born in 1870 in Farsund in Vest Agder, Norway. (Side note: much of Art Andersen's family comes from Farsund, and many are still there.) Both Harbo and Samuelsen had extensive experience on the sea before either one decided to head for America. They met on the New Jersey shore, where Samuelsen joined Harbo in dredging for clams.

Clamming wasn't very lucrative, and our two fishermen heard of a challenge from the publisher of the National Police Gazette, Richard Fox. Fox offered a gold medal and good publicity, and some stories say that he offered \$10,000 (about \$300,000 today) to the first men to row across the Atlantic. It cannot be confirmed that the money offer was made, or that the men expected such a huge prize (which they certainly did not get), but the fact is that Harbo and Samuelsen did get the idea that they could achieve fame and fortune by carrying out that feat. Were they crazy?

The men planned the boat that they would need, and used their savings to have it built, naming it "Fox" after the publisher. It was clinker-built of oak with cedar sheathing, pointed at both ends (like old-style Norwegian wooden boats), 18 feet 4 inches long and 5 feet wide, with rails built into the

sides to help them right it if it capsized. This would later save their lives. There were sealed compartments on each end for flotation air and for water tanks. They would carry a small kerosene stove (which later proved useless), water, sea biscuits, canned meats, coffee and eggs, planned to last two months. They had oilskins, three extra pairs of oars lashed down, and planned to navigate with sextant, compass and chart.

Fox paid to have the boat towed to Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, and promised to pay expenses in Europe when (if) they arrived there. With a crowd cheering and jeering them, Harbo and Fox began their voyage from the Battery at the southern tip of Manhattan on June 6, 1896. They shouted back, "We'll see you in France or in heaven!" Their plan was to both row 18 hours a day, taking turns during the night for 3 hours at a time for sleep. They headed north along the coast past Newfoundland to pick up the transatlantic eastward Gulf Stream.

The rowers had a run-in with a big shark that bumped the boat, and then followed them, and with a pod of whales. Several times they had encounters with ships. Those aboard the ships could not believe that the rowers were not survivors of a shipwreck, or that they were really intent on rowing to Europe. Harbo and Samuelsen had word sent back to America to say that they were okay, and had it verified that they were not using a sail, but they did not accept the offers to take them back. When a Norwegian fishing ship came near them July 1, they accepted the offer of a much-needed hot meal, and they went back to rowing, feeling stronger.

A few days later a storm came on, and the seas rose, battering them for two days. When they could no longer hold their course into the storm they lashed their oars and made sure their safety lines were securely attached. Finally a massive wave came over them and capsized the boat. Fortunately the lifelines held, and they were able to pull themselves over to the boat, rock the boat and heave it over, clamber in, and bail for their lives. Fortunately, the storm soon broke, and they had favorable weather for the rest of the trip. They hung their wool clothing up to dry and rowed naked for a while to keep warm. Unfortunately, they had lost much of their food and half of the water, and had to ration what little they had left.

Halfway to Europe, they had the good luck to meet up with a full-rigged sailing bark from Norway, which took them onboard and fed them well, sending them on their way with new provisions. They rowed on, despite swollen arms and hands and aching backs. On August 1 they sighted a light before dawn, and it turned out to be Bishop's Rock in the Scilly Islands off the southwest corner of Wales in the British Isles. They had rowed 3,250 miles from New York! They came ashore at St. Mary's, and could scarcely walk after nearly two months in their little boat. The American consul there could hardly believe their story, since no one had ever rowed across the Atlantic before.

After a long sleep, they rowed on in their boat to get to Le Havre, France, their final destination. After a long sleep, they rowed on in their boat to get to Le Havre, France, their final destination. They could barely walk when they arrived August 7 to cheering crowds. Publisher Fox came to Paris himself, and presented the pair with gold medals at a dinner, and paid for their expenses there. The rowers went on tour in Europe, but there was no prize money, and they didn't make

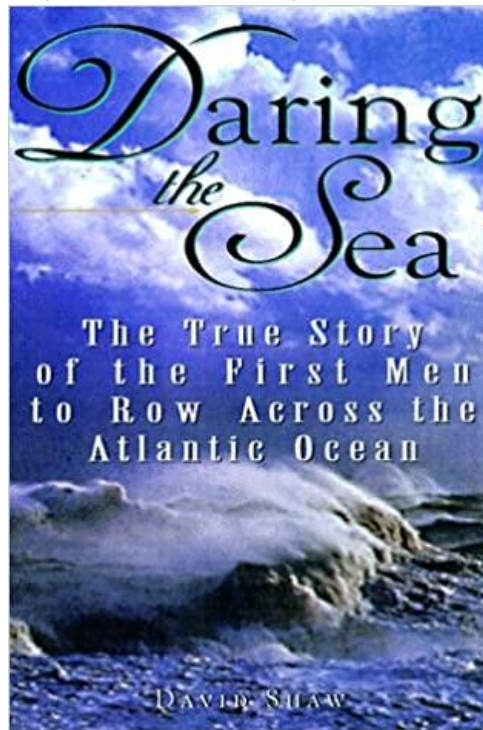
much money touring. Back in Norway they met criticism for not crossing under the Norwegian flag, but they got 10 kroner from King Oscar of Sweden and Norway. But their record for two men rowing across the Atlantic Ocean still stands to this day.

Harbo and Samuelsen decided to return to America, and had their weathered little boat loaded onto a steamer for the trip. For a while they were a sensation in America, but their fame faded fast, and they returned to clamming. After some time, Samuelsen returned to the family farm in Farsund where he lived a good long life. Harbo went back to being a New York harbor pilot, but unfortunately died at 44, leaving 9 children.

