



# Valhall Nyheter

Sons of Norway Lodge # 5-168 August, September 2025



## Kalender



### Lodge Officers

President:  
Vicki Rudh-Jones 815-282-2374  
vrjpt52@outlook.com

Secretary / Editor:  
Christina Fairchild 815-624-4478  
cfairc56@gmail.com

Treasurer / Foundation Director  
Rich Fairchild 815-624-4478  
richard.fairchild.son@gmail.com

Cultural Directors:  
Kirsten Johnson

Social Director:  
Jennifer Johnson

Editor / Publicity Director:  
Christina Fairchild  
779-208-2225  
cfairc56@gmail.com

Sunshine Director:  
Lee Ann Harp 909-806-0825  
leeanharp@yahoo.com

Greeters:  
Lee Ann Harp

Trustee / Auditors  
Ray Pederson  
Gary Melby  
Bill Brod

Librarian / Historian  
Rev. Dr. Richard Wang  
[www.facebook.com/sofnrkfdValhall5168](http://www.facebook.com/sofnrkfdValhall5168)

Affiliation:  
Sons of Norway International  
1455 West Lake St.  
Minneapolis, MN 55408  
<http://www.sofn.com/>

Sons of Norway District 5;  
President –  
Cheryl Wille-Schlesser

Benefits Counselor:  
Greg Ragan  
(815) 623-8817  
[www.raganfinancialgroup.com](http://www.raganfinancialgroup.com)

### August 9th – Valhall Lodge Meeting – 10:00 am - noon

Stockholm Inn. 2420 Charles St. Rockford, IL 61108

10:00 AM Breakfast buffet or order off the menu (Dutch treat)

Program : **Norwegian Women Magazine**

### August 16th - Saturday Cultural Class – 10 am – 1pm

**Goodwill Community Room - 3068 McFarland Road, Rockford, IL 61114**

### Sept. 7 – 45<sup>th</sup> VASA PARK Scandinavian Festival –

35W217 Route 31, South Elgin, IL 60177

Festival Hours: 10:00 am – 5:00 pm

Cost: \$15.00 per person ,

Children 12 and under Free

See the event schedule on the Vasa Park Scandinavian Days website.

[Scandinavian Day - Home](#)

### Sept. 13th – Valhall Lodge Meeting – 10:00 am - noon

Stockholm Inn. 2420 Charles St. Rockford, IL 61108 10:00 AM

Breakfast buffet or order off the menu (Dutch treat)

**Program: Norwegian Emigrants- TBD**

### Sept. 20th – Saturday Cultural Class – 10 am – 1pm

**Goodwill Community Room - 3068 McFarland Road, Rockford, IL 61114**

### Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> - D5 Adult Heritage Weekend - Sloopers Celebration Celebrating Norwegian Immigration 200th Anniversary Heritage Weekend October 3-5

The weekend will be a celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Sloopers Norwegian Immigration. Details can be found on the 5th District's website <https://sonsofnorway5.com/events/>

**Nov. TBD**

**December – Juletre Fest – TBD**

## *Gratulere Med Dagen (Happy Birthday)*

### **July**

Kimbal Higgins 7/1  
Susan Bocker 7/6  
Grace Calhoun 7/11  
Sophia Martino 7/19  
Patty Klawitter 7/22

### **August**

Sally Knutson 8/2  
Margaret Van Dan 8/2  
Jacqueline Jewell 8/3  
Mike Lunde 8/3  
Rev. Richard Wang 8/3  
Robert Schober 8/4  
Adam Knutson 8/23

### **September**

Anders Dahlgren 9/3  
Evelyn Langsholt 9/5  
Natalia Martino 9/10  
Linda Petersen 9/20



## **Upcoming District & International Events:**

### **Sons of Norway District 5 Adult Cultural Weekend October 3-5, 2025 “Celebrating Norwegian Immigration - The Sloopers 200th Anniversary”**

2025 is the 200th anniversary of the first organized emigration of Norwegians to the United States. The single mast sloop, “Restauration,” sailed from Stavanger, Norway on July 4, 1825 with 52 passengers on board. This group, often referred to as the “Sloopers,” left Norway for religious freedom and new opportunities. They arrived in New York City harbor on October 9, 1825. The New York Quakers set aside land in upstate New York, near Rochester. After nine hard years of clearing heavily forested land to farm, they sent Cleng Peerson out west in search for better farmland. He and his group of Norwegian settlers traveled to Illinois and followed the Fox River down to LaSalle County Illinois.

