



# NORTH STAR



# NEWS

Vol 2024 Issue 3/4  
Mar/Apr 2024

## **Cultural Presentation - Arctic Explorers**

*From Liv Dahl*

Attention members:

Mark your calendars for a special event on May 6th at 6 PM featuring explorers Graeme and Lynda Magor who in 1999-2000 spent a year on Ellesmere Island replicating the expedition of Norwegian explorer Otto Sverdrup one hundred years earlier.

In 1898, Norwegian Explorer Otto Sverdrup set out to prove that Greenland was an island. He sailed from Norway on the ship Fram, the very same ship that brought Fridtjof Nansen to the North Pole and Roald Amundsen to the South Pole.

Otto Sverdrup and his crew did reach the south of Greenland. However, an especially harsh winter stopped them from continuing north. Instead, they crossed over to Ellesmere Island and anchored in a bay. The ship became trapped in the ice that did not let them return to Norway until three years later. While there, they explored much of what is now the Northwest Territories, even attempted to claim some of the big islands for Norway.

In the 1990s Canadian physician Graeme Magor and his wife Lynda made a plan to follow in Otto Sverdrup's footsteps. By June of 1999, they had recruited four additional crew members: two scientists from Norway along with their two dogs, Bamse and Yukon, a New Zealander, the owner of the 53-foot ship Northanger, and his Canadian wife. They sailed out of Oslo harbor and arrived at Horseshoe Bay on Ellesmere Island in the fall. Their ship was frozen into the ice and stayed there until August the following year.

Lynda and Graeme will share highlights from their exciting journey, their adventures, and the important research they conducted while over-wintering in the high north. The presentation will be complemented by pictures.

### ***NEXT MEETING!***

- OUR REGULAR MEETING WILL BE HELD AT BOWEN PARK MEETING ROOM #1 MONDAY APR 8, 2024, AT 6:00PM

### ***SOCIALIZING***

- A CULTURAL PROGRAM WILL BE PRESENTED
- REFRESHMENTS WILL BE PROVIDED

For this special event, we have invited members of Nordlys Lodge in Port Alberni to join us. You are also welcome to bring a guest. As refreshments will be served, it is important for us to know approximately how many to expect. If you plan to bring a guest, please let Linda Harvey, our Social Director, know by April 30th. Her telephone number is 250-751-1435.

Liv Dahl, Cultural Director

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Membership Contest!

District 7 is having a Membership Contest starting Nov 1, 2023. The contest will end and close at midnight on April 30, 2024. The draw will be made at the District 7 Convention 2024 for a \$200.00 prize.

- Each new ADULT member that joins Sons of Norway provides one "ticket" in the draw for the person doing the recruitment.
- Please note that a newly recruited member gets the same rights as any member, so they can also join the contest by recruiting a new member as well.

Each Lodge Membership Secretary must keep documentation of names of each member who signed up a new member, with multiple listings of that person if they sign up multiple people, and then submit a final listing to District Vice President Jim Tore Breivik.

Contest will close at midnight on April 30, 2024 and the Lodge Membership Secretary must submit the final list to Jim Tore Breivik on May 1, 2024 midnight.

Best regards,

*Jim Tore Breivik (j-t-brei@online.no)*



## **Editors Message**

Hi members,

You will notice a little different look in the newsletter this month. There is a technical issue in Word preventing me from doing things the way I normally do with images, so there will be reduced images and less pretty things to look at.

I hope to have this resolved by next publication.

