

EXTRA EDITION



VALKYRIEN LODGE 53

SONS OF NORWAY

DISTRICT 5 ZONE 1 WOODVILLE, WI

VOL 40, NO 2

FRA DIN VALKYRIEN LOSJE PRESIDENT

The annual Barnebirkie in Hayward will still be held but with no cookie tent. As I said in the last letter our District 5 is sponsoring a Clif Z Bar for the children in their registration bag. Volunteers will also be very limited in numbers and no spectators are allowed. Watch our virtual Sons of Norway Masse Moro booth at birkieexpo2021.vfairs.com or search Birkie. Well done slideshow and videos about camp. Just login with email as a new register.

If you have computer Zoom capabilities, Tuesday evenings our district has speakers on Scandinavian topics at 6:30 pm. Nordic News introduces you to experts on Nordic and Nordic-American heritage. It is a “radio show” produced by the Fifth District, on Tuesdays at 6:20 PM. The link to past speakers is on our district 5 website under program tab, then click on speakers’ bureau.

If you received Christmas cards this past year and still have the envelopes they came in, Norway could use the stamps. Tubfrim in Norway sells stamps to collectors to raise funds for children with disabilities and eradicate tuberculosis. Cut off the stamp leaving 1/2 inch margin around them and bring to our next meeting. They also will take postcards or envelopes over 50 years old.

We hope we soon can have the Syttende Mai celebration again and wear our bunads. Here are my daughter Becky who lives in Iowa and I when we attended the Decorah Nordic Fest a few years ago. I am waiting on the decision of the Lion’s Club about their Syttende Mai Woodville celebration. It may look different this year but I hope the lodge can do something.

Sons of Norway Scholarships applications are due March 1. If you have a grandchild attending college fall of 2021, please look at the website for both the District 5 and the International.



SHARING OUR STORIES

Here is the story I have researched on my mother's family.

My mother Florence Odalen (Odahlen, Aadahlen-spelling variations) was born in 1915 in Pierce County, Wisconsin. Her parents, both born in Wisconsin, were children of Telemark immigrants from three different church parishes and from the Gudbrandsdal Valley. The first destination for both families was not Pierce County. Like many Norwegians, they settled first in the southeastern part of Wisconsin.

Ole Amundson & Kjersti Johnsdatter lived on the Aadalen farm under the Karlstugo farm, part of upper Gaathaug in Sauherad. They had three sons, Halvor, John, Amund and two daughters, Ingeborg and Marit. The three sons must have felt there was no room for their family to exist there and all immigrated to America, not at the same time but following their sister Marit who left first alone in 1851. Marit Olesdatter was lucky onboard to meet Rev. Herman A. Preus and wife Carolina (Linka). They were heading for Wisconsin to organize a church around Spring Prairie north of Madison. Their travels are described in Carolina's book Linka's Diary. In her diary, Linka tells of hiring one of the steerage class girls named Marit to be their maid in the new country. Marit was directed to take all the Preus's luggage by boat down the Erie Canal and into the Great Lakes while the couple took the train to Milwaukee. Marit continued to work for Linka in the small cabin built for the pastor until their first child was born in 1852. Marit met a local Norwegian widower farmer Ole Anderson, married him in 1852, and lived nearby in Rio, Wisconsin, the rest of her life.

Halvor Oleson was the first brother to leave in 1862 from Telemark with his wife Marie Skogan and four children. They disembarked at Quebec, took a train to Lake Michigan, sailed on a steamboat to Milwaukee, and then rode a train to Columbus which was near to Rio, their final destination. We know this information from a poem he wrote about his travels that has been saved.

