

# Virginia



# Viking

SONS OF NORWAY HAMPTON ROADS LODGE NO. 522

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May 2003

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## The President's Corner



Another busy month for Hampton Roads Lodge 522. Grete's sister, Torhild Byggstoyl provided us with a great display of slides showing some of the beauty one finds in Norway. The Azalea parade was a great success. The float looked great and the sun came through now and then so it was a great day. A big thank you to those (Mark, AnneGrete, Ann A., Astrid and Joe, Terri, Ernie Sutton, Kenny Hill, and Louis Peterson) who helped out in getting our "vessel" seaworthy. And thanks to those who rode or walked in the parade or attended. I was very happy to have some of our "NATO Norwegians" on board with us and we hope to have more pleasant days and nights with them. Six of us attended the great play "Late Night Catechism" which is part of the Virginia Beach Arts Festival. Thank you sister Kari.

When you read this I will be in Madison, WI attending a seminar on how to "write your family history". I will be very happy to share any information that I pick up. My great grandfather Torkil Peterson Ederklep, originally from Numendal, settled in nearby St Olaf, IA in 1849 so I will sneak over there to continue my search for those who have went before us.

Summer activities will be planned at the next meeting so bring your ideas or let one of the board members know of your desires. We have our big Syttende Mai celebration that will be held on the 16th. This is a great time to be a member of SON!

We have been talking a lot about SON's sports medal program. I am throwing out a challenge. I am going to earn a Bronze Sports Medal for walking. For my age bracket its only 100 miles. I am sure I can walk the 100 miles needed before the end of the year. The big question is -Can you? I will have 30 applications at the next meeting so get your walking shoes ready.

Med Venlig Hilsen, Ralph

## May Meeting

### **Thursday, May 15th, at 7:30 pm**

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

**Please note: This meeting will take place in the Fellowship Hall. Entry is through the Ewell Road side.**

### **Program**

There will not be a program for this meeting but there will be an extended social time following the business meeting with refreshments provided.

### **Also**

For the May Meeting, let's show our Norwegian pride! Please wear or bring any Norwegian Flag items you have and we'll display them.

### **Food Pantry**

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

## Syttende Mai Celebration

### **Friday, May 16th**

Members watch for your special invitation

## Tides baseball game

### **Has been cancelled for Friday, May 25**

### **due to Memorial Day weekend**

Please contact Ann Atkinson for a refund if you have sent in money.

## Highlights from the April Meeting

Pres. **Ralph Peterson** opened the April meeting and the new tradition of opening with a song was continued with the singing of Bestefar's Vals and Nidelven.

Six applications for membership have been received and all were unanimously approved for membership and were welcomed into the lodge. They were from **Violet Larsen, Jim Larsen, Harold Bernson, Unni Ramsey, Karin Berling and Toril Øien.**

An E-mail has been received from the International President concerning membership retention and attraction. Although the International Lodge has been losing membership over the past few years, our lodge seems to be going in the reverse direction, acquiring new members at every meeting. Our overall program already included many of the things that are suggested in the letter.

A thank you for our support of the 3rd district Charitable Trust fund has been received from Kenneth Johnson, District Counselor.

A thank you from the Moss Choir has been received expressing appreciation for the gifts bags given them upon their visit to Virginia and all the kindnesses shown them by our lodge members.

Three members are currently volunteering in the Adopt-A-School program and are working on reading with the students. A program is being prepared for a group presentation.

Our lodge Christmas Bazaar will be held on November 1 from 10 AM to 3 PM. Help will be needed to work the bazaar. Anyone wanting a table should declare themselves soon. Contact **Terri Hewitt or Deanna Rumney.**

**President Ralph Peterson** reported on the Sports Medal Program and the requirements for the walking program. He encouraged all members to participate.

A beautiful slide show followed with many pictures taken in the Telemark area of Norway. **Grete Sutton's** sister, Torhild Byggstoyl, who lives in Norway, presented the program.

Delicious refreshments were enjoyed by all! They were provided by **Synnôve Quaglietta, Elaine Murray and Grete Sutton.** Mange Takk!



Betty Andros shows her 50/50 winnings.

Members brought their carvings to share.



Torhild Byggstoyl and her sister Grete Sutton presented a wonderful slide program.