Thank you for understanding,

Rosie Barlak

Editor



## **2024 LODGE OFFICERS**

|                           |                  |              |
|---------------------------|------------------|--------------|
| PRESIDENT                 | Jim Tore Breivik | 250-758-7576 |
| VICE PRESIDENT            | vacant           |              |
| MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY      | vacant           |              |
| SECRETARY                 | Rosie Barlak     | 250-758-7576 |
| ASSIST. SECRETARY         | vacant           |              |
| TREASURER                 | Einar Thomassen  | 250-591-6979 |
| SOCIAL DIRECTOR           | Linda Harvey     | 250-751-1435 |
| CULTURAL DIRECTOR         | Liv Dahl         | 250-591-1116 |
| COUNSELOR                 | Ida Pedersen     | 250-758-2306 |
| EDITOR                    | Rosie Barlak     | 250-758-7576 |
| ASSIST. CULTURAL DIRECTOR | Randi Johansen   | 250-754-4407 |
| FOUNDATION DIRECTOR       | Liv Dahl         | 250-591-1116 |
| SPORTS DIRECTOR           | Kirk Vadheim     | 250-324-8630 |
| MARSHAL                   | Randi Johansen   | 250-754-4407 |
| 1 YR TRUSTEE              | Kjell Garteig    | 250-756-4934 |
| 2 YR TRUSTEE              | Lillian Hope     | 250-758-1095 |
| 3 YR TRUSTEE              | Elisabeth Vikran | 250-740-3683 |

## **MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**

Our Feb 5 and March 4, 2024 North Star Lodge regular business meeting started at 6 pm with 13 and 14 adult members present. Regular meeting business occurred around bill payments.

Motions were carried to:

- Accept 2023 Financial Statement.
- Donate \$80 to the Nanaimo Folkfestival Society
- Pay for Linda Harvey to take the Food Safe Certificate so our lodge has requirements for hosting to the public.
- Submit a resolution to the District 7 Convention that anthems be provided with examples of people singing in lower octaves to make them easier to sing.

## **Brain Discovery**

*From SON Newsletter files*

Neuroscientists and Nobel Prize Winners May-Britt Moser and Edvard Moser, have made yet another exciting discovery about the human brain. Along with their team of researchers at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), they studied lattice cells in mice and have found an interesting phenomenon.

The cells follow a pattern that repeat over and over again. The neuroscientists' main focus was on the medial entorhinal cortex, which is the part of the brain that supports episodic memory. They set up an experimental environment for the mice to study neuron activity over a given period of time. The results excited them. Edvard Moser stated, "I believe we have found one of the brain's prototypes for building sequences."

The hope is that this discovery will give them a look into how the brain places memories and experiences in time order. Interpreting the findings could help them understand Alzheimer's disease, as well as inspire further research into brain functions.

## **Scandinavian vs. Nordic**

*From SON Newsletter files*

What's the difference between "Scandinavian" and "Nordic?" Good question! For those outside of the region, the terms often get used interchangeably. However, if you look a little closer, you will discover that they are not one and the same.

- Geographically, Scandinavia refers to the peninsula that Norway, Sweden, and a small northern part of Finland sit on
- The most common use of the term Scandinavia refers to the three countries of Sweden, Norway, and Denmark which share geography, language, and history
- In general, speakers of Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish can understand each other well enough to communicate, because of the three languages' similarities
- Sámi people who live in Norway and Sweden may not identify as Scandinavian because of the complicated history of assimilation policies the countries had
- The term Nordic refers to five countries: Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, and Iceland - and the autonomous regions those countries have jurisdiction over - the Faroe Islands, Greenland, and the Åland Islands
- Nordic countries are linked by cultural, historical, financial, and political influence on each other
- Nordic countries have a strong tradition of intergovernmental cooperation, with the foundation of the Nordic Council in 1952 that allowed citizens easy travel between the countries
- You won't hear people refer to themselves as "Nordic" because it's often seen as an added layer of their Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, Icelandic, or Finnish identity

## **Social Director's Report**

*By Linda Harvey*

Our March meeting party has gone by but I would like to tell you what you missed!

North Star Lodge celebrated the Irish in March! Green tablecloths, leprechaun top hats, glittery green shamrocks, golden accents, and Norwegian flags decorated the tables. After our regular business meeting, we enjoyed a video on the "Irish in Oslo on St. Patrick's Day". The video showed us a large contingent of Irish and "want to be Irish" parading down the Oslo streets to the music of bagpipes and violins. Irish dancers participated in the parade as well as St. Patrick himself!! Of course, they were all wearing green...clothes, hair, and face!

There were speeches and singing on the steps of a government building in Oslo. As you can imagine, they were having great fun! In one article I read, it stated that some Irish men were doing the jig while playing the Hardanger fiddle!

