



**SONS OF
NORWAY**

**SOLVANG LODGE 457
WESTBY, WISCONSIN**
Sons of Norway Newsletter (Sandhetter)



Editors: David Torgerson & Hazel Cornell

Volume 49

Issue #2

Westby, WI

JUNE 28, 2016

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Hilsen Solvang Members

What a great April and May we have had. I couldn't have been prouder of our lodge at our 100th anniversary event. The committee, with Margaret Veum in the lead, did a wonderful job with each taking their role and running with it. I have had compliments on every aspect of it from the location, the food, the speakers, the decorations, the auction, the heritage and everything connected with the evening. Thank you all so much! Following closely after everyone jumped in again, with Faye McClurg leading, with the Frokost. Again it was very successful with a larger crowd than



Photo by Phyllis Eklov

last year. Both events went so smoothly it was amazing. A big hit at both events was the Viking ship made by Karen. One more event in May again was successful. The Grieg Men's Choir from Madison was beyond wonderful and we had a very good crowd in the beautiful Country Coon Prairie Church. Thanks to Owen and Naomi Bekkum for their assistance in bringing them here. Also thanks again to the faithful cookie bakers for the coffee and treats after the concert. At the end of the concert, Jon Grinde, a member of the chorus and also an International Director of Sons of Norway, presented our lodge with a plaque from Sons of Norway commemorating our anniversary. It didn't get here for the anniversary or he would have presented it then. I would say our 100th year has been a very successful year and we have made our lodge very well known in the community. Now a little relaxation and I am wishing you all a safe and enjoyable summer. See you at the June meeting.

Sandy PS: Do not forget the picnic in LaCrosse at the Hixon Center in Myrick Park in LaCrosse on Tuesday July 26th at 6:00pm, and the June 28 meeting with the subject being tobacco in Vernon County.

SOLVANG LODGE MEETING MARCH 29, 2016



We gathered at the Bekkum Library Community Room at 7:00 P.M. with 56 people in attendance. After our business meeting we were entertained by Madeline and Cathy Anderson (Photo upper right) with help from Blaine Hedberg as they gave an informative history lesson on the formation of the original Solvang Lodge 457 in 1916 as the Daughter's of Norway. They had pictures and detailed information of the outstanding founding women. Our Pot o'gold" drawing went to Bertha Johnson. New members attending were Craig and Vicky Dunnun and David Kraabel. We were reminded by Cedric Veum and Karen Hankee of the availability of awards we can earn for Sports and Cultural endeavors. A lunch was served by Jerry and Kay Burke and Sandy and Ron Iverson.

OUR SOLVANG LODGE 457 CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION on April 23, 2016

The celebration has been deemed a large success, including everyone, the attendance reached about 200. The name tags were made by Cedric and Margaret Veum. Our President Sandy Iverson gave the welcome. The program cover was designed by our long time member Evelyn Larson. The Westby Elementary School Folk Dancers kicked off the evening directed by Sarah Nestingen. The entrance to and the hall in Timber Coulee looked amazing. The Viking Ship was the theme for this event. We had the large Viking Ship, delivered by David Dregne, at the entrance to the grounds and a mini Viking Ship at each place setting, the building of them spearheaded by Janet Johnson. Herring, Lefsa and the delicious meal catered by Borgen's Café was served from a large Viking Ship designed and built by Karen Hankee, it appeared to be sailing on water. Our dessert, Red, White, and Blue cupcakes and a Kransekake, donated by Joyce Quarnstrom, were served by the 2016 Syttende Mai Royalty. Diane Pieper made sure there were American, Norwegian and Canadian flags on each table along with a Norwegian style placemat and the mini Viking Ships. We had a special table for our long time members Florence Holen, Marilyn Sharping, Elaine Lund currently living at Norseland Nursing Home. Brian Rude, who has been a member of our lodge for the most years, was the emcee for the evening. He introduced many special guests: Westby's Mayor Dan Helgerson, Blaine Hedberg Sons of Norway Foundation, Elizabeth Erickson led us in the National Anthems, Reverend John Spidel-Stennes for the Table Prayer. Officers of Sons of Norway: Owen Christianson District 5 President, Ray Knutson the International Treasure and Jon Tehven our International Sons of Norway President all extended congratulation and gave a brief talk. They said they enjoyed having a part in celebrating our one hundred years of being a Sons of Norway Lodge. We enjoyed a parade of 14 Bunads with Sandy Iverson giving information about each one. Myron "Buddy" Rundhaugen of international fame provided music. We feel we were blessed to have all these people attending our event. The Silent Auction was a large success. The "History Table" with its display of historical items organized by Corrine Olson drew a lot of attention. David Torgerson was the official photographer and Roger Hanson filmed a video. This special evening will be remembered for years to come.

The following were some of our speakers and SON Celebrities.



Our President Sandy Iverson



Our Master of Ceremony Brian Rude



Blaine Hedberg on SON Foundation



Westby Mayor Dan Helgerson



International Treasurer Ray Knutson



District 5 SON President Owen Christianson



SON International President Jon Tehven



Former and current Solvang Lodge 457 Presidents (from left to right – Russell Hanson, Gary Daines, Myron Rundhaugen, Ron Iverson, and Current President Sandy Iverson).

Below are other photos from our 100th anniversary celebration at the Westby Rod and Gun facilities in Timber coulee.



Karen Hankee's Viking main course serving venue



Syttende Mai royalty and the Viking ship



Westby Elementary Folk Dancers



Let's eat and enjoy the food and company



Bunad and Folk Dress participants



Dennis Hagen and Howard Dunnun looking sharp



Dinner place settings with Evelyn Larson art work

night. Then the wagon train carried on. However, "Latin American revolutions and World War I claimed the lives of everyone who had seen where the gold was buried."

