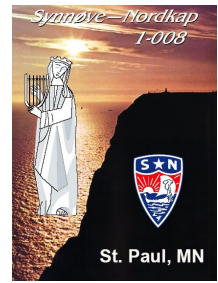




# SynNor Brevet

Synnøve-Nordkap  
Lodge #1 - 008

December 2021  
Issue Number 21 - 11



## Front Page News

### Scandinavian Holiday Traditions

What are your cultural holiday traditions? Maybe you cook Norwegian foods on Christmas Eve? Perhaps you celebrate the new beginning of longer days on the winter solstice? Join us at our virtual lodge meeting via **Zoom on Tuesday, December 14th at 7:00 PM** and tell us about your cultural traditions during the winter holiday season.

Unfortunately, the Synnøve-Nordkap board of directors has made the difficult decision to postpone the Julebord holiday in-person celebration. Our priority is the health and safety of our members. This relentless surge of illness in Minnesota as well as our cold, northern winter make our family traditions even more meaningful. Please join us for our virtual meeting to share yours. We hope to be together again in person very soon.

Lodge officers for 2022 will be installed at this meeting, as well. The election was held during the virtual lodge meeting in November. We hope to see on the 14th.



### President's Letter

Gledelig jul! fellow members!

Christmas is a special time to think about our family traditions. I'm sure for many of us, they include activities, foods, and stories which reflect our Norwegian Heritage and Culture. Sons of Norway has developed a wonderful guide, Christmas Traditions of Norway, which describes many and is available to all members! Created exclusively for members, the "Christmas Traditions of Norway" PDF is now faster and easier to [download from our website](#). Learn about colorful customs and tasty recipes. Get your whole family in on Norwegian Christmas fun.

A special memory I have is how my mother would tell me about the animals in the barn on Christmas eve. She would tell how the animals were more peaceful and content on that night and how my father would make sure the bedding in the stalls for the cows was just a bit more fresh and full than on other nights. She would tell how milking the cows took on a sound and a pace that was almost musical and magical, how the old barn was a bit warmer, and how the light glowed softer and glimmered. My Dad would leave a saucer of milk for the barn cat(s). She would always say, "the animals knew" this was a special night and "your Pa" knew it too.

In the years since my mother's telling of that Christmas story, I have learned the stories of Nisse in the barn and the Norwegian beliefs of being kind to them, especially on Christmas eve! I know my mother was also weaving in aspects of the story of the birth of the Christ child in a lowly manger and the animals surrounding him there. As I have matured and experienced many Christmas Eve's myself, I also suspect it was a time for my "Pa" to relax just a bit in that barn before going into the house. It was some personal time to feel good about his farm, his family, his livestock, and his faith. Indeed, I am sure that Christmas Eve in the barn was special.

Keep your family traditions and stories alive again this year! Surround yourself with joy and peace.



Lowell Johnson



# Secretary's Report

## **Synnøve-Nordkap Lodge #1 – 008 Board of Directors, Online via Zoom, 11/02/2021**

Members in attendance: Dianne Anderson, Ingrid Bjorum, Connie Chrissis, Chuck Draheim, Jean Draheim, Lynn Hoffmeyer, Lowell Johnson, Jean Knaak, Dave Mutchler, Mary Beth Mutchler, Ron Stow, Susan Stow, and Audrey Waage. President Lowell Johnson called the meeting to order.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES**-Lowell: Agenda was approved as emailed, and minutes are approved by email before being printed in the Brevet.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**-Jean D: Report was accepted as presented. Lowell asked when the audit will happen, and Jean D. said after the first of the year usually around Feb 1.

**SECRETARY'S REPORT**-Connie: There are currently 245 members. Mary Beth: Sent a card to Trudy Johnson for her birthday on Fri. She is in a nursing facility.

**DISTRICT 1**-Ron: Attended the District Board meeting in early Oct. The standing committee officers gave reports, and Ron reported as the Sports and Rec Director. The Cultural Director is preparing a catalog of programs as a resource for local lodges. Stamp collecting will be an option for local lodges. The new governance model will be set up and ready to install in 2024. Under this system, the voting to select the International Board will be done by financial managers. District delegates will still be needed.

The 2020 District 1 Convention will be May 31 to June 4 at Cragun's Resort. Information will be coming out through the Brainerd lodge which is hosting the event. The district has voted to give financial incentive to entice members to be delegates. Each lodge will be given \$125 per delegate, and each first time delegate will receive an additional \$125. More information to come.

The following District 1 Board positions are open: Vice President, Cultural Director, Treasurer, and Zone 9 Director. The District hopes to add a Foundation Director.

