



SONS of NORWAY



Oct. 2020
Walworth County, WI

Norsemen of the Lakes 5-650

Our Sept. meeting at my house worked out very well. We had 9 people all together and enjoyed an episode of the Nordic News as well as learned about a Norwegian immigrant named Magnus Swenson and the role women played in Viking life. Cookies, bars, lemonade and coffee were enjoyed as well.

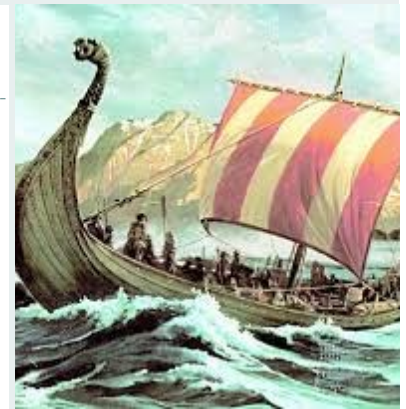
Cathy Nolan, our Cultural Director, presented two awards to Corlene who earned her Idretshelt Medal (exercise) and Literature III pin. Cathy encourages you to use this time (winter and social distancing) to expand the knowledge of your Scandinavian heritage and improve your physical health and mental health with exercise, just like your Scandinavian relatives. Feel free to contact Cathy or Corlene for information regarding any cultural skill. Cathy's email is cnolan2315@comcast.net phone (815) 385-3539. Corlene's is corlene121@gmail.com and her phone is 262-949-9191.

Call for Help

As our president has sold her home and is displaced until spring when she will move into her Lyons home, we are without anyone to lead us through the winter season. This has been a strange year, as we all know, and have had difficulty finding a place to meet. However, it seems that things may loosen up in the next few weeks. If that should happen, we may be able to at least have a Christmas party, maybe at a local church, even if we have to have a potluck. We've done it before; we can do it again.

Therefore, this is a call for help. We need someone (or two or three people) who are willing to coordinate such meetings as we can have. All communications can still be done by Corlene from AZ, but we need boots on the ground, so to speak, to arrange things here.

If you are willing to act as the facilitator in WI and work with Corlene in AZ, maybe we can make something of 2020 yet. Please let me know if you are even a little interested, and we can have a conversation about it on the phone or email without committing to anything if you just want to discuss it.



Gratulare Med Dagen

October Birthdays

Ginny Anderson	3rd
Marjorie Christensen	8th
Gregory Goethal	12th
Grace Henderson	24th
Jane Roberts	27th

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Call for Help	1
Book Review	2
Borettslag	2
Sustainable Textiles	3
Northern Lights	4
Corona Virus	5
Stavanger Cathedral	6

KALENDAR

Need a volunteer to coordinate a meeting (s)/Christmas Party.



PENGUIN CLASSICS

Book Review by Virginia Anderson

The Wreath, by Sigrid

Undset, was originally published in Norwegian in 1920 and set in fourteenth-century Norway. The Wreath chronicles the courtship of a headstrong and passionate young woman and a dangerously charming and impetuous man. Undset re-creates the historical backdrop in vivid detail, immersing readers in the day-to-day life, social conventions, and political undercurrents of the period. Her prose combines the sounds and style of Nordic ballads, European courtly poetry, and religious literature.

But the story Undset tells is a modern one; it mirrors post-World War I political and religious anxieties, and introduces a heroine who has long captivated contemporary readers. Defying her parents and stubbornly pursuing her own happiness, Kristin emerges as a woman who not only loves with power and passion but intrepidly confronts her sexuality.

The Wreath is the first in a trilogy titled Kristin Lavransdatter. It is followed by The Wife and The Cross.

The translation I read was the original to English and in an old English version. I am looking forward to rereading all of the above in the contemporary translation by Tiina Nunnally. I'm a reader, and this trilogy is one of the best I have read. I hope you enjoy it as much as I did. The entire trilogy is available at the library.

