



# SONS of NORWAY



Nov.. 2021

Walworth County, WI

## Norsemen of the Lakes 5-650

Greetings all:

So sorry if you missed the last meeting. Our presentation was about the The Sloopers First Christmas. What strong Norwegian ancestors we have who braved emigration to give us a better life.

We have a great plan for our Nov. meeting. First of all, we'll have baking demonstrations of rosettes, lefse and krum kake to encourage all to dive in and do it themselves at home. You can also have free cooking/baking instruction for members online. Check out the info on our FB page.

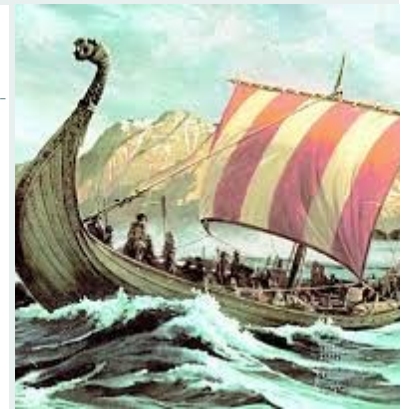
In addition, we'll watch another Nordic News episode called **A presentation on Norwegian sweaters.** Jennifer Coile's presentation about Norwegian Sweaters is a great example of sharing your family history through an heirloom. Her cousin Kari emigrated from Norway at age 19 and gave Jennifer's family sweaters she knitted as a "tusen takk" for their hospitality. It not only involves her family history but gives us a look at how Norwegian patterns and history interacted. So be sure to wear you own Norwegian sweater.

Elections are this month. Last month we ratified the slate of officers:

### 2022-2023 Slate of Officer Ballot

- Pres Corlene Bartels
- V. Pres.- Kathy Norquist
- Secretary- Elaine Lundgren
- Treasurer- Debbie Weber
- Counselor- Brian Ogne
- Hostess- Barb Ogne
- Cultural Director- Kathy Nolan

The Lodge officers met Nov. 26th and decided to hold the annual Christmas party at **Calvary Community Church in Wms. Bay Dec. 4th at 2 p.m.** (Thank you, Calvary.) This will provide safe, easy access as well as being in the light of the day. Dinner will be buffet style again with desserts provided by members. We will enjoy a present exchange for those who wish to participate with a \$10 cap. We are currently working on the possibility of a little entertainment. The cost will be \$20 per person.



### Gratulerer med dagen

#### November Birthdays

- Nordeana Nimphius 3rd
- Amy Finnes Tacheny 20th

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#### CALENDAR

November event:  
Advia Credit Union  
Potluck,  
837 N Wisconsin St.,  
Elkhorn (just south of  
McDonald's)

Christmas celebration  
Dec. 4th 2PM, Calvary  
Community Church,  
N2620 Harris Rd.,  
Lake Geneva, WI (Just  
north of Wms. Bay)



# The Islands of Oslo

October 27, 2021 by David Nikel

"We will facilitate and facilitate only."

Mona Juul (Ruth Wilson) makes her husband Terje Rød-Larsen (Andrew Scott) repeat these words—forces him, really—just before their "guests" arrive at Norway's Booregaard Manor. This is no cocktail party. The guests come from both sides of one of the most intractable conflicts of the 20th- and 21st century. The Norwegian couple, without official government approval, opened up secret back channels, bypassing the traditional diplomatic process. Under the auspices of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (where Mona is employed) and Fafo Foundation (Terje's think tank), the couple hope to "facilitate" a dialogue between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (then exiled in Tunis). Mona and Terje will not insert themselves into the process. They will "facilitate only." The result of all of this, of course, were the 1993 Oslo Peace Accords, and the subject of HBO's movie *Oslo*.

I found this movie on Netflix very interesting. I was vaguely aware of the Peace Accords when they happened, but I didn't have any idea of how they came about. (Fair warning: the "F" bomb is used a few times.)

