



the ASKELADDEN news

Sons of Norway • Askeladden Lodge 5-610 • Kalamazoo, Michigan

June/July 2021

A Congenial Society of Sons, Daughters, and Friends of Norway

facebook.com/AskeladdenLodge

6/7-21

Meetings: *In-person cancelled until further notice due to the pandemic. Monthly meetings will be conducted virtually online.*

Sept - April: 2nd Sundays, 2 p.m.
May only: 3rd Sunday, 2 p.m.

Officers:

President: Gail Thompson-Hadley
(269) 845-2265
ghadley@iusb.edu

**Secretary/Newsletter Publisher/
Acting Membership Secretary:**

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:

Astrid Willis
(510) 393-5512
abwrw@aol.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
(815) 623-8817
gragan51@gmail.com
www.raganfinancialgroup.com

Lodge contact info:

Askeladden.Lodge@gmail.com
(269) 350-3330

Sunday, July 11, 2 - 4 p.m. Sommerfest Plan to join us at Marshall's picturesque Ketchum Park

731 Montgomery St, Marshall, MI 49068

Our first in-person lodge event of 2021 will be an outdoor "Summer Fest" (picnic) at Ketchum Park, in Marshall Michigan. Astrid Willis, our Cultural Director, has located a newly-upgraded park in Marshall to hold our Summer Fest. We will gather at a covered pavilion with picnic tables, located near a playground for young children/grandchildren with restrooms close by. While the light lunch will be at 2 p.m., we have reserved the area for the entire day, from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Families may want to come early or stay longer to enjoy the park.



The lodge will provide classic sandwiches and chips catered by Panera Bread, served with cookies and beverages for all. We are excited to be able to visit with each other in person for the first time since COVID restrictions prevented us from having in-person gatherings in March 2020.

Following lunch, Astrid's son Kjell Christian Croce, guitar and mandolin craftsman, will perform for us. Kjell is a well-known artist in the area. He has been playing and performing with guitar for 10 years in a variety of musical styles from rock and bluegrass to swing jazz and fingerstyle. This is sure to be a great afternoon. You can learn more about Kjell at croceguitars.com

In order to plan the food, a firm headcount is required. Please RSVP to Judy Hande-Skutnick by email jhandeskutnick@gmail.com or by phone at 269-903-8386 by July 5 so we can provide Panera the required number of sandwiches. We look forward to having a great turnout.

Transportation to and from Ketchum Park is on your own. If you need a ride or can offer one, let Judy know when you RSVP and we will do our best to coordinate car-pooling opportunities.

Anyone with health concerns about COVID can wear masks, and bring their own chairs for additional space between members.

Directions from Kalamazoo

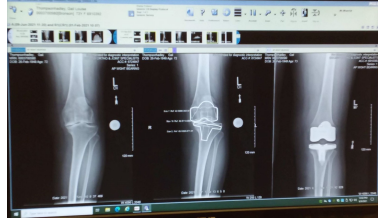
Take I 94 eastbound to exit 110, Old US-27 toward downtown Marshall. Turn right onto US Hwy 27 toward DOWNTOWN Marshall. At the roundabout, take the 3rd exit onto W. Michigan Ave. Turn right on Exchange St. The destination is on the left. There is more than one shelter at the park. Look for the Norwegian flag to find our shelter.

ASKELOADDEN NEWS

Fra Presidenten

Norsk Wood Works, Norwegian Fjord Horses, and Folk Art Tours

Summer 2021 Greetings! I have been blessed with a successful TKR Total Knee Replacement surgery in the past month and am on the road to recovery with the help of my three children and sister here for overlapping shifts of Mom-care, animal chores, household tasks, and tasty meal prep. Hurray for the miracles of modern medicine and the love, care, and support of family! I have been persistent in doing my prescribed hourly exercises, walking, and ice with elevation to get my range of motion back plus strengthen my muscles so I will be ready for summer and fall explorations to places like **Norsk Wood Works and Fjord Horse Farm** in Wisconsin.



I happened upon a photo of a Norwegian carved stool two years ago and traced its origins back to Norsk Wood Works in Wisconsin. Phillip Odden and Norwegian-born wife, Else Bigton, have been designing, building, and carving traditional Norwegian furniture in their shop since 1978. Phillip had grown up on his Norwegian ancestors' Wisconsin dairy farm and met Else when they were both enrolled in the Hjerleids carving school at Dovre, Norway. Else was studying furniture construction and Phillip studied wood carving. **Hjerleid school- and craftcenter | Buildings & Monuments | Dovre | Norway** (visitnorway.com)

Phillip and Else established Norsk Wood Works in the rural north-western Wisconsin town of Barronett in 1978 and then moved their shop and studio in 1990 to an 80-acre nearby farm. Most of the furniture and carving they do are unique pieces done on a commission basis. They have shown their work at Nordic Fest at the Norwegian American Museum in Decorah, Iowa, and in Minot, North Dakota, as well as taught at Vesterheim and the North House Folk School in Grand Marais, Minnesota, and at their own farm studio. They have traveled often back to Norway to learn more about Norwegian carving, carvers, and handcrafts and served as guest artists in 1994 at the Rauland Academy in the Telemark area.



Askeladden Lodge has a long history of summer visits to the Crandall's Nottawa Crossings Fjord Horse Farm near Marshall, Michigan.

Fjord Horse Alena of Nottawa Crossing Fjords in Marshall, MI - YouTube

Phillip Odden and Else have raised, trained, and bred Norwegian Fjord Horses on their Wisconsin farm since 1997. They compete with their Fjords in carriage driving events around the country and travel with them to our National Forests, National Parks, and Wilderness Areas in our scenic mountainous states.