The Polar Star and Cleng Peerson lodges are planning to celebrate Norwegian immigration and the 200th anniversary of the Sloopers arrival in America, by presenting a 3-day culture weekend **October 3-5, 2025**. We will honor the history and culture of the early Norwegian-American pioneers who settled and established farms and communities on the Prairie of LaSalle County, Illinois.

Join District 5 Polar Star and Cleng Peerson lodges along with the Norsk Museum for a weekend of Norwegian fun featuring Sloopers and Fox Valley Settlement Pioneer history, Norwegian culture and craft presentations, Norwegian games, a fun Sloopers walk, a Norwegian barn dance with Norwegian folk music, a traditional Norwegian worship service, and a chance to meet descendants of those Norwegian-American immigrants at their Sloopers Society Annual Meeting. **Registration is Required!**

The Culture Weekend begins at 1:30 p.m. on Friday, October 3 at the Community Center in Norway, Illinois, 3667 E. 2603rd Road, Sheridan (Norway), Illinois.

***Details on all events, activities and registration will be updated as appropriate on:***

- District 5 website: [D5 Adult Cultural Weekend](#)
- Polar Star Lodge website: [www.polarstarlodge.com](http://www.polarstarlodge.com)
- Norsk Museum website: <https://norskmuseum.org>

**Questions:** Contact Barb Johnson at [barbJJohnsonB@aol.com](mailto:barbJJohnsonB@aol.com) or 630-632-2329.

# Sons of Norway Book Club

## August Selections

### August Main read:

The District Governor's Daughter by Collett Camilla

### August Mystery read:

Sunstorm - (Rebecka Martinsson Book 1) by Asa Larson

To be placed on the Zoom Book Club list contact Bill Brownig at

[SonsofNorwayBookClub@gmail.com](mailto:SonsofNorwayBookClub@gmail.com)



**There is still time to register for our fall classes!**

**You can register online, mail a check or call us to sign up (608-255-2224)**

All class times are Central time zone

### **Genealogy Basics (Online)**

Saturday, September 10, 2022—10:00 a.m. to noon

\$40 NAGC member & non-member

This class is designed for those who are just dipping their toes into genealogy research. Class topics will include genealogy best practices, using websites such as FamilySearch.org and Ancestry.com, and resources available from historical societies and genealogical societies. *This class is not specific to those with Norwegian heritage,* and we welcome NAGC members and non-members. Sign Up for Genealogy Basics <https://www.nagcnl.org/event/genealogy-basics-online/>

### **Introduction to Norwegian Genealogy (Online)**

September 13 (Tuesday) & 15 (Thursday), 2022—10:00 a.m. to noon

\$100 NAGC member/\$150 non-member

**This two-session class** is for those who are familiar with genealogy basics but haven't dug into Norwegian genealogical research yet. The class will focus on Norwegian naming traditions, history and geography, along with strategies for reading old handwriting and finding where in Norway your ancestor may have originated. This class also includes a copy of our "Research Guide for Norwegian Genealogy: For Beginning and Experienced Genealogists." Sign Up for Introduction to Norwegian Genealogy

<https://www.nagcnl.org/event/introduction-to-norwegian-genealogy-online/>

### **Using Norwegian Farm Books (bygdebøker) (In person)**

Saturday, September 24, 2022 – 10:00 a.m. to noon

\$55 NAGC member/\$65 non-member

This **class expands on the introductory class** by exploring using Norwegian Farm History Books (bygdebøker) for clues for your genealogical research. **Fee includes lunch and time after to explore the collections.** Sign Up for Using Norwegian Farm Books

<https://www.nagcnl.org/event/using-norwegian-farm-books-bygdebøker-in-person-class/>

### **Exploring the Norwegian Digital Archives (Online)**

September 26 (Monday), 28 (Wednesday) & 30 (Friday), 2022 10:00 a.m. to noon

\$100 NAGC member/\$150 non-member

**This three-session class** explores the wide variety of records and resources available in the Norwegian Digital Archives and how to find them. Sign Up for Exploring the Norwegian Digital Archives <https://www.nagcnl.org/event/exploring-the-norwegian-digital-archives-online/>

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## **How Norwegian Emigration to America Shaped Two Nations**

Written by David Nikel. [www.lifeinnorway.net/](http://www.lifeinnorway.net/)

In the 19th century, Norway saw one of the highest rates of emigration in Europe. For more than a hundred years, tens of thousands of Norwegians packed up their lives and sailed across the Atlantic, in search of opportunity.

On a summer day in 1825, a small sloop named *Restauration* set sail from Stavanger, bound for New York. On board were 52 Norwegians, many of them Quakers and Haugean Lutherans, seeking religious freedom and the promise of a new beginning.