Borettslag: Cooperative Housing Ownership in Norway

David Nikel — September 8, 2020

Buying a home in a housing cooperative is a common method of home purchase in Norway. Let's take a look at the world of the borettslag.

Having lived in apartments for the majority of my life, I'm familiar with the concept of a homeowner association. The owners of each unit pay a monthly or quarterly membership, which goes towards maintenance and improvements of the buildings and grounds.

When we bought a home in Norway a few years ago, we became members of the local association. It manages more than 200 properties on the estate and holds semi-regular meetings. It also rents out the small community building for private use that's otherwise used for meetings. But during the house search process, we came across a model of ownership that I wasn't familiar with: the borettslag. It turns out that it is a fairly common way of buying a home in Norway. Here's what you need to know.

What is a borettslag?

A borettslag is a form of housing association but one with a cooperative ownership structure. Often a borettslag consists of a series of apartment blocks, but not always. I've seen plenty that consist of rekkehus (terraced housing) and some standalone properties too.

Borettslag is actually the term for the legal structure rather than the type of building. When you buy a home in a borettslag, you become a shareholder in the borettslag. This share gives you the exclusive right to your own home. Other rights include the right to use common areas and a "first look" at any housing sales. The actual housing stock is owned by the borettslag, so you must comply with the articles of association and house rules. These vary significantly but may include such things as noise restrictions.

The money: Shared debt and common costs

While the purchase price into a borettslag is often lower than buying a freehold property, there are other costs to consider. The most important thing to understand is the concept of shared debt. In Norwegian, it's known as *fellesgjeld*. A rough pronunciation for those who don't speak Norwegian is *fellas-yeld*.

The joint debt includes the original building costs for the estate along with any significant improvement projects that have taken place since construction. The instalments and interest are paid monthly. If you move into a new build, there's typically a grace period of a few years on the joint debt.

The shared debt is paid as part of the common/shared costs,



known in Norwegian as *felleskostnader*. Usually paid monthly, the fee also covers operating costs including municipal fees, caretaker services, cleaning of stairwells and common areas, buildings insurance, common energy use and the maintenance of outdoor areas, including the exterior of the buildings. However, you are responsible for maintenance within your unit, especially so that no damage or inconvenience occurs to other owners. The borettslag has the responsibility for facades, roofing, entrances, and common areas both inside and outside.

As a shareholder, you have the opportunity to repay your share of the joint debt faster than is required. If you do this, the amount of monthly common costs you owe will fall substantially.

One of the biggest advantages of buying into a borettslag is the saving on the document fee (dokumentavgift), or stamp duty. When you buy a freehold property, a fee of 2.5% of the purchase price is due to the state. This is not necessary when buying into a borettslag, as you are technically buying the rights to live in a property and not the property itself.

Finally, bear in mind the tax implications of borettslag membership. As a shareholder you get a deduction from the interest on your share of the joint debt. Some associations will provide a statement each year for you to use in the annual tax return.

Renting out a home in a borettslag

When you own a freehold property, renting out a room or the whole property is relatively straightforward. That's usually not the case within a borettslag. Renting rights are dictated by the articles of association, so check these carefully when considering a purchase.

In some cases you cannot rent out the property at all. In other cases there are limited possibilities, such as when you are deployed to another part of the country in connection with work or military service. Others do permit renting, but often only after a period of residence such as one year. Usually, any permitted rental period is limited, for example to three years.

Selling your share in a borettslag

Selling a property that is part of a borettslag is essentially the same as selling a freehold property. In most cases, other residents in the borettslag will have the first right to purchase the home. If you are looking at buying into a borettslag, the important figures are always listed in the property ad. In addition to the share price, take note of the shared debt and common costs.

What is OBOS?

OBOS is Norway's largest property developer. The chances are, your borettslag will be affiliated with OBOS, which makes you a member in the OBOS cooperative too. The organization is owned by more than 450,000 members and according to its website, "was established in 1929 to provide a solution to Oslo's housing problems." The organization provides business management services including collection and bookkeeping services for a borettslag.