The Fjords serve as sturdy trail pack animals and also do light draft work back on their farm.

When I find my own way back to Norway in the next few years, I hope to join one of the folk art tours led by Phillip and Else which they have conducted for the past 11 years. According to their website, their tours focus on "folk-art, folk music, and other aspects of rural life in Scandinavia such as horse culture, especially Norwegian Fjord Horses and Icelandic Horses."

Norsk Wood Works, LTD

A year or two ago I was looking through some old copies of our dad's Sons of Norway *Viking* magazine and discovered an article about Phillip Odden and Else Bigton in the July 1981 issue. The photos here of Phillip and Else standing by their ornately carved grandfather clock and of Phillip in the process of carving are from that *Viking* article.

Here's to a healthy friluftsliv summer! We hope to see you all at our Askeladden 2021 Summer Fest at Ketchum Park in Marshall on July 11th!

Friluftsliv: The Norwegian Love of the Outdoors - Life in Norway



A finished product that Phillip and Else can be proud of.

Gail Thompson-Hadley

Gratulerer med dagen

Fødselsdag Hilsener

June/July Birthdays

June - Anne Rapp
June - Terese Sherman
June - Kaeler James Stafne

July - Karin Loberg Code
July - Carolyn Hande
July - Terilyn Koretsky
July - Sondra Phillips
July - River Rose Reich
July - Marilyn Sogge
July - Lauren Teeter
July - Gretchen Wesenberg

ASKELOADDEN NEWS

Syttende Mai program

Joan Renaas O'Bryan, Vice President

With the help of her son, Vaniar Lander, Askeladden Cultural Director Astrid Willis prepared a virtual Syttende Mai program for us with colorful slides and even videos from their 2018 visit to Oslo during Syttende Mai. As someone who has witnessed Syttende Mai in Norway, I can say it felt like we were right there in Oslo while listening to Astrid's narration of their wonderful photos and videos. Astrid and Vaniar had an amazing vantage point very close to the Royal Palace to witness the 2018 festivities. Adorned in her beautiful bunad at our lodge May presentation, Astrid explained things from the perspective that



Astrid's granddaughter, Gabby, joined her for the very special Syttende Mai presentation.

only a native Norwegian can. This enabled all of us to learn about the true Syttende Mai experience. And every one of us most certainly enjoyed Astrid's marvelous program.

Two other Sons of Norway lodges joined us for this very special program for a total of 34 attendees - 23 of them from Askeladden Lodge. We were delighted to see (on Zoom) all three of the Kraatz family members sporting their bunads as well - and Alice and James have brand new bunads!

Astrid answered all of our Syttende Mai questions. And towards the end of her presentation, Astrid showed us some beautiful bunads she has at her home.

You can watch a 55-minute Zoom recording of Astrid's fascinating and informative Syttende Mai program here:

<https://youtu.be/sU7Rw7dIgcw>

May Askeladden Member attendance: Diane Andert, Jeffrey Andert, Curtis Cleveland, Betsy Fish, Catherine Hande, Judy Hande-Skutnick, Barbara Heffner, Holly Jensen, Alice Kraatz, Elizabeth Kraatz, James Kraatz, Karen Kunze, Vaniar Lander, Joan O'Bryan, Sandra Santas, David Sherman, Terese Sherman, Marilyn Stewart, Inger Thoen, Gail Thompson-Hadley, Chris Walvoord, Astrid Willis. Guest: Gabriella Croce

Askeladden Lodge Library

www.librarything.com/catalog/SonsofNorway

Contact Curtis Cleveland with questions or to reserve resources.



This video clip shows just how close Astrid and Vaniar were to the Royal Palace to view the Syttende Mai parade.



You could hear the excitement in Astrid's voice when she showed us a video of the school she attended as a child - Sagene Skole - in the parade!



Astrid in front of the Royal Palace on Syttende Mai.



Astrid in Oslo for Syttende Mai 2018.













SONS of NORWAY

Askeladden Lodge 5-610

507 Clinton Ave
Kalamazoo, MI 49001

JUNI/JULI KALENDER

-  • juni 5 - Grundlovsdag - Constitution Day of Denmark
-  • juni 6 - Sveriges nasjonaldag - National Day of Sweden
-  • juni 7 - Unionsoppløsningen - Norway-Sweden Union dissolved 1905
-  • juni 14 - U.S. Flag Day
-  • juni 17 - Icelandic National Day
- juni 20 - Father's Day
- juni 23 - Sankt Hans Dag - Jonsok - Midsummer Day
-  • juli 1 - Canada Day
-  • juli 4 - U.S. Independence Day
-  • juli 4 - HM Queen Sonja's Birthday, 1937
- juli 6 - Cultural Committee Meeting - Zoom 7:30 p.m.
- juli 11 - **Askeladden Sommerfest 2 p.m.**
Ketchum Park, Marshall, MI
-  • juli 20 - HRH Crown Prince Haakon Magnus' Birthday, 1973
-  • juli 29 - St. Olav's Day (Olsok)
- juli 31 - last day to submit *Askeladden News* articles for the August issue

NOTE: We may not have an August issue of *Askeladden News* again this year if no August event is scheduled. The annual trip drawing is scheduled for the October meeting as usual. You must notify the Membership Secretary in writing or email by the September meeting if you wish to participate. Your eligibility will be determined prior to the drawing.



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.