



Norse Valley Lodge 5-491 Nytt Notes April 2024

The calendar says it's supposed to be Spring but the temperature says it's November all over again. The weather forecaster promises us upper 50's and low 60's seven days out but he or she has been saying that for the past 4 days. They keep moving it further out.

If it seems that I'm anxious for warmer weather, it's likely due to my purchase of new golf clubs in mid-March. I haven't been able to use them yet and the reason for my beef (I know, a first world problem). It's akin to a kid in Norway getting a new toboggan or sled for Syttende Mai. It's cruel...having to wait until October to glide down a snow covered mountain. One way to teach patience, I guess.

In case you missed it

On March 16th, ten people representing the Norse Valley Lodge paraded in the New Dublin (New London) Saint Patrick's festivities.

As many of you know, the Vikings were instrumental in the growth of Dublin. The Vikings established the Kingdom of Dublin (in Old Norse, it was referred to as "Dyflin") in Ireland that lasted from roughly 853 AD to 1170 AD. It was the first and longest-lasting Norse kingdom in Ireland, founded by Vikings who invaded the territory around Dublin around 831. Its territory corresponded to most of present-day County Dublin. It was a very prosperous Kingdom and a center of trade. The Viking influence could be why some of the modern day Irish people have red hair.



April 20th - 6:00 p.m. (Saturday) Lodge Meeting @ Our Saviors Lutheran Church.

We are planning a cooking demonstration of some Scandinavian foods by at least two of our Board Members. We'd love to have a third person bring a favorite recipe and explain how they prepare it. Make enough for around 15 people to sample your Scandinavian food.

May 19th – Syttende Mai Picnic at Noon (Sunday)

Join us in celebrating Norway Constitution Day with a Sunday afternoon picnic. We have reserved the shelter at Derks Park on the southeast side of Appleton from Noon to 3:00 p.m.

Derks Park is adjacent to Kensington Drive between College Avenue and Calumet Street on Guyette Drive. Look for the Norwegian flags adorning the park shelter.

Join us for a no cost to you meal and program.
Lefse, hot dogs, and ice cream will be provided.

Please bring a side dish to share.

Come learn about Syttende Mai and play outdoor games (including Kubb) and don't miss out on the door prizes.

Extended families are welcome as well.

I also wanted to remind you of the Rosemaling Workshop that will be held at the Neenah Police Department located at 2111 Marathon Avenue in Neenah on April 26th through the 28th (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday) from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm each day with the instructor being Lois Mueller. The registration deadline is April 15, 2024. See my e-mail of February 16th for more information and the registration form.

Mark this Special Program on your calendar!

The Fox Cities and Green Bay Sons of Norway lodges will be jointly hosting a presentation by **Jorn Magnus Rivojen Langseth on Saturday June 29th at 1:00 p.m. at the Community Church of Appleton, located at 3701 North Gillett Street in Appleton.**

Jorn Lengseth is well-known for his drums and other artistic pieces connected with the Ume Sami culture in Northern Norway as well as interesting presentations advocating for Sami language preservation and describing Sami culture and history. He will give presentations on Sami culture, specifically regarding the significance of Sami drums. The presentations will include slides of his drums and other works of art ranging in size from large outdoor installations to small, exquisite knives.

Langseth's passion about his Ume Sami heritage fuels his creativity and is expressed in his works to preserve the symbols, language, art, food — every aspect of the Sami culture. He shares his knowledge with others through art shows, personal appearances, and at the Umesamisk ressursenteer in Norway.

His art has been featured in shows throughout Norway and in other parts of the world. Some of Langseth's art will be on display at Vesterheim Norwegian-American museum in Decorah, Iowa during the month of May 2024.

Rivojen Art can be found on-line for examples of Langseth's work.

Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities:

Beginning at 1:00 p.m. and ending at 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday April 3rd, we are looking for Norse Valley members to volunteer at Feeding America on the north side of Appleton to pack food for the less fortunate. Please contact Norse Valley member Linda Hash (lhash@new.rr.com), our volunteer coordinator, if you would like to help out.

We tentatively set Wednesday May 29th from 11:30 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. as our next volunteer day at Feeding America. Let Linda know about your interest and availability to work on May 29th.

On Wednesday July 10th, we invite our Norse Valley Lodge members for a day of volunteering at the Norwegian American Genealogical Center near the state capitol building in Madison. Some outdoor grounds clean-up and indoor filing are the two projects we are usually tasked with. We usually carpool down and some folks stay for the nearby Concerts on the Capitol Square by the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra at 7:00 p.m. with feature artists Bill Miller on flute and Jane Story on Violin. A piece by Bergen, Norway's own Edvard Grieg will be featured.

