



Meetings: *cancelled until further notice due to State of Emergency*

Sept - April: 2nd Sundays, 2 p.m.

May only: 3rd Sunday, 2 p.m.

Trinity Lutheran Church

504 S. Westnedge Ave

Kalamazoo, MI

Officers:

President: Gail Thompson-Hadley

(269) 845-2265

ghadley@iusb.edu

Secretary/Acting Membership

Secretary/Newsletter Publisher:

Judy Hande-Skutnick

(269) 903-8386

jhandeskutnick@gmail.com

Vice-President/Editor:

Joan O'Bryan

507 Clinton Avenue

Kalamazoo, MI 49001

(269) 383-6802

joan.obryan@wmich.edu

Treasurer: Curtis Cleveland

(269) 381-4531

cacleve82@att.net

Cultural Director:

Holly Jensen

1453 Spruce Drive

Kalamazoo MI 49008

(269) 385-3693

hollyjensen@yahoo.com

Affiliation:

Sons of Norway International

1455 West Lake St.

Minneapolis, MN 55408

Andy Johnsen, President,

Sons of Norway District 5;

Director, District 5 Zone 6

aijohnsen@att.net

Benefits Counselor:

Greg Ragan

1 (800) 442-4146

gregragan@aol.com

Lodge contact info:

Askeladden.Lodge@gmail.com

(269) 350-3330

Sunday, December 13

2 p.m. (via Zoom)

Christmas in Norway with the St. Olaf Choir

Jul i Nidarosdomen

Although we won't have our traditional Christmas program at Trinity Lutheran Church this year, make yourself a cup of hot chocolate, and perhaps bake a batch of krumkake, and then join with Askeladden members and friends for 15 or 20 minutes of greetings and sharing your family's Norwegian Christmas traditions via Zoom. This meeting is open to all and in keeping with tradition, the Vasa Satellite Lodge is invited to join us.

Then together we will watch a one-hour video of a 2013 performance of the world-renowned a cappella St. Olaf Choir as they sing with the Nidarosdomens Jentekor (Nidaros Cathedral Girls Choir) in glorious Nidaros Cathedral in Trondheim, Norway. This concert previously aired on NRK in Norway and on PBS stations in the US. Some of the songs are sung in Norwegian with organ, strings, piano, horns, bells, and a little hardanger fiddle music.

The St. Olaf's beloved choir was founded in 1912 by Norwegian immigrant F. Melius Christiansen who set the high standards for excellence. His son, Olaf, followed as conductor in 1943, and retained traditional church chorales, but added more contemporary compositions, Renaissance music, and American folk hymns. When Anton Armstrong became the conductor in 1990, he added the flavor of music from the Pacific Rim, Africa, and Latin America.

Zoom info:

Topic: Askeladden: St. Olaf Christmas Concert Nidaros Cathedral

Time: December 13, 2 p.m. Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join on laptop, desktop, or other device on which you can view email messages:

<https://zoom.us/j/93610347938?pwd=bmRlY2JpUUZhMEcxY044eVlrbnNqUT09>

OR join on other devices with audio/video capability using downloaded Zoom app:

Meeting ID: **936 1034 7938**

Passcode: **828131**

Join by phone: 1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

ASKELOADDEN NEWS

“The Askeladden News”

Curtis Cleveland, Lodge Historian

For over 30 years, the lodge's newsletter *The Askeladden News* has been the record and heart of Askeladden Lodge. During these years, there have been seven editors of the newsletter. Starting with this issue, I will write about the editors and their supporting crews: the assistant editors, typist, and publishers. The first two editors, Marine Damvelt and Myrtle Beinhauer, are covered in this issue.

First, here are the seven editors:

- Marine Damvelt, editor from October 1988 to May 1993
- Myrtle Beinhauer, editor from July 1993 to August 1994
- Ferne Best, editor from October 1994 to December 2000
- Louise Adams, editor from January 2001 to December 2004
- Helen Loen, editor from January 2005 to December 2006
- Dennis Darling, editor from January to September 2007
- Joan O'Bryan, editor from October 2007 to the present

Second, here is an important date: September 24, 1998. This was Institution Day, when officials of the International Sons of Norway recognized the members of the Kalamazoo-based group Friends of Norway as members of the newly instituted Askeladden Lodge. Before the Institution Day, between 1986-88, Friends of Norway, spearheaded by Myrtle Beinhauer and 13 other citizens, recruited members for a future Sons of Norway lodge in Kalamazoo. This group published two editions of a newsletter, which included the names and contact information of the Steering Committee, lists of interested members, and articles about upcoming social events of the group. No editor was listed. The article bylines, when listed, include Karen Kunze and Jean Darling.

The first editor of *The Askeladden News* was Marine (Sonny) Damvelt. He was the editor from October 1988 to May 1993, four and one-half years. His supporting crew consisted of Karen Damvelt, his wife, as the assistant editor and Louise Adams, the typist. During his term as editor, Marine completed the duties of the publisher. Marine set the practices and traditions that have been maintained to the present.