**These islands within easy reach of Oslo offer historical sites, peaceful walks and sheltered swimming.**

People taking a quick 'city break' to Oslo often bemoan the fact they can't enjoy the best of Norwegian nature. That's always a big surprise to me, because you absolutely can! Not only is the city greener than many other European capitals, it's also on the shores of the **Oslofjord**. There are opportunities for recreation all around.

**Enjoy the great outdoors in Oslo**

While the famous western fjords and spectacular mountains of Lofoten are out of reach, there are ways to enjoy **friluftsliv** in the very heart of the Norwegian capital. Look at any aerial photo of Oslo and you'll see several small green specks dropped into the fjord in front of the city. Welcome to the islands of Oslo!



Each island has its own distinctive character, from the beaches and history of Hovedøya to the residential vibe of Lindøya, yet all share a familiar look. That's because cabins built on certain islands have to adhere to a strict color scheme of red, blue, green or yellow. When you add in the green of the grass and trees and the blue of the ocean, it's a truly colorful experience.

Swimming off Hovedøya

**Which island is right for you?**

Want to relax or have some fun, there's an island for you:

**Hovedøya:** Historic ruins, good swimming, beach, nature reserve

**Lindøya:** Summer homes and a friendly community feel

**Gressholmen:** Oslo's former seaplane airport now a boatyard, habitat for birdlife

**Langøyene:** Wild camping permitted, good beach and sheltered swimming

Other islands include **Bleikøya**, home to a former sanatorium that housed children suffering with tuberculosis in the 19th-century (it is now a private residence), and **Nakholmen**, a small island populated with around 200 holiday cottages owned by city dwellers.

We'll look at each of the islands in more detail later on, but first, how do we get there?

**How to get to the Oslo islands by ferry**

The islands are plugged into the city's public transport system thanks to a series of small passenger ferries. They all leave from the clearly marked pier in front of Oslo City Hall, which is within a 20-minute walk from anywhere downtown. The ferries run year-round (every 1-2 hours depending on the route), although departures are much less frequent outside the summer months. During the summer, they are frequent enough for you to visit two or three islands during the day. A huge plus for Oslo residents or those staying more than a couple of





days is that the regular Ruter public transport tickets are valid on all these ferries. So if you have a monthly pass, you're good. An Oslo pass? Yep! A day ticket? You're also good! In addition, you can buy single tickets for the same price as a bus/metro ticket, currently 35 kroner (\$5.50). The 24-hour tickets are 105 kroner (\$16.50), and both should be bought from the machines at the Oslo pier. If you get on the ferry without a ticket, you'll be fined.

Bear in mind that these islands aren't seen as tourist attractions, so there isn't much in the way of facilities. Some of the larger islands have kiosks or small shops, but the opening times are erratic. Always take food and something to drink with you, and if the kiosks are open you can treat yourself to a waffle and some coffee.



### **Hovedøya**

The largest, closest to the city, and most popular of the islands, **Hovedøya** is great for swimming, relaxing on the beach or rocky coastline, or playing ball games on the large grassy area. History buffs will enjoy wandering around the ruins of the 12th-century Cistercian monastery built by English monks and the remaining cannon batteries from the (many) years the island was used by the Norwegian military because of its strategic position.

A few steps from the jetty, the beautiful timbered Lavetthuset is now home to a gallery and studio space, while a simple kiosk (summer opening only) with outdoor seating is handily located next to the monastery ruins.

Despite all of this, the majority of the island's 469 acres are forested and protected as a conservation area. You're free to wander the trails, but just don't take away any samples of the diverse plant-life or rocks that can be found here.

### **Lindøya**

There's more summer cabins on Lindøya, about 300, than any of the other islands. This gives it something of a community feel in high season, akin to wandering through a pretty suburb of Oslo. A small shop serves the islanders, some of whom spend the month of July or even longer living here. You won't get lost on Lindøya!

The best swimming spots can be found on the island's southwestern corner. Lindøya is the only one of the islands to have two ferry stops served by different routes, which gives you more flexibility when visiting.