Their father Ole Amundson died in 1867 when John and Amund decided to follow their siblings to America. John Olson Aadahlen and wife Kristi Amundsdatter had two boys and four girls ages 4-18 and his brother Amund Olson Aadahlen and wife Analaug Amundsdatter had six children. It was no small undertaking to buy tickets and pack food for 17 people. The two families along with the brothers' mother Kjersti sailed on the boat Laurdal from Porsgrunn to Quebec, Canada in 1867. The brothers settled on farms near Rio, Wisconsin where my grandfather Amund and his twin sister Mary were born in 1870 to John and Kristi. By 1880, John and his family left for Pierce County to an established farm he bought. The story goes that there were too many Olsons in the area so changed the family name to Aadahlen and later to the spelling Odahlen. Amund and his family also moved to Pierce County in 1883.

At about the same time as the Aadahlen family, my mother's maternal grandparents were also planning to leave Norway. The Pladsen farm family lived in the Gjerpen parish as leasing farmers. The Pladsen farm was called Slettene before the mid-1850's under the larger farm Aas. This family of Lars Halvorsen, age 50, and Anne Gurine Isaksdatter, age 44, left Gjerpen Parish from the Pladsen farm with their six children, one being my great grandfather Halvor Larson Pladsen, age 19 at the time. They left on the ship Laurdal on April 18, 1868. They arrived on June 8, 1868 in Quebec, Canada to begin their water and land journey to Wisconsin.

They joined other Norwegians in Ashippun Township of Dodge County where they were farm laborers. Five or six years later, the whole family moved across the state to Pierce County and bought land in El Paso Township. The land was wild timberland so it took the labor of the males of the family to clear it for farmland, but Lars was a lumberjack so had the skills and tools to do the job. Their family name became Place from their farm name Pladsen meaning "place" in English.

Their oldest son Halvor Place, my great grandfather, took over the farm when his father Lars died in 1878. This is the year Halvor married Eliza Peterson (Berge) Barg, born in Wisconsin. Her father Halvor Peterson Berge immigrated from Kvitesaid, Telemark and her mother Bertha Lodengard was from East Gausdal in the Gudbrandsdalen Valley. Their third child, my grandmother Ida Place, was born in 1883 on this farm two miles from the Aadalen farm. My grandmother and grandfather Amund Odalen (spelling had changed) were married in 1903 and took over the farm of John Olson Odahlen where my mother Florence was born. A coincidence of location is my father Ed Neiderhauser worked on the same Place farm (then owned by A.C. Bjornson) in the late 1930's-early 1940's as a farm laborer while my mother lived two miles away on the Odalen farm that Amund and Ida purchased. After they met and were married, my parents lived in a second house on that Place farm where my dad continued to work as a farm laborer. On this farm I was born where 72 years previously my immigrant family cleared the land and broke the soil to begin their new opportunity in America. Sometimes we don't get too far from our roots.

Audrey Severson

PLEASE SHARE YOUR STORY AS LITTLE OR AS MUCH AS YOU KNOW. WHERE DID THEY COME FROM, WHERE DID THEY SETTLE, AND ANY DETAILS YOU KNOW.

EMAIL THEM TO ME: apseverson@gmail.com or to: N6059 530th St. Ellsworth, WI 54011

TRIVIA FROM THE VIKING ISSUE

The February issue of the Viking on the Nordic Life page 7 suggested trivia questions from the Sons of Norway website. When I looked at them, the questions were difficult unless you have traveled all over Norway. Here are the four least difficult questions from that site. See if you know the answers. To find the answers log into Sons of Norway or set up your account. Click on Member Resources at the top, Cultural Programming, then Idea Bank, then find Games-Stave Church Trivia

1. True or False: Urnes is the oldest surviving stave church.
2. True or False: Stone, metal and wood were all common structural materials used in the building of stave churches.
3. What denomination were the majority of stave churches built to service?
Lutheran Catholic Anglican Baptist
4. Canonized in 1031 A.D., who is the patron saint of Norway?
Harald Hardrada Ragnar Lodbrok Olaf Harraldson Magnus V

Urnes Stave Church - Is this the oldest stave church in Norway?