Our Azalea Fest float was readied by members Mark Holmquist, Ralph Peterson & Jude Liptak.



Congratularer med dagen!

Happy May Birthdays!  
Synnôve Quaglietta 5,  
William Hovland 11,  
Joan Hass, 25



# Meet New Members...

## Jim & Violet Larsen



My four grandparents were all born in Norway and came to America as adults. My father's parents settled on Staten Island and my mother's in Brooklyn. My mother, Violet, has always excelled at keeping the Norwegian traditions alive in our family. This is especially true around Christmas time when we all enjoy her traditional

and delicious baking, as well as, a home filled with Norwegian and Scandinavian decorations, many of which she & I have made over the years.

I had the pleasure of meeting cousins from Norway when they came to visit in 1993. Later that same year, my mother and I went to visit them in Norway. For me, that trip started a love for European travel and I've been back to Europe every year since, often twice a year.

~Jim

I am a first generation American. My mother left Norway for America in 1925, and my father in 1929. They met and married in 1930. We were a Norwegian household. Brooklyn had a large Norwegian population in that day. Our language, friends, church, food and customs were all Norwegian.

My father had lost both parents by the time he was seven years old. He then lived with his oldest brother who had a farm, until going off to sea, sailing three masted schooners out of New Zealand, where he lived for fourteen years. His English was beautiful.

In 1988 my late husband, Carl, and I went to Norway with an old address book of names and found my father's family. What joy! In 1993 my son, Jim, and I went to visit cousins in Norway where an unforgettable family gathering was held for us. I was grateful I could converse with my Norwegian relatives in their own language, and regret not passing it on to my children.

~Violet

## Unni Ramsey



I was born in Oslo, Norway. I came to the United States in May 1959. My original destination was Camp Lejeune in North Carolina. Later I moved to Alexandria and Vienna, VA. I am still a Norwegian citizen and proud of it. My husband and I retired to Hampton, VA in 1998 and currently live and enjoy our lives at beautiful Southall Landings on the Bay in said city. My mother is 91 years old and going strong and lives in Oslo. My sister and family also live in Norway. Many of my friends are Norwegian and several are members of Sons of Norway.

## Toril Øien Eller



I was born and raised in Oslo by my Danish mother and Norwegian father. Our Norwegian family roots are in Eidsvåg in Romsdal, where we still have distant relatives, but my son Jon (16) is the third generation to be born in Oslo on that side of the family.

With a name like mine, it was obvious that I was never meant to go outside Scandinavia, but in

August 2000 my son and I left Norway for Gloucester, VA, to move in with my American fiance and his two children. We had met during one of his visits to Norway when he was working for a Navy contractor. We married early in 2001 in Colonial Williamsburg, and I added Eller to my last name. That summer we took all the children and my mother-in-law and went to Norway for a 3-week trip around the country. From there we went back to Oslo and Drøbak, where we stayed a week, before we headed back to Virginia with a 24 hour stopover in Copenhagen. It was a wonderful trip that we still talk about.

Last year I embarked on a new career as a real estate agent. I was thrilled to find Sons of Norway. The Azalea festival gave me an opportunity to dress up in my bunad, that spends way too much time in the closet, and I look forward to wearing it again for the 17 Mai celebration. It's a long trip to Va Beach for the SON meetings, but I hope to be able to attend at least some of them. Meanwhile, I read every word in the Virginia Viking – several times!

~Toril

## Karin Berling



I have lived in the US over 8 years. I was born in Oslo, and I grew up in Drammen, a suburb to Oslo (and Norway's 6<sup>th</sup> biggest town). My first visit to the U.S. was as an exchange student for one year at an American high school close to Pittsburgh. After returning to Norway, I finished two years of school in Drammen. After

graduation as a "rødruss", I again headed to the U.S.– this time to Chicago, where I stayed for two years, and then headed to Norfolk, VA to attend ODU in 1995. I have lived here since, and I am still at ODU. I received my B.A. Degree in Biochemistry from ODU, and I am about to receive my Masters Degree in Biotechnology from there as well.

While studying at ODU, I met my husband, Jacob Haugh, a fellow biochemistry major. We were married in September 2000 in the Norwegian Seaman's Church in New York. Although my husband is not Norwegian, he loves visiting Norway and is trying to learn the language. We have no children, but we do have a big beautiful Norwegian Forest Cat (Skogkatt) named Fredrik. Although I love the United States, I miss Norway – its traditions, culture, food, language and most of all – my fellow Norwegians! I'm looking forward to getting to know all of you!