### **Gressholmen**

Seaplanes landed at Gressholmen between the First and Second World Wars in what was then the main airport for the city. Few traces remain now of the former airport buildings, which now serve as a boatyard.

The otherwise hilly island is connected to Heggolmen and Rambergøya with causeways that form an important bay for sea birds. The picturesque Heggolmen lighthouse on the island's northwestern tip is a popular place to walk to, not least for the views back to the city.

### **Langøyene**

One downside of the Oslo islands is that camping overnight is not permitted, except here on Langøyene. Originally two distinct islands now connected by a large flat grassy area ideal for sports, the island is known for its grill parties and even a small summer festival.

The south-western side of the island is home to a lovely sheltered beach and shallow swimming area. It's also the farthest island from Oslo, so much so that it's technically part of Akershus County albeit owned by the municipality of Oslo.

### **The rules of the islands**

As already mentioned, Langøyene is the only place where overnight camping is permitted. Also, between mid-April and mid-September, open fires are not allowed. There are public campfire sites on the islands, which can be used all year. Ask a local if you're unsure where they are. Take care in periods of dry weather, as grass, shrubs and trees can easily catch fire from discarded cigarette stubs, for example.



Langøyene with Oslo in the background. Photo: Ukjent / Oslo byarkiv

# Five People Killed in Kongsberg Attack

October 19, 2021 by David Nikel



Photo: SariMe / Shutterstock.com

**Police have named the man charged with the bow and arrow attacks in Kongsberg, Norway, that left five people dead on Wednesday night. Here's what we know so far.**

Norwegian police have confirmed that five people have been killed and a couple more injured in a shocking attack in Kongsberg. A 37-year-old Danish man has been arrested and charged. While the attacker used a bow and arrow throughout the city, his victims died of stab wounds. The Police have confirmed he carried multiple weapons. Kongsberg is a city of around 25,000 people, approximately 84km southwest of tOslo.

## **Local man arrested, a 'convert' to Islam**

Police initially refused to comment on the identity of the accused, but later confirmed his identity. The man was named as Espen Andersen Bråthen, a Danish citizen living in Kongsberg.

While holding Danish citizenship through his parents, he was born in Norway and has few personal ties to Denmark.

According to his appointed lawyer, the arrested man has cooperated and "explained in detail" the events. However, he does not admit criminal guilt. His initial case was heard at Buskerud District Court in Kongsberg on Friday at 9am. He was detained for an initial four weeks and referred for psychological assessment.

Police lawyer Ann Irén Svane Mathiassen told TV2 that the accused was previously known to the Police in connection with several different matters. It has since emerged that there were concerns about radicalization of the individual, and he had been a convert to Islam. In 2017, he recorded a video announcing his conversion, referring to himself as a "messenger." However, local Mosque leaders say they "sent him away" when he approached them around the same time. Members of the local Mosque attended a service held to commemorate the victims.

Norwegian press reports suggest the man had been previously banned from visiting his parents after threatening to kill them. He lived alone and had a very small circle of friends. Police believe he was suffering from mental illness and that there was little to suggest that this attack was carefully planned.

## **What happened on Wednesday night?**

At 6.13pm on Wednesday evening, police received multiple reports from people in central Kongsberg of a man roaming the streets with a weapon said to be a bow and arrow. Among other places, attacks took place inside a Norwegian supermarket.

Coop spokesperson Harald Kristiansen told NRK there had been "a serious incident in our store" but that no employees were among the injured. "We are providing assistance to our colleagues and helping police with their investigation," he added. A major police operation supported by national resources was launched following the reports. Within 30 minutes, police arrested a man and took him to the police station in Drammen. He is believed to have acted alone.

## **Five dead**

Five people were killed, and two people were injured. Police say although the man aimed arrows at his targets, the victims died of stab wounds, suggesting he carried multiple weapons. The deceased were all aged between 50 and 70. One of the injured is an off-duty police officer who happened to be at the scene in his spare time. Both of the injured are in hospital," said local police spokesperson Øyvind Aas.

