

Vonheim Saga
Published Monthly by
Vonheim Lodge #1-108
Sons of Norway

Fra Presidenten

Summer Is Flying By!

We have been greeted by 90 degree days and some severe storms as summer is moving along.

Bygdelags are active with trips to Norway. Treasurer Don Teigen returned from a Fellesraad trip to Norway, while I have a Hadeland trip to Norway. The lags focus on genealogy and are a great assist with exploring your family roots. The Norway trips bring you right to the archives where you will be helped and provide an opportunity to venture to family farms and possibly be connected to some relatives.

There is a seven lag Stevne meeting in Fargo on July 10-13, which includes Hadeland. If you have interest in the lags and genealogy, you can get more information at <http://www.fellesraad.com>.

Vonheim gets together with Oslo lodge for a picnic at Wabun Park each year. Check out the detail info. It is a really good BBQ meal and a fun time. I hope to see you there!

Officers will be asked to get together in July for planning, All members are welcome. See Facebook for info as it emerges.

Tusen Takk,
Merle Tingelstad

**Picnic! Picnic! Picnic!
Fun! Fun! Fun!!**

Tuesday, July 30th, 6 PM

Come enjoy BBQ chicken and ribs

Cost: \$17

The traditional beans and cole slaw will round out the meal

The same location as previous years, area D, at Waubun Park just east of Minnehaha Falls.

Following dinner there will be Bingo with prizes.

**Reservations Required by
July 23rd to Louise
763-545-4827**



COMING EVENTS

Meetings are held on **Saturday** at Norway House, 913 E. Franklin Avenue, adjacent to Mindekirken in Mpls. (Lillehaugen Room on the lower level)

July 30th Picnic at Wabun Park

September 14th Lodge Mtg at 1:00 PM

Vonheim Meeting Notes Norway House June 8, 2019

14 members and guests attended our Sami Heritage presentation by Chris Pesklo.

President Tingelstad advised that he will be scheduling a planning meeting for July.

He noted some news headlines from Norway. First was that Norwegians have been quick to adopt the all electric vehicles which is great for reducing emissions.

However, they are finding that they will require a significant expansion of their electric production capacity even with off-peak charging of vehicles. Decisions will need to be made soon on how to achieve this and address the associated price tag.

With a little over 5 million people, Norway population is similar to Minnesota.

Another item is the Norwegian Parliament is banning fur farms effective 2025. Their primary fur products are mink and fox and these provide a large proportion of the

income for many farms that can't survive on their crops alone. Another item is that the inaugural trip was recently completed for an arctic tourist train taking an 11 day trip from St. Petersburg, Russia to

Murmansk at the Norwegian border and crossing into Norway by bus to make connection to the Hurtigruten boats or train south.

Chris Pesklo presented a program on Sami Heritage. The Sami are the indigenous peoples of the northernmost parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Russian area near Scandinavia. An oddity is that the primary genetic lineage of Sami is closely associated with the Basque area of Spain, while the 9 languages are Finno-Uralic derivatives.

Sami have been called Laplanders, but that is considered a derogatory term akin to using the "N" word for African-Americans. The Sami people and American Indians have a lot of parallels in how they were treated by their governments. They had no property rights and being susceptible to alcohol were taken advantage of. The Sami rebelled in 1852 in the Kautokeino uprising over their mistreatment, leading to executions. There were also massive protests in the 1980's in the Alta Valley over a hydroelectric project that would flood several Sami villages and prized grazing grounds for reindeer. There were laws in Norway prohibiting the Joik (spiritual singing by Sami) that could lead to execution. These laws had to be removed before the 1994 winter olympics as the opening ceremonies featured a Sami joik.

A NORWEGIAN LOVE STORY of OLE and LENA

Ole & Lena lived by a lake in Nordern Minnesota. It was springtime, and the lakes were just beginning to thaw.

Ole asked Lena if she would walk across the frozen lake to the general store to get him some smokes. She asked him for some money, but he told her, 'Nah, just put it on our tab'.

So she walked across, got the smokes at the general store, then walked back home across the lake. When she got home and gave Ole his smokes, she asked him, 'Ole, you always tell me not to run up the tab at the store. Why didn't you just give me some money?'

Ole replied, 'Well, I didn't want to send you out there without any money when I wasn't sure how thick the ice was.'

September Program: Reviewed in the Norwegian American, May 2013

Robert G. Johnson and Janey Westin offer a new theory on the presence of Norse explorers in North America

The Kensington Runestone in Minnesota, the Spirit Pond runestones discovered in Maine, reports of Native American peoples with light skin and eyes could there possibly be a historic explanation for these phenomena, or are they simply hoaxes?

In “The Last Kings of Norse America: Runestone Keys to a Lost Empire,” Robert G. Johnson and Janey Westin offer their own hypothesis, backed up with years of research and a brand-new translation of the Spirit Pond runestones.

“Our hope,” writes Johnson, of the book, “is that it will eventually be recognized by the authorities of history as a significant contribution to the pre-Columbian period of Norse activity in North America.”

Johnson received his Ph.D. from Iowa State University. After a puzzle-solving career in industrial research, he joined the Department of Geology and Geophysics at the University of Minnesota to work on the mystery of past climate variations. The American runestone controversy was just another perplexing problem with a solution that resulted from a joint ten-year effort with co-author L.J. (Janey) Westin. Westin, initially a professional calligrapher, pursued paleographic studies of medieval manuscripts, stone inscriptions, the structure of letter forms, and the tools and materials of the trades.

The two realized that no legitimate translation of the Spirit Pond runestones had ever been made; such finds are often considered hoaxes and brushed off by historians immediately.

Though most scholars do not debate that there was a Norse presence in North America, especially evidence at L’Anse aux Meadows in Newfoundland, “Artifacts such as the Spirit Pond stones, found in Maine, and the Kensington Runestone of Minnesota have been met with both acclaim and derision. Sensible scholars tend to weigh in on the side of forgeries and fakes. Those who support the authenticity of the stones are often labeled cranks or conspiracy theorists or, more kindly, hopeless romantics who want to believe in the untold adventures of medieval warriors,” write authors Johnson and Westin.

With “The Last Kings of Norse America,” Johnson and Westin present an exciting, smart, and logical argument for the validity and reasoning behind a Norse expedition to inland North America. Written in an imaginative way as part historical account and part adventure, the reader follows King Haakon VI on his disappointing expedition to inland North America to rekindle old trade routes, and follows the authors as well as they investigate holestones and runes in the Midwest and East Coast, evidence that backs their theory. “The Last Kings of Norse America” will appeal to a wide audience, including Viking enthusiasts, those with an interest in history or simply those who want to read a captivating story.

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September 14th at 1PM hear author Janey Westin speak on her book *The Last Kings of Norse America: Runestone Keys to a Lost Empire*, (featuring two historically important runic transcriptions)

“Epic in scope, insightful, imaginative, venturesome, and provocative – if this groundbreaking book about the Norse in America before Columbus does not cause a paradigm shift in your thinking, you need to check your pulse.” – Herbert R. Cederberg, PH.D., Emeritus Professor of History, University of Wisconsin.