After the video, we played a game called "Irish Family Feud". It was a question-and-answer game styled after the well known TV show, the Family Feud. Two teams battled for the highest score. The winning team received 3 "Hurrahs" from the losers!!

The Irish Blessing was read before a delicious lunch. Thank you to Pat and Judy Hyslop for providing a delicious lunch.

April 8th is our next meeting date beginning at 6:00 p.m. Come early (5:30) to help set up. The lunch will be provided by Elisabeth and Aila.

After the meeting we will hear about some of the past programming that North Star Lodge was involved in. Also, there will be a brief presentation about "why is April so important to Norwegians in past and present times."

There is a captivating article enclosed in this newsletter about our May 6th meeting. Liv has invited guests speakers to present a very interesting piece of history. Please read the article and consider bringing a friend along. Please remember to phone me if you are bringing someone as we have to gage the amount of food to prepare. 250-751-1435 Since we expect a few more people than normal, I will be asking you for your help in providing some lunch treats.

The 17th May is in the planning stages. Stay tuned for more information. A special email will be sent out to the members regarding this party. I will be asking for volunteer helpers for this event at the next two meetings. Please help as preparing for an event like this is all encompassing. Thank you. I will be asking ...

Linda Harvey  
Social Director

## **Ancient Rock Paintings Discovered in Norway**

*From SON Newsletter files*

Out for a hike with his family on the outskirts of Oslo, in the municipality of Moss, Tormod Fjeld unexpectedly discovered history. The family had stopped for a snack break when something caught his attention. While many others likely would not have noticed, Tormod had a well-trained eye, since he likes to look for rock carvings in his free time. While not a carving, he noticed colors on a boulder near to where they were resting. He used an app on his phone to analyze the picture he took of the rock. It was immediately clear that there was something special about this rock and so he reached out to a friend that works in archeology. Experts from the Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research (NIKU) were soon called in and it was determined that this faint pattern on rock was in fact something that likely dates to the Bronze Age (3300 to 1200 BC). It depicts a boat with oarsmen and human and animal figures.

This is a significant discovery for many reasons. It's remarkable that they survived all this time, although a rock protrusion protected them from the brunt of the elements. Also, given the faintness of the images, the majority of people hiking in the area would likely not have given it a second glance. It's a fortunate happenstance that Fjeld was there with eagle eyes to spot this stunning discovery. This adds to an already impressive list of finds that he and two friends have made over the years and will hopefully continue making for years to come.

## **A Color-Coded City**

*From NRK.no*

On the southern tip of the island of Karmøy in Norway, lies a charming village known as Skudeneshavn. Skudeneshavn is a coastal town that features narrow streets, seafront wharves, and a unique cohesiveness. In 2018, the King adopted the cultural environment protection in Skudeneshavn that is protected by the Cultural Heritage Act. This act recognizes the value of historic areas and seeks to maintain their cultural significance. It is the reason Skudeneshavn is so well preserved. The conservation means that there are regulations in place for the maintenance and upkeep of building exteriors and outdoor areas.

Skudeneshavn has had a rich color history in respect to their building exteriors and those same colors are now portrayed in the city's color code as a result of its status as a culturally protected environment. Any maintenance or painting to one's house must be in line with the city's guidelines in a specific color palette and with the right technique/tools. The colors include white, shades of green, red, and blue. There is no doubt that the protection creates an authentic experience and draws forward the rich history of the town.

## **Counties Go Separate Ways**

*From www.expressnews.com*

In 2017, Norway's Storting voted to combine several fylker, and 19 counties became 11 regions in January of 2020. This administrative reform attempted to strengthen each region and improve coordination between municipalities, regions and state.

According to the website LifeinNorway.net, several of these combined regions decided that the set-up was not working and have rolled back the mergers as of January 1, 2024. Now there are a total of 15 counties.