Fast forward to the present, a Norwegian from Farsund named Victor Samuelsen (no relation to Gabriel/Frank) is responsible for the creation of a bronze monument to Harbo and Samuelsen which stands on the edge of the fjord in Farsund, home town of both Samuelsens. He would like to have a duplicate cast and placed in New York's Battery Park.

Footnote: Check out on YouTube the "Harbo and Samuelsen" ballad. Also, Google the 8 1/2 minute Bookworm History video, "The Fantastic Voyage of the Fox

Editor's Note: The following book written in English can be purchased through Amazon.



A portrait of Norwegian immigrants George Habo and Frank Samuelsen explores the lives of these first men to row across the Atlantic Ocean, their families, and their dreams and disappointments, through chronicles of their long and nearly fatal 1896 journey.

Polar Star Culture Corner

Our Lodge continues to earn culture medals in 2020. Writing a review of book for the newsletter completes the requirements for the Norwegian Literature Medals.

Review of “A Doll’s House”

A Play by Henrik Ibsen

Review by Frank Krawczyk

This review of “A Doll’s House” by Henrik Ibsen is not based upon “seeing” the play but upon “reading” the play, a different experience and a satisfying one. The play was written in 1879 and was critical of society’s view of women. As such it was not well received by viewers because it pointed out the lack of freedom and respect afforded women by their husbands and fathers alike. The lead character, Nora, likes and consumes macaroons, and must hide that fact from her husband, Torvald, because he doesn’t want her to have them. Torvald also chides her about the value of money and considers her, incorrectly, as a spendthrift. Furthermore Nora’s husband uses pet names for her that is a diminutive form such as sparrow and the like.

As the play progresses it becomes obvious that Nora borrowed money for her husband’s illness to be cured using the forged name of her father. The holder of the bond she forged, Nils Krogstad, who lent her the money, demands her help in retaining his job under threat of telling her husband where the money came from. It soon becomes obvious to Nora that her husband thinks of his desires above and beyond the importance of Nora’s desires and needs. In reflection Nora believes she is not so much loved and owned. This play contains treachery, deceit, dominance, lies and unrequited love. I highly recommend that if you cannot “see” this play you read it.

The Viking, from Norway to America

By R.E Rasmussen

Crew member on the Viking

Translated from Norwegian

This book is published by Friends of the Viking translated into English. The ship is now in residence in Geneva Illinois where it is undergoing restoration. But the story begins in the spring of 1892 when

the author first learned of the plan to build the Viking to sail from Norway to the World Columbian Exposition held in Chicago in 1893.

The story begins in earnest when Rasmussen traveled to Kristiania to meet with the ship's Captain Magnus Anderson and submit an application to become one of the ships crew. The ship itself is patterned after the "Gokstad" ship and the Viking was built in Sandefjord Norway.

With the completion of the Viking the journey began by sailing to Kristiania for cleaning and outfitting and then to Bergen, it's last port in Norway. Early on Sunday April 29, 1893 the Viking set sail out of Bergen for America and Chicago Illinois. The story continues naming the crew and the voyage across the Atlantic. It also describes the stops the ship made in America. Wherever the Viking appeared crowds gathered to wonder at the ship and he crew. This text includes numerous illustrations and photos.

The book ends with an Addendum which tells of the movement of the Viking down the Mississippi to New Orleans and back. Also covered in the Addendum is the movement of the Viking ship from place to place in the Chicago area and activities of the "Friends of the Viking Ship" to find a permanent home and restoration of this magnificent vessel.

This is a recommended read for anyone of Norwegian ancestry.

This book is available from the "Friends of the Viking Ship" www.vikingship.us

Review by Frank Krawczyk

Sports and Activities Report by Jerri Lynn Baker



Thumbs up to Polar Star walkers!!! Only 1669.09 miles left on our virtual walk back to Norway! This month we even added Floyd Anderson to our list of walkers list!

Gratulerer Med Dagen (Happy Birthday)
Polar Star!



Karen Oswald October 30



Cole Johnson

November 4



OCTOBER 16-31

- 19. Donna Kristensen**
- 19. Emilia Todd**
- 30. Karen Oswald**

NOVEMBER 1-15

- 4. Cole Johnson**
- 9. Gelaine G. Gallucci**
- 9. Jean Kutrovatz**

October is Foundation Month

Submitted by Carol Devito
Polar Star Foundation Director

Faithful to Our Mission and Members:

At the Sons of Norway Foundation, we are driven by a sense of purpose: to share and preserve Nordic heritage, to positively affect our members' lives, and to make Sons of Norway communities better places to live. Since 1966, staying true to this purpose, we have been supporting our members through scholarship and cultural exchange opportunities, providing disaster relief to members in need, and funding community programs that celebrate Norwegian heritage and culture.

In 2019 Sons of Norway awarded:
\$12,500 in camperships
\$27,000 in grants (we benefited in 2019 and 2020)
\$103,000 in scholarships

Last year we received a \$500.00 grant in May for our Norwegian classes.

This year in May we received a grant for \$1,330.00 to host the Stoughton Norwegian Dancers (of course it is on hold until 2021).

It is important to support the Foundation so they can continue their good works. Polar Star Lodge makes a yearly contribution, but the Foundation also counts on donations from their members who are able to contribute to continue their good works. Any amount large or small is appreciated. If you need a donation envelope, please let me know and I will send you one. Thank you.

If anyone is interested in taking over as Foundation Director, please let me know. It might be good to have someone with a new perspective to take over this position. Thank you.

POLAR STAR 2020 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

PROGRAMS 1:30 p.m. (unless listed)

POLAR STAR JULETREFEST

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6th 2020 pending virus safety

Tree trimming at 1:00 p.m.

POTLUCK BEGINS AT 1:30

January 3, 2021 pending virus safety

