

Virginia



Viking

SONS OF NORWAY HAMPTON ROADS LODGE NO. 522

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March 2003

President: Ralph Peterson 318-9414 Treasurer: Ann Atkinson 489-3218 Cultural: Mary Zimmerman 523-9409
VP: Martha Blau 421-2660 Secretary: Mary Friesen 857-8560 Editor: Terri Hewitt 460-4318

The President's Corner



Congratulations to those members of our lodge who did such a great job working with the Moss Choir and thanks to the rest of you who supported the Choirs visit by attending their performances.

Our first attempt (that I am aware of) at collecting food for a food pantry was a success. We collected a full shopping cart of food that we donated to the Bayside Presbyterian Church food pantry. We will collect food again next month so bring along a can or two with you to the next meeting.

March will be busy as well. There should be something for everybody. Our genealogy and sewing groups will meet, we have two Norwegian classes a week, a hockey game to go to, some 1st graders to help, helping out the public radio and TV stations and a lodge meeting to attend where we will meet a leprechaun and a troll. And don't forget the annual Norwegian Lady Ceremony.

I thought you all looked great in your Norwegian sweaters at our last meeting and I am looking forward to seeing all your trolls at the next meeting.

As I write this short note I am sitting in New Jersey looking at all the snow including the snow that is blocking our driveway. It does remind me of Norway and North Dakota however I have come to the conclusion that I like Norway, North Dakota and New Jersey better in the summer.

Hilsen,
Ralph

March Meeting

Thursday, March 20th. at 7:30 pm

at Bayside Presbyterian Church, Room 401 on Ewell Road in Virginia Beach. (Off Independence Blvd. Just north of McDonald's Nursery)

Program

There will be a short skit "The Troll and the Leprechaun Trade Tales". Be prepared for a visit from a real troll and leprechaun! Refreshments will immediately follow the business meeting and program.

Also

For the March Meeting
Please bring any trolls (or Leprechauns)
You have and we'll display them.

Food Pantry

As part of our outreach program would you please bring a can(s) of food to our next meeting. We will be announcing the recipient at our next meeting.

Hockey Game

Sunday, March 23. 4:00 pm

Admirals VS Cincinnati Mighty Ducks.
Tickets \$7.25. Order by March 13th.
See more info page 3

Norwegian lady Ceremony

Saturday, March 29. 2:00 pm

at the Norwegian Lady Statue (Atlantic & 24th St.)
Reception to follow at the Old Coast Guard Museum.
Please join us and other friends for this annual event.
It is a touching ceremony to honor those involved in the Wreck of the Dictator. **SON members are requested to bring finger foods to share at the reception.**

Newsletter submissions are always welcome. Deadline is the 3rd Friday of the month. Submissions may be mailed to Terri Hewitt, 4936 Farrington Dr., VA BCH, VA 23455 or emailed to ViElskerNorge@mindspring.com

Highlights from the February Meeting

Our president, **Ralph Peterson**, announced that we would begin a new custom of singing a Norwegian Song at the beginning of each meeting. Bestefar's Vals was then sung in Norwegian by the group.

A letter was read thanking us for our contribution to the Charitable Trust in memory of Lee Richards.

The Moss Choir visit was a great success. The gift bags our funds supported were very much appreciated. We received a beautiful banner and stand from the Mayor of Moss and an invitation to the 100 year jubilee in Norway in 2005.

A 5 year pin was presented to **Deanna Rumney** along with an appreciation plaque for her service as past president. 30 year pins were presented to **Anita & George Hill** by **Mary Zimmerman**.

President **Ralph Peterson** won the 50-50 drawing AGAIN!

We received many food donations for our first out-reach food pantry program. The recipient for the February collection is the Bayside Presbyterian Church.

A short video about a coastal cruise up and down the western coast of Norway was presented.

Delicious refreshments were enjoyed by all!



- ↑ Past President, Deanna Rumney
- President, Ralph Peterson
- ➔ Food donations to go to the Bayside Presby. Church pantry.
- ⚡ Members and guests show their Norwegian spirit by wearing their Norwegian sweaters.



Congratularer med dagen! Happy March Birthdays!

Mark Holmquist 6, Craig Hutcheson, 7
Barbra Stehlik 17,
Wilma Foss 20,
Harald Hansen 20,
Orville Gladen, 29



News From Christiana Lodge

Christiana Lodge also has a member who is an author. Her name is Lil-Ann Chepstow-Lusty, and she spoke about her book "The Vikings" at their Feb. meeting.

After reading the 3rd District President's message in our Jan. newsletter, they also decided to appoint a committee to work on getting younger members to join.