Contact Corey Olson at clobadger87@gmail.com or (920) 858-7642 if you are interested in helping out on July 10th.

April 9th, 1940: Germany invades Denmark and Norway The Battles of Narvik were key events in the early years of World War II.

Few people without a keen interest in war history know about Narvik. Yet the small town in northern Norway played a major role in the early months of World War II.

Two naval battles just days apart were fought in the Ofotfjord near Narvik between the British and German navies, before a two-month land campaign took place. The naval defeats are widely called Hitler's first defeat of World War II.

On April 9th, 1940, Adolf Hitler unleashed his undefeated troops on the neutral Scandinavian countries of Denmark and Norway. Denmark capitulated on that first day but Norway held out until June 8th when all British troops were evacuated from Norway after Germany began their invasion of Holland, Belgium, and France.

Norway gave us some World War II firsts: April 9th was the first time paratroopers were ever utilized in a battle and April 11th was the first time British and German forces fought each other.

Why was Narvik so important?

If you've ever been to Narvik, Norway you can't miss the railway. It splits the town in two and has driven the town's economy for more than 100 years. The reason? Iron ore.

Sweden's 'Iron Ore Line' from Luleå to Kiruna was extended all the way into Norway in 1903 because of the ice-free harbor in Narvik. Since then, more than one billion tons of iron ore has been transported on the railway to Narvik. From there, it is shipped to its final destination. Germany was getting 80% of its iron ore from neutral Sweden to make its war armaments.



Even today in Narvik, it is apparent how important the railway was. You could clearly see how the town has grown around the railway line and port.

Britain and France wanted the railway line and port for the iron ore for their war materials but Germany landed troops and invaded Norway a few days before the Allies were planning to do the same.

Operation Weserübung: The occupation begins

Following a meeting with Vidkun Quisling, a Norwegian military officer, Hitler became concerned about the

threat posed by the Allies to Sweden's iron ore supply, on which Germany was dependent. He began to plan for an invasion of Denmark and Norway.

On 9th April, German Navy ships sailed north ostensibly as a preventive maneuver against a planned French-British occupation of Norway. Narvik was one of several landing sites during the operation, alongside the likes of Oslo, Bergen and Trondheim.

Two German battleships, ten destroyers and a few thousand Austrian mountain infantry set course for Narvik. Norwegian coastal defense ships *Norge* and *Eidsvold* were not fully prepared for action and were defeated. Both were sunk, with a great Norwegian loss of life.

The first naval battle of Narvik

The following day (April 10th), the British Navy took an opportunity to attack while two German destroyers were being refueled early in the morning.

In total, eleven merchant ships (six German, one British, two Swedish and two Norwegian) were sunk during the operation. Many Brits had a lucky escape, however. As the destroyers left the Vestfjord, two German submarines fired torpedoes but none of them found their target.

The second naval battle of Narvik

Just days later, the British navy chose to double-down on their efforts in Narvik and dealt one of the biggest blows to German forces in the early years of the war. A British battleship, nine destroyers and many other vessels and aircraft arrived in Narvik to find German forces struggling for supplies.

In the resulting battle, the Germans lost over 1,000 men, a U-boat, and eight destroyers. Over the two naval battles, the German Navy was severely depleted.

Many German marines were rescued and equipped with the uniforms of the Norwegian forces that were killed during the battles. Naval warfare did continue in Narvik including the sinking of a Polish destroyer by German aircraft the following month.

The land battles of Narvik

Narvik and the surrounding mountains saw significant fighting during the early months of the war. Initially outnumbered, German forces were boosted by a few thousand sailors following defeat in the second sea battle.

At its height, the Norwegian and Allied forces (including British, Polish and French troops) outnumbered the Germans by almost four-to-one. Both sides' suffered—Germany from supply difficulties and the Allies from coordination difficulties—but eventually the greater numbers made the difference. As they withdrew from Narvik, German troops destroyed much of the harbor.

Norway's occupation continues

However, Narvik would eventually remain in German hands. Despite positive results in Narvik, the situation in France was critical and Allied numbers were needed there.

Operation Alphanet saw the coordinated withdrawal of Allied troops from Norway over a period of four days. German troops returned to Narvik as the occupation of Norway was completed. It would go on to last for almost five years (May 8, 1945).

Nevertheless, the damage done to German equipment and morale in Narvik was considered significant.



Narvik Today



Be sure to take a look at our Facebook page ([norsevalleylodge](#)) **and encourage friends and family to like it.** We also have information about our Lodge on a website that can be found at www.norsevalley.org. Got a question? Send an email to norsevalley@gmail.com. If you have any questions or concerns about lodge activities, please contact Judy Ghastin at judy62ghastin@gmail.com or 920-450-3584.