~Karin

# Meet new Member...

## Hal Bernsen



Both of my parents were born in Norway, Father in Oslo and Mother in Kristiansand. Father arrived in the US in the early twenties, Mother in 1929. They became American citizens, met and married in Boston. Father was a ships chandler, primarily servicing Scandinavian ships. Both of my parents were active in caring for Norwegian seamen during WWII. Many of those

torpedoed in the North Atlantic recuperated in our home. It was there I was first encouraged to learn to speak Norwegian. In 1964, during my first tour in Norfolk, my wife and I were in attendance when the Norwegian Lady was dedicated at the Beach. I had the good fortune to attend the 25th anniversary celebration, a beautiful day when we all marched along the boardwalk with Norwegian Ambassador, Kjell Vibe. Upon the death of my father in 1964, my mother returned to Norway. Although she vacationed in the US virtually every year after, she never took up permanent residence here again. Throughout my my Naval career I visited Norway often, developing fast friendships with my uncles, aunts and cousins. In 1988 I was awarded the Norwegian Medal of Merit (formerly the St. Olav's medal) for the work I did as the Admiral in command of US Naval forces in the Persian Gulf. I had the opportunity to assist the Norwegian merchant fleet. During the past 12 years, since my retirement from the Navy, I have averaged 2-3 trips to Norway each year primarily to visit my mother. She recently passed away one month shy of 101.I intend to visit as frequently as possible and maintain ties to Norway. I am quite sure that affiliation with SON will help in keeping those ties fresh and vibrant. ~ Hal

**Velkommen Karin, Hal, Toril,  
Jim, Violet og Unni!**



## Membership update...

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Violet Larsen  
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Marie Nilsen  
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Unni Ramsey (David)  
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## Greetings from the Nelsons!

Bill and Kate are now settled in their new Richmond home. Bill attributes his great Norwegian luck for the quick sale of their VA Beach home and the quick acquisition of their Richmond home. They moved in the middle of a snow storm, yet managed to find their way. They love being closer to their family and had all their children and grandchildren present for Easter. They are happy to report good health and a calendar overflowing with activities. They have joined an exercise group which started out with 8 women but since Bill has joined it is now 18 women and one man- Bill! Kate says she credits Bill for attracting the new members! They do miss their Hampton Roads friends and welcome news, calls and visitors. They plan on staying members so they can keep up with their many friends here. You can contact them at the address listed above. Good Luck Bill & Kate! We miss you too!

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 to 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 Hockeygame

**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 May →

## Mystery Member?



→ If you guessed Counselor,  
Deanna Rumney  
for April's mystery  
member, you are right!

### Sytteende Mai in Norway

For Norwegians, May 17th, Syttende Mai, is one of the biggest days of the year. To get a feel for how most Norwegians like to celebrate their national day, let's follow an imaginary family, Arne and Ingvild Hansen and their children, 18-year-old Maria and 8-year-old Daniel.

The Hansens start out their day with a big breakfast of herring, smoked salmon and other open-faced sandwich toppings. Then it's time to head to the big parade. Daniel joins with his schoolmates to march in the *barnetog*, or children's parade. For Maria, Syttende Mai marks the end of weeks of a uniquely Norwegian celebration known as *russetiden*. With her fellow *russ*, or graduates, she too marches in the parade. Arne and Ingvild meanwhile stand with the rest of their town dressed in their very finest, a *bunad* for Ingvild and a suit and tie for Arne, waving their Norwegian flags and singing the national anthem "Ja, vi elsker." After the parade, Maria joins with her *russ* friends for a while as mom and dad take Daniel to join in the children's games organized by schools and the town. Daniel is treated to the favorite of Norwegian children, *pølse*, *brus*, and *is*, or hot dogs, soda pop and ice cream.

To end their big day, the Hansens come back together at home for a Syttende Mai meal of *rømmegrøt*, *grillemat*, and *kransekake*, or cream porridge, grilled food and almond ring cake, as well as a little eggedosis, eggnog minus the milk.

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.

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*Happy  
Sytteende  
Mai!*