In my last report, I told them about our Norwegian Lady Ceremony every March. That caught their interest and Kari says they must do something in Norway as well! So she has found a speaker for the April meeting to tell the story of the Norwegian Lady. I sent newspaper clippings of Bill Foss when he published the new version of the book and Pres. Anne Tandberg has been given the book by Bill Foss and she will share it with her lodge.

Greetings to all from Christiana Lodge!

~ Astrid Gulas

Coming Back Home to America

By William O. Foss



VIRGINIA BEACH, VA- Cleaning out closets is not a job I relish, especially when most of my closets resemble those owned by famed closet stuffer Fibber McGee. Since I had procrastinated to the Nth degree- it could no longer be put off- I decided to tackle the easiest job first: the closet filled with boxes of scrapbooks and Christmas cards received years ago, stacks of 78 rpm phonograph records, a pile of misplaced and forgotten books, family games- who plays Chinese checkers these days?- large manila envelopes filled with who knows what, and umpteen photo albums.

While I began my cleaning job with great enthusiasm, the task of removing items from the shelves and placing them in an orderly fashion on the floor soon became a bore. So I decided to take rest and browse through the old photo albums.

One small album contained photographs of an important part of my life: Leaving Norway to come to America.

My father, Hans Fosshaug, the son of Otto and Hilda Fosshaug in the town of Hyggen on the Drammensfjord, had emigrated to the United States in the early 1900's. He later dropped the 'haug' in the family name, claiming that Americans couldn't pronounce haug correctly. Living in Boston, he met and married another Norwegian immigrant, Alma Sandstrøm from Oslo., and I was the sole offspring of their union.

After the death of my mother when I was about two or three years old, my father returned to Norway where he placed me in the care of his parents. He apparently felt that bringing up a child by himself was too much of a burden for a young man trying to make a life for himself in the New World.

In Hyggen, where the cool blue water of Drammensfjord touches its bay surrounded by rolling hills and majestic woods, my grandparents gave me their love and raised me as their son. I called them *far* and *mor*, the Norwegian words for father and mother, not *bestefar* and *bestemor*, grandfather and grandmother.

Once in a while an *Amerika-brev* letter from America- would arrive to tell my grandparents of my father's goings and doings. Occasionally they would include a communication to his son. Once my father sent me a baseball bat; nobody in Hyggen knew what it was used for. I can remember using it just to bang things and hit rocks into the Hyggen Bay.

Following graduation from *Hyggen Folkskole* (elementary school) and confirmation at the *Røyken* church, it was decided that young William should join his father in America.

So, one sunny day in June 1933- at the age of 14- I found myself in Oslo, boarding the *SS Bergensfjord*, one of the great ships of the *Norwegian-America Line*, for an ocean crossing to New York and a journey into an uncertain future.

Suddenly, I, who had never been outside the town of Hyggen without being accompanied by grown-ups, found myself alone in a strange and complex environment. While I was apprehensive, I also looked forward to meeting the new challenges and experiences that lay ahead.

I was concerned how I would react when I would finally meet the father whom I didn't remember. Since he had remarried, I now had a stepmother. And a sister.

Then there was the language problem. I didn't know a word of English,

except the words 'Made in America' labeled on goods made in America.

Two much traveled passengers, Louis Hansen and Lars Tobiassen, became my shipboard guardians, and upon learning of my language problem, began an intensive English tutoring program. They were determined that I should at least learn how to say some basic everyday American phrases. I caught on pretty well, and when we entered the New York harbor I was certain that I could say "How do you do, Father" in perfect English.

Pandemonium seemed to break out when the *Bergensfjord* docked in New York. People were stirring about everywhere and yelling happily to each other. Having said goodbye to my newfound friends, I stood by the ship's railing to await the arrival of my father.

Soon I saw him coming on board. He looked much like the pictures he had sent me of himself. I remember the words that my two mentors had taught me- "How do you do, Father."

He came toward me.

We embraced.

I said, "Far."

"William," he said.

There was a long silence.

"Let's go home," my father said.

And that's how it was when I came back to America.

Oh, your wondering about the closet? Except for the book, everything else went back to where it had been stored before.

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Bill Foss is a member of our lodge. He is the author of many books including "The Norwegian Lady and the Wreck of the Dictator." His books can be purchased at local book stores including Borders, Barnes & Noble and The Old Coast Guard Museum.

Meet our new Officers...



Vice President, Martha Blau

I am a second-generation American-Norwegian and I was born in Columbia, SC. My maternal grandmother immigrated to the US when she was 22 years old. Our family farm is still in the Hollingdahl

valley and most of our relatives live in either Eidsvoll or Oslo. My Grandmother spoke Norwegian but would not allow any of us to speak it. She wanted us to be AMERICANS. I hope to continue my Norwegian lessons after my daughter's upcoming August wedding this year. My memories of Grandmother Marta (for whom I am named) are vivid ones of scary troll tales, delicious Norwegian food, and funny and interesting stories of her growing up on the farm with all of her siblings. I am just sorry that I didn't get to spend time with her as an adult, to better understand and learn about her Norwegian traditions, etc.