Here is the current line-up of fylker:

Continuing as merged counties:

- Agder
- Vestlandet
- Trøndelag
- Innlandet

Splitting:

- Troms og Finnmark are breaking up
- Viken will revert to Buskerud, Akershus and Østfold counties
- Vestfold og Telemark will also roll back the changes

Unaffected by both 2020 and 2024 changes:

- Møre og Romsdal
- Nordland
- Oslo
- Rogaland

Not everyone was in favor of the restructuring, including the police service, who will need more resources and officers to cover the increased number of counties.

*litt på norsk...*

## **Det er sunt å la tankene fly**

*From SON Newsletter files*

Å la tankene vandre i hverdagen har ufortjent dårlig rykte, mener forsker. Tenk deg at du må jobbe på spreng med en rapport sjefen har bestilt, men gløtter ut av vinduet på solen som smelter den skitne snøen. For ditt indre blikk ser du de gule krokusene hjemme i hagen. Har det kommet flere siden i går, og kanskje noen tulipaner? Slike dagdrømmer bør du ikke ha dårlig samvittighet for.

- Du bør gi deg selv rikelig med luker i arbeidsdagen til å la tanker komme og gå fullstendig fritt, mener professor Halvor Eifring ved Humanistisk fakultet ved Universitetet i Oslo.

Vi bruker nesten halvparten av vår våkne tid til å tenke på alt annet enn det vi «skal» og «bør». Spontane tanker utgjør hele 47 prosent av vår våkne tankevirksomhet. Dette har forskere målt ved å sende meldinger på smarttelefon til en rekke mennesker på tilfeldige tidspunkt, med spørsmål om hva de tenker på.

Når vi lar tankene vandre fritt blir hjernens default mode network, eller hvilenettverk, mer aktivt, viser forskning fra 2007. Senere har forskning vist at denne delen av hjernen som også er involvert i drømmer. Vi er genetisk disponert til av og til å gløtte opp på fuglene i luften, antilopene ved vannet, vinden i trærne og den varme luften på bakken i horisonten. Mennesker stammer fra savannen i Afrika, hvor vi var avhengige av å se, høre og lukte rundt oss for å overleve.

- Det ville være farlig om vi ikke jevnlig skiftet fokus fra det nære til mulige fjerne farer, som å registrere et rovdyr som nærmet seg, illustrerer han.

Eifring har samlet forskning på temaet innen flere fagfelt, og funnet ut at spontane tanker kan fylle minst åtte ulike funksjoner:

- De kan fungere som trøstetenking
- De kan bearbeide vonde følelser
- De fremmer kreativitet
- De kan gjøre at du skifter perspektiv om du står fast
- De kan bearbeide og tolke minner fra fortiden
- De bidrar til økt selvforståelse
- De stimulerer empati, og
- De kan forberede deg på mulige nye utfordringer i fremtiden

*a little in English...*

## **It's Healthy to Let Your Mind Wander**

Letting your mind wander in everyday life has an undeservedly bad reputation, a researcher has found. Imagine that you have to work on a report the boss has ordered, but are gazing out of the window at the sun melting the dirty snow. In your mind's eye, you see the yellow crocuses at home in the garden. Have more arrived since yesterday, and maybe some tulips? You should not feel guilty about daydreaming.

"You should give yourself plenty of gaps in the workday to let thoughts come and go completely freely," says Professor Halvor Eifring at the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Oslo.

We spend almost half of our waking hours thinking about everything other than what we "must" and "should." Spontaneous thoughts make up a whopping 47 percent of our waking thought activity. Researchers measured this by sending messages on smartphones to a number of people at random times, asking them what they are thinking about.

When we let our thoughts wander freely, the brain's default mode network, or resting network, becomes more active, research from 2007 shows. Later research has shown that this part of the brain is also involved in dreams. We are genetically predisposed to occasionally stare at the birds in the air, the antelopes by the water, the wind in the trees and the warm air on the ground on the horizon. Humans originated from the savannah of Africa, where we depended on seeing, hearing and smelling our surroundings to survive.

"It would be dangerous if we did not regularly shift the focus from the near to possible distant dangers, such as registering a predator that was approaching," he illustrates. Eifring has collected research on the topic in several fields, and found that spontaneous thoughts can fulfill at least eight different functions:

- they act as comforting thoughts
- process bad feelings
- promote creativity
- help change your perspective if you are stuck
- process and interpret memories from the past
- contribute to increased self-understanding
- stimulate empathy
- prepare you for potential new challenges in the future



- Please remember to submit any newsletter submissions by April 15 for the May 2024 issue.