In the hours following the attack, Norway's Police Directorate sent out a national order for police to be armed. Norwegian police are usually unarmed but officers do have access to weapons when authorized. According to a press release, the police have no concrete indication of a change in threat level, so it appears to be a precautionary measure.

## **Solberg speaks**

Outgoing prime minister Erna Solberg said the situation has shaken everyone. "I understand that many are afraid. It is therefore important to emphasize that the police have control," said Solberg. She added that the incoming prime minister, Jonas Gahr Støre, has been notified of the situation, adding that "now it is very important that the police get to do their job."

## **A tragedy**

Mayor of Kongsberg Kari Anne Sand said they are working on support for local residents. "It's a tragedy, absolutely awful. One does not think such a thing can happen in Kongsberg."



# 16 Fascinating Facts About Svalbard

October 27, 2021 by David Nickel

**Impress your friends and family with these incredible facts about the Arctic archipelago of Svalbard.**

Located on a latitude of between 74° to 82° north, Svalbard is the very definition of remote. Top of so many people's bucket lists, Svalbard is the home of the world's northernmost... well, pretty much anything. Among many other things, the world's northernmost full service hotel, liquor store, supermarket, cinema, library, and kebab van can all be found here. The remote Norwegian islands are a tourist draw for adventurers, wildlife lovers and the curious. Whether it's exploring the Russian settlements or taking in the spectacular scenery of the Arctic desert, there's plenty on offer here.



**1. Even Norwegians need to show their passport when travelling to Svalbard.** That's because while Norway is part of the European Schengen area, the archipelago is not. Flights to Longyearbyen airport leave from the non-Schengen zone of Oslo Airport, and everyone is required to show their passport regardless of nationality.

**2. You must carry a gun outside the settlements.** In a 2012 law the Governor of Svalbard requires anyone travelling outside the settlements to have the means to scare off a polar bear. This means carrying a firearm is mandatory, and items like flare guns are also highly recommended. It is prohibited to use a weapon within the settlements though. Several of the shops, restaurants and other public buildings have 'no firearms permitted' signs on the main doors.

**3. Polar bears live alongside people.** The population changes seasonally but there tends to be around 2,500 people living in Svalbard. Nearly everyone lives in the capital, Longyearbyen. But the real natives of these islands are the polar bears. Numbers have actually increased of late and are said to number around 3,000. However, this population calls a wide area its home, only part of which is Svalbard. The bears tend to stay clear of the settlements. However, bears do sometimes approach buildings due to desperate hunger.

**4. Seven of Norway's 47 national parks are on Svalbard.** Norway's national parks are created to ensure the preservation of nature for future generations. They are scattered all over Norway, with 85 percent of them being mountainous. Sixty percent of Svalbard's land is protected. The seven national parks are Forlandet, Indre Wijdefjorden, Nordenskiöld Land, Nordre Isfjorden, Nordvest-Spitsbergen, Sassen-Bünsow Land, and Sør-Spitsbergen. The mountains, glaciers and islands of Nordvest-Spitsbergen National Park are home to historical monuments including former whaling stations and burial grounds.

**5. Svalbard is classified as a desert.** Because of its rock and ice, cold temperatures and low humidity, Svalbard falls into the northern part of our planet known as 'Arctic desert'. The area receives minimal precipitation, and the air is almost as dry as it would be in a 'hot' desert. However, average temperatures on Svalbard have increased rapidly over the last few years and the climate is becoming wetter as a result. Earlier this year, Svalbard recorded its 100th consecutive month of above average temperatures.

**6. Less than 10% of the landmass has any vegetation.** Much of the islands are covered with rock and ice, making it nearly impossible for vegetation to grow. However, nearly impossible is not the same as impossible. The flora of Svalbard is surprisingly diverse, albeit in small areas.

**7. You can see the northern lights during the day.** It's well-known that to see the northern lights you need darkness, which means travelling to the north of Norway in the winter. But Svalbard is so far north that the sun doesn't rise for four months during the winter. For almost three of those months, it's completely dark all day, making it possible to see the aurora borealis at any time of day. In October and February you can enjoy the stunning blue Arctic light during the daytime and hunt the northern lights at night.