My "other" life is that as wife of a retired Navy Supply Officer, Jerry (who many of you have met), with whom I traveled around the world for over 21 years, who now works as a civilian for NAS Oceana in environmental protection. And mother to 3 children (all of whom I home-school/ed: Marie-an '02 graduate of Liberty University, whose wedding is this summer; Joanne- a h.s. junior, and Micah- a fifth grader) Besides the children's activities, I also perform in with an English handbell choir (we have been invited to perform in Ukraine and Russia this summer), as well as being the head secretary for the AWANA children's program in our church.

I discovered SON accidentally through my Mom, who had learned about it from a friend in AARP. We thought that SON would be a fun way to spend time together as well as learn about our Norwegian heritage. You are wonderfully fulfilling that wish. I am grateful for SON and am glad that we joined. I never dreamed I would be holding office though, and I feel honored that I was asked to do so. Tusen Takk for the privilege to serve.

Duties of the Vice President include:

shall preside at all meetings in the absence of the President, and when the President is prevented from acting, shall fill his or her position and shall assist the President at the meetings and supervise the guard(s).

In regards to membership, our Vice president shall assist the Financial Secretary in the collection of delinquent dues, have charge of the effort to get new members, assist the field staff personnel, encourage members to attend Lodge meetings and to pay special attention to the welfare of new members in their relation to the Lodge.



Marshall, Mark Holmquist

I was born and raised in Colorado Springs, Colorado. I joined the Navy after graduation and became a radioman on the submarine USS Jacksonville (SSN-699) out of Norfolk. I got out of the Navy in 1990 and am

now working as a video editor at Coastal Training Technologies in Virginia Beach. I am Norwegian on my mother's side. I am still doing my genealogy but have traced my Great Great Grandfather to Vegaarshei, Aust-Agder Norway in 1865. I have been married for 12 and 1/2 years to Sharon. I am the step-father to our kids, Robert and Jessica. Robert is 20 and Jessica is 18 graduating from Maury this year. I am an avid Hockey and NASCAR fan. I hope to get us all out to some games this year as well as some Tides games. I am looking forward to serving the lodge as best I can and am enjoying the Norwegian classes from AnneGrete. I hope to someday be fluent in it. As my first duty please hand in those stamps and I hope to remember everyone's name.

Duties of the Marshall shall include:

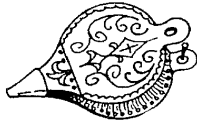
- (a) have charge of regalia, song books and such other properties as are kept in the Lodge rooms and not especially entrusted to other Officers;
- (b) be in attendance 15 minutes before the opening of a Lodge meeting;
- (c) see to it that the paraphernalia are distributed and in their proper places when the Lodge is called to order;
- (d) assist the President in preserving order and decorum and, if so ordered, remove from the Lodge room persons whose presence is offensive or disturbing;
- (e) supervise the balloting, put the ballot box in order and see to it that members keep at a proper distance from one another when voting;
- (f) conduct candidates into the Lodge room for initiation; and
- (g) perform all other duties described by the Bylaws and Ritual of Sons of Norway.

Our Marshall also is in charge of name tags and the TubFrim (stamp) program in our lodge.

"The most important part of life is not to reach your goals, but to be underway toward them."

-Fridtjof Nansen, Norwegian explorer, statesman, humanitarian.

FYI ...



* The newly named **Sy Klub** (formerly known as the Cultural Skills Group and means sewing club) will meet at the home of AnneGrete Peterson, on **March 13 at 10 AM**. She lives at 4121 Roenker Lane, VB. Phone: 318-9414. We're currently working on various forms of counted cross-stitch. Please join us for the workshop and lunch (bring a sandwich, please). We have some materials for practice work if you have nothing you're working on at the moment.

~Mary Friesen

* **Genealogy Website of the month**

<http://www.usgenweb.org/>

This is another site where it is difficult to describe in detail what it can do. It is enough just to say you can reach resources in every State County and Township in the USA through this site. Good hunting!

~Ralph

* **Norwegian Genealogy Meeting- March 17, 7:00pm** at the home of Ralph and AnneGrete Peterson. Please bring along a sample of your work if you have started on your family tree. If you haven't started, just show up. Please let the Petersons know if you are coming at 318-9414.