The early editions of the newsletter lacked a name, other than “Sons of Norway, Askeladden Lodge, 5-610.” However, starting with the April 1990 issue, the name “The Askeladden News” was used. This name has been used to the present.

Published monthly, the newsletter consisted of 2 to 4 sheets of stapled paper (8-1/2 x 11), printed on both sides with black ink.

Articles, which were consistent from issue to issue, focused on upcoming lodge events, reports on the previous lodge meetings, upcoming fund raising events, list of the officers (14 of them) with telephone numbers, list of new members, monthly birthday lists, and the lodge's many Special Interest Groups with contact information. The Special Interest Groups included: Youth Group, Norwegian Language, Genealogy, Rosemaling, Folk Dancing, Travel, and Norse History. There were two other articles that were found in each newsletter issue: the president's column and an article about the lodge members.

Myrtle Beinhauer, the lodge's first president, called her column “FRA PRESIDENTEN.” She began each column with the greeting: “Kjaere Venner.” The columns varied in length, from one paragraph (44 words) to two pages, when she talked about her trip to Norway (summer of 1990). All of her columns were well written and important, regardless of talking about having fun at an upcoming picnic or talking about the importance of increasing lodge membership.

The articles about the lodge members, eventually called “ABOUT US,” first appeared in the May 1989 issue. Members had to give the information about themselves to Marine or Myrtle, which many did. As a result we know about the foreign and domestic travels of the members, health issues of the members, the birth of the grandchildren, the birth of Karin and David Code's children, advancements at work, and retirements from work.

In January 1991, Scott Erickson became the second lodge president of Askeladden Lodge. During the two years that he was president he wrote articles about the executive board meetings, but, unfortunately, did not write a monthly president's column. Myrtle continued to contribute articles for the newsletter, especially the “ABOUT US” articles. Other members who contributed articles in 1991-92 included Anne Rapp, Pearl Ingebritson, Inger Thoen, Lorraine Clyne, Norma Gilbertson, Karin Code, and Dee Pederson.

In 1993, the president's column returned as a monthly feature when Joyce Hare became the third lodge president. In July 1993, Myrtle Beinhauer became the second editor of *The Askeladden News*, when Marine Damvelt stepped down as editor on the occasion of his retirement from business. Myrtle's very first issue featured the Askeladden Lodge logo (Troll with the Lad) for the first time. Our unique lodge logo was designed by Charter Member Philip Kunze. Earlier issues in 1993, featured the Sons of Norway logo and photographs, both for the first time. Since then all editions have included both logos.

The “ABOUT US” articles continued to be the real heart of the monthly newsletters. The articles in 1993 were expanded to include biographical sketches of the members, containing information on members' parents, birth, education, work, marriage and civic involvement. Myrtle's crew included Louise Adams as typist and Marine Damvelt as publisher. In 1994, the publishers were Olav Vik and Thad Shaffer.

Myrtle's final issue as editor was the August 1994 issue. She closed her “ABOUT US” article with: “That's all for now!” Elsewhere in the same issue, she said she was ill and needed to take a temporary leave as editor. Myrtle died on October 3, 1994.

Fra Sportsdirektøren

Sports Challenge: Virtual Walk to Norway

As you may recall, in celebration of the 125th anniversary of the founding of Sons of Norway, District 5 issued a Sports/Physical Challenge. The Challenge began November 1, 2019, and continues through **December 15, 2020**. The objective is to track an individual's miles from various sporting activities (walking, running, swimming, cycling, ice skating, roller skating, and skiing) and obtain the Lodge's aggregate total. With the goal to match the virtual distance from Askeladden Lodge to Minneapolis, MN (where Sons of Norway was founded, 604 miles) and then to Ringsaker, Norway where the International Convention will be held (3984 miles). For a combined Lodge effort of 4,588 miles.

Please telephone, text, or email me with the Participant's Name, Activity type and Miles attained as soon after December 15 as possible, so I can aggregate the Lodge's total and forward the results to SoN HQ by December 31. I will then report our grand total back to the lodge.

Tusen takk,
Curt

aasbjorn@sbcglobal.net
(269) 589-9425

ASKELOADDEN NEWS

Fra Presidenten

Norwegian Family Christmas Traditions

This past week I have visited with several Askeladden members to learn about the favorite Norwegian Christmas traditions they remember from their younger days. Inger Thoen lived in Norway until she was 25 and was born before WWII devastated Norway so she told me of happy times when her mother and grandmother started baking weeks before Christmas and made a dozen kinds of special cookies. Her family had a Christmas tree with real lighted candles for years before they switched to electric lights. They made little heart-shaped baskets from shiny paper filled with candy to decorate their tree along with colored balls and many Norwegian flags. On Christmas Eve, the grandparents and bachelor uncles would enjoy a big meal at their home and they would hold hands and walk around the decorated tree singing Christmas songs. Inger's father would go out to meet Santa Klaus who would then appear with presents for all. Her father would return later and say, oh – he had missed seeing Santa again that year. On Christmas Day, they would have a long table filled with all the Christmas cookies and other treats for more family and neighbors who would stop by for a Christmas Day visit.