People are encouraged to get their Folk Art projects ready for the competition. People are needed to apply for camp scholarships, and local lodges are encouraged to apply for grants for the Nordic Fund. Chuck asked what is available for grants. The common amount is \$500, and it is for lodge projects that reach out into the community to attract new members.

The following have volunteered to be delegates from our lodge to the 2022 District 1 Convention:

- 1) Connie Chrissis, 2) Lowell Johnson (tentative), 3) Ingrid Bjorum, 4) Lynn Hoffmeyer

Alternates:

- 1) Susan Stow, 2) Andy Chrissis

Ron Stow will be attending and participating as a District Board member. We will do one more call to the general membership in the November Brevet asking for members interested in being delegates.

**JR LODGE**-Susan: October focused on what Viking kids were doing in the year 980. It was determined by family status. November will be learning about skalds which are poets and storytellers. A Viking re-enactor will be attending the Nov meeting. The dancers will be performing on Sat, Dec. 4 at the Union Depot during the European Christmas market, and the Dec meeting will be Norwegian baking.

**NOVEMBER MEETING**-Jean K and Ron: The program that had been scheduled for last month, the L'Anse aux Meadows National Historic Site presented by Anne Sladky, will occur this month via Zoom. We will have the election of officers. Ron will work with Sasha on coming up with a screen-share listing of the candidates as required.

**GA UPDATE**-Jean D: The church council is requiring masks in the building and no hospitality events for the month of Nov. They are meeting month by month to make determinations.

**DECEMBER MEETING**-Jean K: Decision was made to have Julebord at GA Church as the council gave us permission to host this event. There was discussion about officer installation, foods to serve, covid precautions, and entertainment.

Jean will work to get the Julebord organized for Tues, Dec 14 with the help of Mary Beth, Dianne, and Jean D. Lowell will prepare a statement of expectations for covid safety for the Brevet announcement of the Julebord in Dec. There was discussion about officer installation, foods to serve, covid precautions, and entertainment. Jean will work to get the Julebord organized for Tues, Dec 14 with the help of Mary Beth, Dianne, and Jean D. Lowell will prepare a statement of expectations for covid safety for the Brevet announcement of the Julebord in Dec.

Lowell shared Sasha's suggestion that instead of Julebord we bake and deliver traditional Norwegian cookies for sharing with our members who are shut-ins. Lowell will work with Sasha on this as an ad hoc project, and Mary Beth will let them know of the members who can no longer attend meetings.

Ron reminded everyone about the zoom Genealogy meeting on Sat, Nov 6.

The next Board of Directors meeting will be Tues, December 7 at 7p via Zoom. (cchrissis)

## **Synnøve-Nordkap Lodge Meeting #1-008 Nov 9 at 7 pm via Zoom**

- President Lowell Johnson called the meeting to order.

(Continued on page 4)



(Secretary's Report, continued from page 3)

- **November birthdays:** Dave Hegdahl and Jean Draheim
- **Anniversaries:** None
- **Veterans attending:** In recognition of Veterans Day Lowell thanked Lynn Hoffmeyer, Dave Hegdahl, and Fred Matson for their service.
- **Members attending:** 36
- **Officer election:** The roster of nominees was shown on the screen, and Lowell informed everyone that we could have a vote of acclamation if there is one nominee for each position. Dave Hegdahl moved that we accept the roster by acclamation. Chuck seconded. The motion carried unanimously. Officers will be installed at our December meeting.
- **District convention delegates:** If anyone is interested in being a delegate to the District Convention in June 2022, please let Ron Stow know of your interest. We will vote on this at an upcoming meeting.
- **Julebord:** The meeting will begin at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, December 14. People attending will need proof of vaccination or a recent negative Covid test. Jean Knaak (knaak002@gmail.com) would like people to let her know what appetizers or desserts they would like to contribute.
- **Program:** The L'Anse aux Meadows program that had been scheduled last month was presented. Jean Knaak met our presenter, Anne Sladtky, at a stevne. They travelled together to visit this national historic site where reenactors did a great job of showing what life must have been like in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Anne also showed pictures and maps of the site which is located in the Canadian provinces of Newfoundland and Labrador.
- **Genealogy:** People shared genealogy 'surprises' and 'non-surprises' they encountered after submitting their DNA for testing. The group has been working on tying traditional genealogy with DNA test genealogy.
- **Door Prizes:** Sons of Norway cap: Lowell Johnson; Sons of Norway Christmas deco: Mary Beth Mutchler; "Uff-Da" seat belt stay-in-place velcro: Judy Jourdan. (cchrisis)

### Junior Lodge Update

Wool gathering and stories about uses for wool in Viking times were first among the stories told by our guest, Kari Tauring. Dressed in her woolen Viking style clothing, Kari showed our junior lodge group how to spin from a round wooden disc with a wooden spindle below. Then she told us about how the Vikings used plants to dye the wool for garments. The *woad* European herb plant was gathered to create blue dye. Wealthier Vikings could afford to import the costly *madder root* for dye to achieve red for their garments. Kari's garments were a soft blue and light lavender with

a green cloak. There were two brooches for the dress and one for the cloak. Vikings would have woven fabrics on a vertical loom with stones tied to the thread at the bottom.