Their arrival in America that autumn marked the beginning of a mass movement that would see [nearly 900,000 Norwegians](#) follow in their wake over the next century. For a country that today has a population of just over five million, this movement was nothing short of transformative.

Now, 200 years later, both Norway and the United States are commemorating this extraordinary journey. From exhibitions and festivals to a planned replica voyage retracing the *Restauration's* route, 2025 has become a year of reflection.

It is a time to look back not only on the hardships and hopes of those early emigrants, but also on the lasting cultural connections they helped forge between two nations.

This is the story of what drove so many to leave, where they went, and how their legacy continues to shape lives on both sides of the Atlantic.

### **Why Did So Many Norwegians Leave?**

The driving forces behind Norwegian emigration were varied, but they shared one common thread: [the promise of something better](#).

Life in rural Norway during the 19th century could be harsh. Land was limited, especially in the mountainous west, and inheritance customs often left younger siblings with few prospects. As the population grew, competition for resources intensified, pushing many families into poverty. Industrialization arrived late in Norway, meaning urban jobs were limited and farming remained the dominant way of life.

In many regions, especially in areas like Sogn og Fjordane and Møre og Romsdal, subsistence farming was the norm, and crop failures or harsh winters could quickly spell disaster.

Religious motivation also played a part. Some Norwegians, particularly members of dissenting Christian movements like the Haugeans, sought greater freedom to practice their faith without interference from the state church.

Another powerful factor was the influence of "America letters." These letters, sent by earlier emigrants, described a land of abundance, affordable farmland, and personal freedom.

Often read aloud in village gatherings, they painted a picture of America as a land of milk and honey. Whether or not these descriptions were fully accurate, they were incredibly persuasive.

### **The Long Journey Across the Atlantic**

Early emigrants set sail on small wooden sailing ships from ports such as Bergen and Trondheim. These voyages could take several weeks, sometimes longer, and conditions on board were often grim.

Travelers endured cramped, unsanitary quarters and subsisted on limited food. Disease was a constant threat, particularly on the early crossings.

By the late 19th century, steamships had replaced sailing vessels, dramatically reducing the journey time. Most Norwegians travelled via

European ports such as Hamburg or Liverpool, connecting to transatlantic liners bound for New York.

Ellis Island, which opened in 1892, processed the majority of Norwegian immigrants who arrived during the peak migration years.

Despite the hardships of the journey, for many it was a one-way ticket. They left their homes and families behind, often knowing they would never return.

### **A New Life in the Midwest**

Although Norwegians settled in a variety of places, the American Midwest became their heartland.

States such as Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, and North Dakota welcomed large numbers of Norwegian immigrants, many of whom sought farmland that reminded them of home.

They established small rural communities where [Norwegian language](#), customs, and religion continued to play a central role. Lutheran churches, folk music, and even traditional foods helped sustain a sense of identity in a new world.

In these enclaves, Norwegian was spoken for generations, and local newspapers were printed in both Norwegian and English. Today, the [Norwegian American](#) remains an important mouthpiece for the communities.

Over time, many Norwegians found work beyond the farm. They contributed to the growing railway system, worked in logging camps, or took jobs in the cities.

Wherever they went, they brought with them a strong sense of community, a love of education, and a determination to succeed.

### **The Impact on Norway**

The effects of emigration were felt deeply in Norway. On one hand, it provided relief in overpopulated rural areas. With fewer mouths to feed and less pressure on farmland, those who remained had a better chance of survival.

Some families even viewed emigration as a form of family investment, pooling resources to send one or two members abroad.

On the other hand, entire communities were hollowed out. Young people in particular were drawn to the promise of a better life, leaving behind ageing populations and weakened local economies. Emigration also sparked political debate in Norway about inequality, opportunity, and the need for reform.

A significant number of Norwegians eventually returned home, bringing with them new ideas, savings, and in some cases, American spouses. These



returnees contributed to social change, often encouraging more progressive attitudes and fostering transatlantic connections that lasted for decades.

### **A Shared Legacy**

Today, the legacy of Norwegian emigration can still be felt on both sides of the Atlantic. In the United States, millions of Americans claim Norwegian ancestry.

Norwegian-American communities maintain strong cultural traditions and celebrate events such as [Norwegian Constitution Day on 17 May](#) with parades, folk costumes, and music.

Meanwhile in Norway, the emigration story is remembered with both pride and nostalgia. It is a reminder of the resilience and courage of ordinary people who crossed an ocean to build new lives.