"There's a treasure up on Wildcat Mountain. Did you know that? Most people don't! ... Gold like you won't believe. Bags and bags of it. Worth millions, I would guess." An excerpt from the story 'Wildcat Mountain's Sentinel' appearing in Dennis Boyer's 1996 book, *Driftless Spirits*. In letters to his family, the Billings man left clues about the treasure. "The letters contained obscure references to astronomy, astrology and mythology," The story goes. These references intertwine with what has become a well-documented history of spiritual happenings at the mountain. The man Boyer interviewed added that there's a ghost guarding the gold, but the ghost really doesn't guard the treasure, instead its job is to lure people away. "...This sentinel doesn't stand on top of the gold," the man said. "So, when people see this ghost they aren't going to find anything. That's the whole point, he decoys them away! The ghost throws people off the trail so to speak."

The legend says that aside from the common odd noises and strange sights, the ghost likes to throw rocks and wields a Bowie knife. Some people have seen him on horseback, others have seen him standing on the rocks on the mountain with his rifle. The story finishes up that the ghost is also able to shift its shape. "Most often it's a wildcat," the man said. "That's what I saw. Now some people don't know what a wildcat is. So there's been all sorts of confusion about bobcats, lynx and mountain lions... Now some say the form of the ghost goes way back. Back before the gold. I've seen the wildcat. He changes his size from house-cat size to big old Buick size. But sometimes you see just the shadow and not the cat himself. "I saw him on the full run on Highway 131 one night," the man continued. "I followed him from the Hay Valley Road junction down in the Town of Stark until he bounded off on Plumb Run Road just before La Farge..."

ANOTHER VERSION JESSE JAMES' GOLD

And if there wasn't gold at Wildcat Mountain left by some Billings family, perhaps there's gold on the mountain hidden there by outlaw Jesse James, his brother, Frank, or members of their gang. In his short life, 1847-1882, Jesse James and the James-Younger gang were among the most notorious of characters, carrying out robberies throughout the lower Midwest into Iowa and Minnesota. They derailed trains, held up stagecoaches and robbed banks.

In 1876, members of the James-Younger gang attempted to hold up a bank in Northfield, Minn., according to Northfield Historical Society records. A bank teller refused to open the safe and was shot and killed. A bystander, a Swedish immigrant, was also killed as he didn't understand English and failed to follow the instructions of the robbers. Two members of the gang were killed in an ensuing shoot out. The gang fled and split up with some heading east, presumably the Younger brothers, Cole, Jim and Bob. Frank and Jesse James headed west. However, the history may have the directions and groups backwards. Northfield is located close to Rochester, Minn., and it's believed that the James-Younger gang may have crossed into Wisconsin infrequently to "lay low." Local legend has it that Wildcat Mountain was the spot and some of the James-Younger gang's loot and gold is still buried on the mountain.

The Northfield botched robbery is thought to have been the beginning of the end for the James-Younger gang, although it remained active until 1881. But Jesse James' gold that's supposedly at Wildcat Mountain might be much older than the 1880s. Frank James, during the Civil War, fought on the side of the Confederacy for Quan-trill's Guerrillas. William Quantrill was the leader of one of the most savage units fighting for the South, and his hit-and-run tactics supposedly were models for the James-Younger gang.

It has not been without speculation that some of the supposed gold buried at Wildcat Mountain and guarded by the sentinel ghost may be Civil War booty collected by Quantrill's group and later hidden by Frank James at their Wildcat Mountain hideout. Historical records, however, don't support this piece of folklore. Only the Mountain knows. Editor's note: I know where it is but I am not telling.

Norsk Joke Time

Ole's neighbor Sven had a boy, Sven Junior, who came home one day and asked, "Papa, I have da biggest feet in da third grade. Is dat becuss I'm Norvegian?"
"No," said Sven, "It's because you're NINETEEN."

Ole wore both of his winter jackets when he painted his house last July. The directions on the can said "put on two coats".

One particular Sunday Ole was lying back in the hammock and, having just returned from church with Lena, he was feeling a little religious. "God," said Ole, "Ven you made Lena, vy did you make her so nice and round and so pleasant ta hold?" Suddenly a voice from above said, "So you would love her, Ole." "Vell then vy, oh vy," asked Ole, "vy Lord did you make her so stupid?" "So she would love YOU," said the voice.

A few photos from Syttende Mai parade etc.



AGRICULTURE IN NORWAY

Agriculture in Norway accounts for about 2 percent of annual GDP, and only 3 percent of the land is cultivated, which seems natural, given the cold climate, thin soils, and mountainous terrain. Grains are grown only in the south while western Norway has some livestock raising and dairy farming. The leading crops in 1998 were cereals, particularly barley, wheat, and oats (total output of 1.3 million metric tons), and potatoes (400,320 tons). In 1998, there were 2.5 million sheep, 998,400 cattle, and 768,400 hogs in the country. Norway is still a major fishing nation and is self-sufficient in many agricultural products, but fruits, vegetables, and most grains are all imported. Agriculture and fishing remain heavily protected by the Norwegian government.

The Saami of Norway's North have a special agricultural career in Reindeer husbandry

Reindeer husbandry is a small industry on a national scale, but in Saami and local communities it is of great importance for the economy, employment and culture. The aim of Norway's Ministry of Agriculture and Food is to ensure that the Reindeer trade in Norway is ecologically, economically and culturally sustainable. Reindeer husbandry as an industry, culture and way of life is unique, both nationally and internationally.



The Reindeer diet of wild herbs makes for a savory and sophisticated contribution to the abundant cuisine of Norway.

Norway's reindeer husbandry policies are guided by two independent principles: economic policy and indigenous peoples' rights.

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