**8. You are not allowed to die on Svalbard.** Because of the permafrost on Svalbard, burial isn't possible as bodies simply won't decompose. However, there is a small cemetery, but it stopped accepting 'newcomers' in the 1950s. One of the reasons was the fear that the preserved bodies may still contain traces of a flu virus that killed seven miners decades before.

**9. You cannot give birth on Svalbard.** There's no such thing as the circle of life this far north.

Just as you can't die, you can't be born on Svalbard either. When a pregnant woman has a few weeks remaining before her due date, she must travel to the mainland to give birth. However, there are plenty of children living in Longyearbyen! The town's main settlement is home to a kindergarten, a school and a youth club.



**10. Anyone can live on Svalbard.** Effective since 1925, the Svalbard Treaty that defines Norway's sovereignty over the archipelago has some very interesting conditions. The most curious is that the islands are an entirely visa-free zone. This gives citizens of all treaty signatories the right to live here. This goes a long way to explaining the very diverse nature of the people living in Longyearbyen. However, this right doesn't give a 'back door' into Norway's immigration system. Years of living on Svalbard do not count towards the time required to apply for a permanent residence permit, for example.

**11. Svalbard could save humanity as we know it.** Opened in 2008, the Global Seed Vault is built into the bedrock above Longyearbyen Airport. Almost one million seed samples from all over the world are stored here, with a total capacity for up to four times that.

#### Svalbard Global Seed Vault

It's commonly believed that the vault's purpose is to help humanity reboot in the event of a major global disaster. While that's true, the vault has already proved its worth. In 2015, the Vault returned some seeds to Syrian scientists working to preserve and duplicate their seeds in the face of conflict.

**12. You take your shoes off when entering buildings.** This tradition dates back to the time when the only people who lived in Longyearbyen were miners. To prevent the black dust from covering the interior of buildings, it became commonplace to remove outdoor shoes at the door. This tradition continues today, and many museums and hotels still ask you to remove outdoor footwear. There is usually a shoe rack or even a whole room for this purpose, and many establishments provide slippers to use while you're inside.

**13. Svalbard's first airport was built in World War II.** In fact, the airstrip at Adventdalen was built by the Luftwaffe. It remained in use sporadically until the construction of a new airport in the 1970s.

#### Longyearbyen Airport

**14. Longyearbyen Airport is built on permafrost.** The 2,483-metre-long runway is insulated against the ground, so it will not melt during the summer. The hangar is also frozen into the ground.

**15. Cats are forbidden.** Residents of Longyearbyen are not permitted to bring any cats with them to the island. The harsh law is necessary and strictly enforced to protect the local fauna and safeguard the local birdlife.

**16. Longyearbyen is an Arctic science hub.** The town's Svalbard Science Centre hosts the Norwegian Polar Institute, EISCAT radar, and Svalbard Science Forum. It is also home to a few hundred students taking semester courses in biology, physics and geology.



Illustration from the Icelandic manuscript Flateyjarbok. (Credit: Werner Forman/Universal Images Group/Getty Images)

**6 Things We Owe the Vikings**  
#6 Aside from archaeological evidence, one of modern historians' primary sources for information about Viking life comes from a somewhat dubious but endlessly entertaining source. The Icelandic sagas, written by unknown authors in the 12th, 13th and 14th centuries, chronicle life in the Viking Age around the year A.D. 1000, when the ancient Norsemen abandoned their pagan gods and converted to Christianity. Victorian-era scholars accepted the sagas, with their graphic depictions of the deeds of both powerful rulers and ordinary people, as fact. Today, most historians agree they are an unreliable—yet still valuable—source of information about the Vikings, laced with a hefty dose of mythology and fantasy. In any case, we can thank the Vikings and their exploits for providing fodder for one of the earliest forms of our favorite guilty pleasure: the soap opera.