**NOVEMBER/DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS**



March

- 12 Karen Mostad
- 18 Giovanni Gradica

April

- 1 Pia Pedersen
- 4 Seth Van
- 20 Natasha Olds
- 28 Arvo Paivarinta
- 29 Einar Thomassen



**SUNSHINE COMMITTEE**



Hello!  
 Good Health to all!  
 Call Sonja 250-756-2406

**Blandaball - Mixed Dumplings**

*From NRK.no*

A traditional dish from Møre.  
 Recipe source: Recipe Reminiscing and Oppskrift.klikk.no  
 4 servings

Main ingredients:  
 2.2 lbs / 1 kg fish fillets (preferably pollock, haddock or sole)  
 2 lbs / 900 g raw potatoes  
 1 large onion  
 1 Tbsp. salt  
 1/2 tsp. Pepper  
 about. 2 Tbsp. coarse barley  
 about. 2 Tbsp. Flour  
 fried bacon crumbles

Typical sides:  
 bacon – either crumbled as topping, or served in strips  
 boiled rutabaga  
 boiled carrots  
 boiled potatoes

Directions:  
 Cut the clean fish fillet into pieces. Peel and cut potatoes and onions into pieces.

Shred fish, potatoes and onions in a meat grinder or food processor on coarse setting. Stir salt, pepper and flour into the mixture.

Form the mixture into round balls, and if desired, use your finger to make a hole and press pieces of bacon into the center of each ball.

Place the balls in simmering lightly salted water or fish stock, and let them simmer for 20-30 minutes. After 20 minutes, divide a ball in two to see if it is cooked through. Serve blandaball hot with sides of fried bacon and turnips, rutabaga, carrot and/or potatoes.

Leftovers can be pan-fried in slices or frozen.

## **Study Finds Song is a Universal Language**

*From SON Newsletter files*

A new American study claims that we can recognize a lullaby, no matter what culture the song is from.

After testing people from over 60 countries, two researchers claim that songs and music are a universal language.

They think we can hear the difference between a song meant for dancing and one meant to put a small child to sleep. This applies regardless of which culture the songs come from, and which culture the listener was brought up in.

"We show that our common psyche creates basic patterns in songs that transcend large cultural differences," says Manvir Singh, doctoral fellow at Harvard University, in a press release.

He is one of the two researchers behind the music study, which has been published in the journal *Current Biology*.

The Harvard researchers have done an experiment in which songs in different languages from all parts of the world were divided into categories based on how they were used in their own society. If the song was used for dancing in the community where it was sung, it belonged in the dance category. They also created separate categories for songs that were to be used in healing rituals, such as lullabies for a troubled child or pure love songs.

The researchers cut 14-second snippets from the songs and tasked 750 internet users with putting them into the correct category. Although there were only four real options, the subjects were given several to choose from. The researchers had entered two trick categories, which allowed the internet users to claim that the songs were mourning songs or just telling a story.

Despite the deception, the subjects did quite well. It was easiest to recognize dance music, but the subjects were also able to recognize lullabies and healing songs.

## **Barnebage on the Move**

*From SON Newsletter files*

Pre-schoolers in Norway are some of the most hardy and adventurous kids around. Each weekday, kids in barnebage are prepared for anything the weather can throw their way.

Growing up in the rugged countryside and even in cities, kids experience friluftsliv at a young age, braving the elements wearing tiny safety vests with their care providers.

Around 400 Norwegian daycare centers go on daily adventure outings with their 11,000 charges. The hope, according to Kristin Oftedal of the Norwegian Trekking Association, is that they "learn skills and attitudes that they can carry with them for their whole lives."

"We believe outdoor children are happy children," she adds.

The aim is to teach children simple and nature-friendly ways to be outside together, play, experience, wonder, explore and learn about nature. Oftedal says that she hopes this practice will produce a new generation of nature lovers.