### **Norwegian-American Communities Today**

Two centuries after the first emigrants left Norway, their legacy is still very much alive in the communities they helped build. Across the United States, a vibrant network of clubs, societies, and cultural institutions continues to celebrate Norwegian heritage and keep the transatlantic connection thriving.

The city of Decorah, Iowa, is home to the [Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum](#), which preserves the stories of emigrants and their descendants. Across the Midwest, Norwegian festivals, museums, and heritage centers continue to educate new generations about their roots.

One of the most visible organizations is the Sons of Norway, founded in 1895 to promote and preserve Norwegian culture among descendants of immigrants.

With lodges across the United States, Canada, and even Norway, the organization offers language courses, cultural events, heritage camps for young people, and support for genealogical research. It also publishes a long-running magazine filled with stories, recipes, and news from both sides of the ocean.

In Minneapolis, [Norway House](#) has emerged as a leading center for Norwegian-American culture and cooperation.

Located just a short walk from the Norwegian Lutheran Memorial Church, Norway House hosts art exhibitions, lectures, language classes, and business conferences. It serves as a hub for both cultural exploration and modern exchange.

Other institutions, such as the National Nordic Museum in Seattle, provide physical spaces where the emigrant story is preserved and shared with new generations.

From small-town 17 May parades to folk-dancing groups and lutefisk dinners, these organizations help maintain a cultural identity that spans oceans.

For many descendants of Norwegian immigrants, involvement in these societies is not just about honoring the past, but also about building community and understanding where they come from.

### **Marking 200 Years of Emigration**

The year 2025 marks two centuries since the *Restauration* set sail from Stavanger, carrying the first organized group of Norwegian emigrants to America. To commemorate this milestone, [a range of events and initiatives](#) are taking place in both Norway and the U.S. throughout the year.

In Norway, the city of Stavanger is at the heart of the celebrations, with exhibitions, lectures, and cultural programmes honouring the legacy of the emigrants.

A centrepiece of the anniversary is a planned replica voyage of the *Restauration*, which will retrace the original 1825 journey across the Atlantic. The project aims to bring history to life while fostering renewed connections between descendants of emigrants and their ancestral homeland.

Across the Atlantic, the Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum in Decorah, Iowa, hosts a year-long exhibition. Titled [200 Years of Norwegians in America](#), it explores the emigrant experience through personal stories, artefacts, and artistic interpretations.

Other Norwegian-American institutions are also marking the anniversary with local events, festivals, and genealogy workshops.

The bicentenary is more than a celebration of the past. It offers an opportunity to reflect on the themes of migration, identity, and belonging that remain deeply relevant today.

As families on both sides of the Atlantic revisit the stories of their ancestors, the anniversary serves as a powerful reminder of how a small ship from Stavanger helped build enduring cultural ties that continue to shape lives two hundred years later.





# Recipe

## Norwegian Rhubarb Pudding

### Ingredients:

- 1 3/4 cups water
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 1/2 lbs fresh rhubarb, cut into 1/2 inch pieces
- 1/4 cup cold water
- 3 Tbsp. cornstarch
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 cup chilled whipping cream
- 2 Tbsp. granulated sugar

### Directions:

1. Heat 1 3/4 cups water and 3/4 cup sugar to boiling, stirring occasionally.
2. Add rhubarb.
3. Simmer uncovered until rhubarb is tender, about 10 minutes.
4. Mix 1/4 cup water and the cornstarch; stir into rhubarb.
5. Heat to boiling, stirring constantly.
6. Boil and stir 1 minute.
7. Stir in vanilla extract.
8. Pour into serving bowl or dessert dishes. Cover and refrigerate.
9. Beat whipping cream and 2 tablespoons sugar in chilled bowl until stiff. Pipe through decorators' tube or spoon onto pudding.

Recipe directly from: <https://www.food.com/recipe/norwegian-rhubarb-pudding-135124>



Sons of Norway Rockford  
Valhall Lodge 5-168  
Christina Fairchild-Editor  
226 W River St  
Rockton, IL 61072

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**Sunshine Person: Lee Ann Harp – [leeannharp@yahoo.com](mailto:leeannharp@yahoo.com) – 909-806-0825**

The Valhall Lodge Newsletter is published every three months. Submit items of interest you would like to post in our newsletter to the Editor by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. When attending a Norwegian event that would be of interest to your fellow lodge members, please add your editor's name & address to their mailing list. Also, please notify the editor of a member passing so they may be acknowledged in our newsletter.

**Editor: Christina Fairchild 226 W River St. Rockton, IL. 61072** Phone (815) 624-4478

E-mail [cfairc56@gmail.com](mailto:cfairc56@gmail.com) if you have an e-mail address; please let us know what it is.