Oslo's Traditional (and Sustainable) Blanket Coats Shine at Fashion Week



In an era when sustainability and eco-consciousness play a growing role in people's purchasing decisions, the fashion industry is facing new scrutiny—and pressure to change its notoriously wasteful ways. With its emphasis on timeless style, natural fibers and made-to-last construction, Norway's fashion scene is ahead of the curve.

The fashion industry generates 10 percent of the world's carbon emissions and 20 percent of its wastewater every year. Due largely to the widespread culture of "fast fashion"—in which garments are made not to last, but rather to be worn briefly and then replaced in a rapid cycle of degeneration from trendy to passe—clothing is turned into trash at an alarming rate: each second, the equivalent of one garbage truck of textile waste is burned or put into a landfill, according to a United Nations report.

To make matters worse, with 60 percent of textiles now made of synthetic rather than natural fibers, that waste is building up rather than breaking down, and it's leaching harmful chemicals and particles into the environment.

As consumers respond to a growing awareness of the fashion industry's harmful environmental impact, it's no surprise that Norway's clothing designers are ready to shine with timeless classics that are built to last. At Oslo's fashion week in August—held online to maintain social distancing—designer Elisabeth Stray Pedersen showcased her line of blanket coats under the label ESP, which she has developed specifically for today's style-conscious and responsibility-minded consumers.

The ESP line draws heavily on tradition for its blanket coats—the company itself sprang from the classic Lillun of Norway, which began producing the iconic garments in the 1970s. Pedersen purchased Lillun in 2015 and reinvented the brand with an emphasis on traditional crafting techniques and sustainable, locally sourced materials, including wool sourced from sheep that roam the highlands in Viken county, and thread from craftspeople in the nearby mountain regions.

This season, Pedersen has taken her sustainability focus one step further by incorporating the practice of upcycling, which uses scraps or discarded materials to produce new and better products. This has brought new elements to the ESP line, including leather and textural details, and even a patchwork sweater crafted from scraps from Pedersen's own factory.



Northern Lights Travel Guide

by David Nikel — June 26, 2018

Delicate ribbons of color dance across the Arctic sky: These are the northern lights in Norway.

The aurora borealis is a major tourist attraction for northern Scandinavia, and Norway in particular. The internet is filled with great northern lights photography, which has placed an aurora-hunting trip at the top of so many people's bucket lists.



What the lights actually are

Northern lights are caused by electrons streaming out from the sun in a solar wind. When they are caught by the Earth's magnetic field, the electrons are forced into the polar atmosphere where they collide with atoms and molecules. This collision creates tiny emissions of light. When that happens billions of times, it culminates in the lights we see from the ground.

If you monitor the Sun and observe strong disruptions, you can expect a display of northern lights a couple of days later. Although predicting the lights sounds technical, thanks to modern technology it's no more difficult than checking the weather forecast. In fact, that's what you're doing, checking the sun's weather forecast looking

for solar winds. Several websites predict the light display, and although it's not an exact science, it does give you a realistic idea of whether you can expect a display over the coming few nights.

Where and when to go

The most important thing to state upfront is there is absolutely no guarantee of seeing the northern lights in Norway wherever you go. However, it's true to say that you can do several things to increase your chances. The basic requirements are simple: total darkness and a clear sky. This immediately rules out the summer months in northern Norway, as the midnight sun ensures light throughout the season, day and night.

It also means you should avoid coastal areas, as there is a higher chance of cloud cover. And get away from the ambient light of built-up areas. Luckily, Arctic Norway is made up of miles and miles of remote wilderness, offering some excellent vantage spots. The Lofoten islands are a top choice to enjoy surfing under the northern lights, if you are lucky enough to be there at the right time!

You should also avoid midwinter when the worst weather tends to hit the region. September-October and February-March are generally accepted to be the best times to chase the aurora borealis.