The big question Kari asked was, "How many sheep were shorn in order to weave the sail for a Viking ship?" We were all astonished that the fleece from 750 sheep was needed! No electric clippers were available to shear a sheep. At that time the wool was pulled from the sheep. Uff da!

We heard stories about Freya, her magical powers, and Odin, too. Then Kari told about her experiences on the Norwegian reality TV show, **Alt for Norge**. Everyone was quite curious and asked many questions.



## Drøbak: The Norwegian Home of Santa Claus

by Don Halvorson

While we traditionally believe that Santa Claus lives at the North Pole, in Norway his home is in Drøbak. Forty kilometers south of Oslo, this small quayside community of thirteen thousand sits on the west side at the narrowest point of the Oslo Fjord.

All year long, visitors flock to Drøbak to take in the Yuletide experience. In summer, it's an inexpensive trip by ferry from Oslo's Aker Brygge station. In winter, when the ferries don't go there, the only way by water is the Jule Cruise, a larger, expensive cruise ship. The third choice is to go by bus year round.

Once there, the feeling of Christmas is everywhere. The local post office uses its Julenissen postmark year round. Visitors can buy clever postcards and have them postmarked from that location. Every street corner displays a Santa crossing sign. At the center of it all is the Julehuset, a small house that remains open all year. Inside there are hundreds of cute traditional decorations and ornaments of Scandinavian design for tourists to buy.



Popular are the toadstools and small ceramic pigs that are felt to bring good luck in Norway, and red hearts that are synonymous with Christmas there. All around elves and trolls move about, busily working on special holiday gifts for Julenissen distribution on Christmas

Eve. Every year tens of thousands of letters arrive there from all over Norway with children's wishes for Christmas.

Drøbak derives its name from *Drøye bakke*, the description of its surrounding hills, rolling and fading away from its coastline. Before 1989, when the city fathers dreamed up the Julenisse idea, Drøbak was a trading town. In the century of sail, between 1700 and 1800,

the town slowly grew as a commerce hub on the Oslo Fjord. Boats leaving the wharf with ice blocks and lumber would return with grain and other commodities needed by the inhabitants living around Christiania. In the winter, when the inner harbor around the capital froze, Drøbak became the port where cargo ships laid up until the spring ice out. Cargo meant for the region during the winter was put on horse-drawn sledges to finish the journey. In 1814 Drøbak became the Customs Center for the capital. In 1962 Drøbak was made a part of Akerhus Fylke and became a municipality and the administration center of the area.

In the beginning of the eighteen century, a collection of small wooden houses were built next to the boat harbor, as homes for the fishermen, seamen, and tradesmen living there. Much like Gamle Stavanger, these buildings today have become a tourist attraction and are cared for by the local Society for the Protection and Restoration of Historical Buildings.

Historically these houses are a microcosmic testimony of Norway's rise from early poverty to today's prosperity. Today they are used as offices for employees of many of the fylke's departments.

Drøbak also has other attractions. Known as the town where the sun never sets, it is famous for its spectacular sunsets.

Several kilometers away there is the often-visited fort of Oscarsborg. There, on the evening of April 8, 1940, an undermanned garrison of inexperienced army recruits and their aging commander successfully held off a much larger German force, just long enough for the Royal Family, with Norway's gold, to flee the capital.

After spending time at Julehuset, visitors can walk to several local museums, or spend time relaxing at the harbor watching for passing sailboats or cargo ships on the Oslo Fjord. With luck, they might also witness the arrival of a small fishing boat returning home with its daily catch of mackerel.

[Introduction to Drøbak | VisitDrøbakwww.visitdrøbak.no > en > introduction-to-drøbak](#)  
[Santa's Claus home - DRØBAK - The Caisls - Family on the roadwww.thecaisls.cz > 12 > 03](#)



## Bulletin Board

### Sunshine News

It is with a sad heart that we share the news that long time member, Millie Hartleben, passed away on November 22 at the age of 97. Millie was a proud Norwegian and a Golden member of our lodge.

The funeral was Saturday, December 4, in Eagan. We will miss her.

### Norwegian Language Classes

Classes are cancelled until further notice.

Please contact Class Facilitator Sheryl Hove at [sherylhove@netzero.net](mailto:sherylhove@netzero.net) or 651-738-4908 for information

### Genealogy Group

Please watch your email inbox for information about the January meeting.