Like many Norwegians, Inger's family had a log cabin with a sod roof in the mountains where she and her four sisters spent summers outside and learned to ski and skate at age 3 as was a matter of course for Norwegian children. New Askeladden member, Astrid Willis, who also grew up in Norway, told me that children learned to ski and skate just like they learned to walk. Astrid's family lived outside Oslo ten minutes from a large park where they skated and learned to ski on the mountains right near home.

Astrid was born in an attic at the start of WWII so her first years were ones when Norwegians suffered from lack of food, and all the other items stolen by the Germans. Her mother was lucky to secure a few eggs and some meat once in a while, and the children would take their empty buckets to the Norwegian Lutheran church daily for porridge which helped keep them alive. Astrid's father served in the Merchant Marine so they would see him only twice a year. In later years, Astrid's mother baked 13 kinds of cookies at Christmas time. Askeladden members have shared recipes in past years, and Astrid suggested we should put together a cookbook of our favorite Norwegian family recipes complete with stories describing their significance.

Joyce Hare grew up in the Seattle, Washington, area with her Norwegian grandmother and mother baking seven kinds of cookies, as well as lutefisk, lefse, jul kake, fudge, pulled taffy, and Norwegian pork and lamb. Joyce's grandmother knitted sweaters and hats for gifts and her carpenter father built an elaborate doll house and made painted birch bark Christmas cards. Joyce's grandparents had a farm which is still in the family

and the farm forester has sent a large, fragrant box of Washington state evergreen boughs to Joyce every Christmas for the past 20 years which she uses to grace her mantle and make wreaths, reminiscent of the Christmas trees they put up on Christmas Eve when she was young.

Jean Willinger spent her childhood near La Crosse, Wisconsin, and went to her Norwegian grandparents' farm 20 miles away for a Christmas Eve meal and then on Christmas Day after services at the local Lutheran Church. Jean also learned to ski at a young age and skated on the rinks in La Crosse as well as on the frozen creek at her grandparents' farm.

Anne Rapp grew up in Ohio and treasures her Norwegian mother's hand-written cookbook with recipes for the 20 to 30 kinds of cookies she would start baking several weeks before Christmas every year. Anne remembers as a young child gazing up in awe with arms up-raised at their beautiful Christmas tree.

Joan O'Bryan's family lived 600 miles from her Norwegian grandmother so she didn't know about the lefse her grandma made every Christmas until recently. Grandma Ingeborg labored over hand-knit mittens, scarves, sweaters, socks, and hats every year for Christmas presents for all six of the Michigan grandkids.

Our Norwegian Grandma Josie lived in California and the one Christmas we visited from Michigan when I was just five years old, the Norwegian tradition I remember was her delicious krumkake baked in a cast iron pan. We did spend many Christmas holidays in Michigan at our aunt and uncle's Higgins Lake log cabin where we enjoyed time around a roaring fire and had fun sledding, skating on the frozen lake, and cross country skiing in the woods. Now my three Wisconsin grandkids have been on snowshoes and cross country and downhill skis since age 3 and are learning to ice skate; and the Ohio and Pennsylvania grandkids also love to play in winter snow. God Jul everyone!

Gail Thompson-Hadley



Christmas 2013, Gail's almost 3-year-old grandson, Russell, having fun in the snow.



Krumkake filled with whipped cream, spritz cookies, and other treats. Askeladden baking session, March 2020.



Hand-knit children's mittens from Norway, 1976.



Santas on skis.



SONS of NORWAY

Celebrating **125** Years

Askeladden Lodge
507 Clinton Ave
Kalamazoo, MI 49001

DESEMBER KALENDER



- desember 6 - Finland Independence Day - celebrating Finland's independence from the Russian Republic in 1917
- desember 10 - Nobel Peace Prize awarded in Oslo
Live stream available on YouTube. www.nobelprize.org
- desember 13 - Luciadagen - St. Lucia Day
- **desember 13** - **Askeladden Lodge Christmas program 2 p.m. via Zoom**
- desember 23 - Lille julaften - Little Christmas Eve
- desember 24 - Julaften - Christmas Eve
- desember 25 - Juledag - Christmas Day
- desember 31 - Nyttårsaften - New Year's Eve
- desember 31 - last day to submit *Askeladden News* articles, earlier is appreciated.



God Jul!

Gratulerer med dagen!

Fødselsdag Hilsener

December Birthdays

Daniel Hadley

Karen Hare

Tore Ramstad

Sandra J. Santas

NOTICE: All Askeladden **in-person** events are cancelled until further notice.

Askeladden Lodge Library

www.librarything.com/catalog/SonsofNorway

Contact Curtis Cleveland with questions or to reserve resources.



The mission of Sons of Norway is to promote and to preserve the heritage and culture of Norway, to celebrate our relationship with other Nordic Countries, and to provide quality insurance and financial products to our members.