Where to stay

Chasing the northern lights is an incredible experience. Although seeing them can never be guaranteed, one thing can be: you will get cold. Sometimes you will be standing outside in the cold for hours, and no matter how well dressed you are, you are going to feel the chill. It really is worth investing in a hotel for a northern lights chase, and in the north of Norway that normally means Tromsø, or if you really don't mind the cold, Alta.

I've seen the lights overhead from the city center of Tromsø so it's definitely possible to enjoy a display without leaving the city, but your chances increase drastically the further away you go. Still, the small yet lively city of Tromsø makes an excellent base for your nighttime adventures.

How to see the northern lights in Norway

The big decision to make is whether you take a guided tour or try going solo. If you have a car, it's worth considering a solo adventure, otherwise stick with a tour group. Most groups are small and are facilitated by expert chasers who use the very latest technology to know when and where to drive. Some groups have been known to travel hundreds of kilometers in one night across the Swedish and Finnish borders to find those elusive clear skies.

What to pack

If you are joining an organized tour group, warm clothes, food and drink are normally provided (do check!) but nevertheless it is sensible to dress warmly. Many groups offer an outer layer body suit, but you will still need to be wearing at least three layers on top and two on the bottom. Good quality base layers are highly advisable, as is a woolen jumper, thick gloves, thick socks and sturdy boots. A flashlight will come in handy, and if you bring a camera it is advisable to bring a spare battery, but keep that spare

battery wrapped inside a sock or something else snug!

How to photograph the aurora

I asked Trine Risvik, a guide from Tromsø Friluftssenter, how to take the perfect photo. “You need a camera that is able to have a long shutter speed and a low aperture, which means generally a mid-range SLR camera, although the newer semi-automatic cameras that offer you a higher shutter speed and a lower aperture will give you most of what you need. If there is a strong, playful northern light, you can accept a higher ISO and a shorter shutter speed, but with fainter, slower light, you need long exposure time and a lower ISO. Either way, you need as lower aperture as possible.”



Norway PM: Coronavirus Measures Could Be Tightened

By David Nikel Senior Contributor

Norwegian prime minister Erna Solberg has said that the gradual reopening of Norway following the unprecedented coronavirus restrictions must now stop. The government is also considering tightening societal restrictions if the increase in the rate of positive COVID-19 tests seen in recent weeks continues.

Norway grapples with an increasing rate of positive tests

Released on Wednesday, the latest weekly update from the Norwegian Institute of Public Health (FHI) revealed 728 new cases compared to just 377 the previous week. Norway enacted a drastic nationwide shutdown in mid-March, closing all schools, many businesses and closing the border to all but returning residents. From May, the country began a slow process of lifting the measures, but this will now be paused.

Solberg said at a press conference that the latest numbers show that the country is “still on insecure ground,” adding, “as the situation is now, we cannot ease the measures. We must continue to slow down.”

The news will come as a blow to the travel industry and tourists hoping to visit Norway in the fall. Visitors from most European countries already face a 10-day quarantine period upon arrival, essentially ruling out European tourism. Tourism from other countries remains impossible.

Measures might be increased

The recent increases are due to local outbreaks rather than a national trend. As such, stricter measures are not being introduced at this time. However, Solberg made it clear that the government would do so if the rate continues to rise, going as far as outlining possible measures.

Stricter rules on the numbers allowed at social gatherings will be considered, which mirrors the UK’s announcement earlier this week. A reduction in numbers allowed at public events, compulsory homeworking, digital-only teaching in higher education and a ban on travel to selected parts of Norway will also be considered.

Local outbreaks

Local leaders in Bergen, Norway’s second biggest city, have already introduced local measures to combat a local outbreak. “It is not relevant to introduce this for places that do not have an outbreak. But what we see in Bergen can be the recipe for important measures in the event of an outbreak elsewhere,” said Solberg.