### For Information:

**Lowell Johnson**, President:  
[pres.synn.nord@gmail.com](mailto:pres.synn.nord@gmail.com)

**Ingrid Bjorum**, Brevet Editor:  
[ingrid@steinmetz.org](mailto:ingrid@steinmetz.org)

### Folk Art Competition

Hey, all you talented folk artists, get your hardanger, rosemaling, painting, photography, woodcarving, etc. projects ready for the Nordic Folk Art Competition at the District Convention in June. Any project you have completed since June 2018 is eligible to be entered. Further information will be available in the spring.

### COVID-19 in Norway

Norway is in the midst of a significant surge of COVID-19 and of the largest outbreak of the omicron variant, so far, in Europe. You can read more about the state of the pandemic in Norway here:

<https://www.euronews.com/2021/12/02/covid-19-norway-on-guard-over-omicron-as-dozens-test-positive-after-christmas-party>

<https://www.lifeinnorway.net/coronavirus-in-norway/>

Current travel guidelines and restrictions to Norway: <https://www.visitnorway.com/plan-your-trip/coronavirus-and-travelling-to-norway/>

## Meet Our Member – Jana Stow Velo

At the age of 8, Jana Stow Velo joined a newly founded group of children's Norwegian folk dancers. Started by her mother, Susan Stow, the dance group became the Junior Lodge of Synnove-Nordkap Sons of Norway. Since then, Jana has made a variety of connections with Norway and its language and culture.

Asked who or what influenced her to join Synnove-Nordkap, Jana replied, "My parents. They are both passionate about Norwegian language, culture and cuisine and I was eager to learn." She feels blessed to also have had grandparents who shared their knowledge about Norwegian cultural skills such as knitting, woodworking, baking, and appreciation of Norwegian culture in general.

Jana grew up in Stillwater Minnesota, steeped in Norwegian dance, language, and music. Having gone to Skogfjorden language camp for 5 summers and folk danced for over a decade, it was always a goal of Jana's to have a career involving Norwegian culture. This dream was realized in 2014, when she was hired at Sons of Norway headquarters in Minneapolis. First, she was a Cultural Coordinator, then a Senior Cultural Specialist and now Jana is the Editor of written publications. She states, "It is a thrill to research information for articles and to help Sons of Norway members with culture-related questions!"

Although Jana's husband, Phil, is not of Norwegian descent, he knows the culture is very special to her, so much so that he wore wedding attire to match Jana's bunad (folk costume) when they married. Their daughter, Kaia (9), is now in the Peer Gynt Dancers and loves to learn about Vikings, trolls, and to sing Norwegian songs. She has attended two summers at Skogfjorden via Zoom, and this coming summer she will finally go to camp in person!

Between the two sides of her parents, Jana says she is roughly half Norwegian. She has taken Ancestry and 23andMe DNA tests and the science has backed up the records that her parents have painstakingly researched.

In addition to her interests in Norwegian, Jana is an avid cyclist and also loves to hike in nature. Since this period of Covid has happened, she has taken up the hobby of birding which she has used as a way to get her daughter out into nature and watch for birds.

Jana serves as coordinator of the Synnove-Nordkap Lodge Facebook page. Check it out for fascinating articles about all things Norwegian.

With the start of Junior Lodge season this year, Jana stepped into a new role as dance director with Peer Gynt Norwegian Dancers. Considering her background as a folk dancer, the children will certainly be in for a treat.

Mange tusen takk, Jana Stow Velo, for your contributions to the success of Synnove-Nordkap!



*The mission of the Sons of Norway is to promote and to preserve the heritage and culture of Norway, to celebrate our relationship with other Nordic countries, and provide quality insurance and financial products to our members.*



Synnøve-Nordkap Lodge #1-008:  
District 1 Lodge of the Year in 2013  
Family Lodge of the Year in 2006, 2008, 2013, 2016, 2017, 2018  
Visit Synnøve-Nordkap online: <https://synn-nord.org>  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/synnor/albums>  
<https://peergyntdancers.wordpress.com/about/>  
<https://www.facebook.com/SynnoveNordkap/>

Date	Event	Location
Tuesday, December 7, 7 PM	Board of Directors Meeting	Virtual meeting via Zoom
Tuesday, December 14, 7 PM	Lodge Meeting	Virtual meeting via Zoom
Tuesday, January 4, 7 PM	Board of Directors Meeting	Virtual meeting via Zoom
Saturday, January 8, 1 PM	Junior Lodge Fish Toss & Sledding Party	Stillwater Middle School 523 Marsh St. W. Stillwater, MN 55082
Tuesday, January 11, 7 PM	Monthly Lodge Meeting	TBD