* Our **lodge website** is now active. You can see it at <http://sonhamptonroads.cjb.net> Give the website address to your friends and relatives. It has something for everyone. It is constantly being updated. So check it often! Comments and suggestions of any kind are appreciated. Send mail to the Larry Atkinson. Just click on his name on the website. ~Larry

* **The lodge is going to a Hockygame Sunday March 23rd @ 4:00 pm**

Admirals VS. Cincinnati Mighty Ducks. The tickets will cost \$7.25. We need the money by **March 13th** so Mark can make reservations and get the tickets. Send your checks to:

Ann Atkinson
1083 Algonquin Road
Norfolk, VA 23505

We will advise about getting the tickets to you. Wear something Norwegian if you have something. We will be sitting together.

* **WHRO pledge-a-thon March 10, 7:30 pm.**

If you would like to answer phones and show your Norwegian spirit, give Ralph a call to join us for this fun event. We will be wearing Norwegian attire along with our big smiles.

Third District Today

From the District President

From the March 2003 newsletter.

The newsletter can be read in entirety online at

<http://sofnd3.home.att.net> or ask our lodge president for a copy.

Now that the installations are over we should be getting into the real program part of the season. You have seen me writing about the need for good programs before, and I am somewhat encouraged therefore to read in the various newsletters I receive about the programs for the year to come.

Some lodges have outstanding programs, and some are trying to have at least some programs of cultural value. Speaking as I do about programs related to culture and heritage does not mean to say that I think "socials" are useless, not at all. And there are obviously culture/heritage related socials like our 17th of May celebrations that should be an important part of the program of any Sons of Norway lodge. Leif Erikson Day celebrations should by the way, also be included in our program calendars. But when asked, potential members and people who have left Sons of Norway have all pointed to culture/heritage programs as being key to membership attraction and retention. Some people I have spoken to complain that it is difficult to come up with program ideas that they think will catch the interest of the members. Well, maybe so, but brainstorming have worked wonders before, and if that doesn't work, don't forget that you can get help from the Home Office. Check out the idea bank. It has so many suggestions that surely you can find something to suit your lodge. Talk to a neighboring lodge to learn what they are doing. And hey, why not pool your resources and have joint meetings from time to time if you are in reasonable proximity to that lodge? The most important thing is that you try to do something. I am convinced that having more meaningful meetings will have a positive impact on attracting and retaining members. In your membership work it is important that you have a membership committee. The committee should actively monitor your membership situation and develop plans for how the lodge will seek to attract new members. I wonder how many of our lodges have membership committees? An active membership committee is an important part of the membership drive of any lodge. We cannot just leave it all to the vice president or the field staff to get us new members, and the field staff cannot help you when it comes to membership retention. So why don't you sit down and put a membership committee together and have the membership committee draw up a plan for attracting new members. With the right program mix and an active membership committee, you may surprise yourself. You may find those new members. There are people out there who are potential members, but you have to find them yourself. Doing nothing is not likely to bring you success.

Things are happening in Sons of Norway that could help you in your quest for new members. The Second Century for Growth Committee is working right now to come up with ideas of how to attract members in the 30-55 age group. They are working towards having a report for the International Board Meeting in May, and we all look forward to hearing what they have to say. But don't wait for their report. Get started right away and use the committee's report whenever you get it to supplement your own plans and efforts. I look forward to a successful year of membership attraction and retention.

Fraternally,

Audun Gythfeldt, President



Who is the March Mystery Member?



If you guessed President, Ralph Peterson for February's mystery member, you are right!

Today's Norway

Norway: World Capital of Peace?

Norwegians, like most other peoples around the world, want their country to have an important international role. Over the past decade, to the satisfaction of most, Norway's role has become that of international peacemaker. Norwegians have long taken pride in the fact that the Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded in Oslo since 1901. In the past decade, Norway has also been able to sponsor various peace negotiations around the world. Norway has involved itself in conflicts in the Middle East, the Balkans, Southeast Asia and Central America. Some ventures, like the Israeli-Palestinian agreement signed in Oslo in 1993, have experienced difficulties. However, many have succeeded, such as the peace agreement ending a 19-year civil war in Sri Lanka that was signed in Oslo in December 2002.

Because Norway is a small country with an ample supply of finances and virtually no enemies, they are able to spend the money and time on peacemaking ventures that other countries simply could not. This reputation for peacemaking has become very important to many modern Norwegians because it opens numerous business opportunities abroad and gives them a sense of national pride.

The mission of Sons of Norway is to promote, preserve, and cherish a lasting appreciation of the heritage and culture of Norway and other Nordic countries while growing soundly as a fraternal benefit society and offering maximum benefits to its members.

Sons of Norway-Hampton Roads 522
Terri Hewitt, Editor
4936 Farrington Dr.
Virginia Beach, VA 23455
ViElskerNorge@mindspring.com



Happy Spring!
March 21st