More than half the week’s new cases were reported in Viken, Norway’s largest county, home to more than one million people.

Concerns that people are ignoring rules

At the same press conference, FHI director Camilla Stoltenberg aired her concerns that people are getting tired of the rules. Her comments came after the release of a joint study from FHI and the University of Bergen that showed more than half of Norwegians have broken quarantine rules. The worst offenders were over 50 years of age.

Stavanger Cathedral: Memories of Medieval Stavanger

by [Mathew Paul Gundersen](#) — September 3, 2020

From devastating fires to hidden crypts, the story of Stavanger's medieval cathedral is a fascinating one. Let's take a look at the city's most treasured building through the centuries.

Stavanger's most cherished and best-preserved building is the city's cathedral. *Stavanger domkirke* has much to be admired, inside and out. The cathedral is a symbol of Stavanger and its importance to the area can be gauged from its central position. The history behind this iconic building over the centuries is an intriguing one to say the least.

Where is Stavanger cathedral?

Stavanger cathedral lies in the heart of the Stavanger, just a short walk from the city's main shopping area. It's also just a stone's throw away from the train station and main bus terminal. The cathedral sits in a borough known as Storhaug, slightly back from Lake Breiavatnet. The entrance is on the west side. This is the side of the building that faces onto the city's main square and down to the harbor area and Vågen. The building's central setting is no coincidence; it highlights the cathedral's importance to the city and the county of Rogaland in its early history.

The early history

The construction of Stavanger cathedral started around the year 1100, but it wasn't finished until nearly 50 years later in 1150 (estimated). This timeframe corresponds with Sigurd Jorsalfarer naming of Stavanger as a cathedral city in 1125. Although, there is still some debate about which came first – the city or the cathedral?

It's claimed that Bishop Reinald, a bishop from Winchester in England, started and supervised the cathedral's construction. When it opened, it was operational within the Roman Catholic Church until the Protestant Reformation.

These days it's part of the Church of Norway and remains a fully functional cathedral. It is also recognized as the oldest working cathedral in Norway.

Architecture and later additions

The cathedral was initially built in an Anglo-Norman style, but a fire in 1272 brought about a change. The fire caused such devastating damage to the original wooden architecture that the cathedral had to be entirely rebuilt. The new construction was managed by Bishop Arne between 1276 and 1303, and it saw the cathedral take on a very different look. Wood was replaced with stone and it was built predominantly in a Romanesque/Gothic style.

Over the years, the cathedral has had various additions. In the 1650's, a new pulpit designed by Andrew Smith was added. In 1957, new stained glass by Victor Sparre was installed to east side. In recent years, the building has been undergoing a period of restoration works. These have mostly taken place on the building's east-facing side and remain ongoing today.

Inside Stavanger cathedral

Although it might not look very big, the cathedral is deceptively large with a capacity for 800 people. Inside, there is one large central nave (aisle), and either side of that two smaller elongated sections. Two lines of great, round pillars separate the nave from the side parts. Interestingly, each of the pillars has figures from the scenes of Ragnarok (Scandinavian 'End of Days').

The roof of the cathedral is similar to, and said to be inspired by, the hulls on Viking ships. It's simply turned upside down but performs the same purpose as it did on those great sailing vessels – it keeps water out.

Fun facts about Stavanger cathedral

Did you know that below the cathedral there is a crypt that is believed to be an ancient church? Literature states it was there before the 1100-1150 cathedral. It is said to be the remains of an old wooden church built in 1015 (estimated) by Erling Skjalgsson.

There are a number of tapestry items in the cathedral made by local textiles artist Frida Hansen. One of them is a carpet hung on the wall of the holy Saint Olaf. She is also responsible for one of the altar cloths, in addition to the carpet in the altar ring.

The cathedral was built in an area overlooking Vagen, a settlement said to consist of just a few hundred people at the time it was built. It's mostly from this central point that over the centuries Stavanger grew gradually, expanding outward to the city that we see today.

