



North Carolina Vikings



January / February 2020

Sons of Norway / Vol. 13, No. 1 / NC Vikings Lodge 3-675

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President's Message

Welcome back from the Christmas and New Year's holidays. I hope all of you had a wonderful time.

Fourteen years I ago had the privilege of being a founding member of our 3-675 Sons of Norway lodge, the North Carolina Vikings. At that time, I believe we were the first SONS lodge in the entire state of NC. Then and today, our membership has been concentrated in and around Raleigh as well as a few folks from Pinehurst... but no one from further out than 60 miles or so from Raleigh.

The membership and range of cooperation for the NC. Vikings significantly changed last year. Our lodge is the fastest growing SONS lodge on The entire East Coast of the USA, the United States/Canada, and Norway: a total of 300+ lodges. This rapid membership growth in the territory from the NC/VA border to Burlington and from the Atlantic Coast, NC to the SC border as well as areas not covered by the Charlotte Lodge could make significant changes in how we serve our fellow members of the NC Vikings.

We need input and commitment from all members, particularly from the former New Bern lodge, and definitely from the many members in North Carolina who were independent and not affiliated with any lodge.

This will include adding board officers from other areas than the Raleigh area in the past. It might include meeting in other venues (ports) other than our home port of The Good Shephard Lutheran Church, in Raleigh.

Our NC Vikings lodge ship has succeeded in weathering the storms of change for years. We are still shipworthy, and you as our seasoned and new crew will enjoy our future voyages.

Anchors away
Med Vennlig Hilsen,

Frank Bell, President
North Carolina Vikings Lodge 3-675

Upcoming Vikings Lodge Programs and Lodge Meetings

Meetings will be held Underwood Hall at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (7000 Creedmoor Road, Raleigh, NC 27613) unless noted otherwise.

Future Lodge meetings are as follows. Please mark your calendars!

January 25, 2020 Curtis Conover - his Norwegian experiences / 3pm – 5pm

February 29, 2020 Lodge Elections / 3pm – 5pm

February Birthdays

Granville Green	February 10	Benjamin Mattern	February 17
Bonnie Johnson	February 11	Brian Stensvad	February 23
John Morch	February 13	Greta Holst	February 25

Help Plan a Meeting

Can you invite a professional, expert or overall fun person to help us with cultural programs at our lodge meetings? Call Frank Bell or Mike Tilder to pick an activity you can line up for the lodge!

Items for the Newsletter

If you've got an announcement, or just have something interesting to share with the group, please email Mike Tilder at mmtilder75@ATT.net or Frank Bell at bellfrank2@gmail.com

Social Outing!

Several good plays, concerts, musicals, etc. are taking place in the Raleigh/Durham area this spring. A few S.O.N. members have expressed an interest in a group outing to one of these performances, listed below.

Please take a look at the list and email Frank Bell (bellfrank2@gmail.com) and Jennifer Axness (jenniferlaxness@gmail.com) with your feedback as to which venue and event are most interesting to you. Once we have an idea of who is interested in seeing what, we will email the group with the date and price for tickets. **Please note that ticket prices are approximate and there is usually more than one date available for each show. We've selected weekend dates and "prices from" for each.

- **NC Symphony, "A Rodgers & Hammerstein Musical"** / Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts (lower level seating) / Saturday, Mar 7, 3:00 pm / Prices from \$39
- **NC Opera, "Magic Flute"** / Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts (middle level seating: G, H, J) / Sunday, April 5, 2:00 pm / Prices from \$44
- **STOMP (Touring)** / DPAC (lower level seating) / Sunday, April 5, 1:00 pm / Prices from \$34.50
- **Riverdance** / DPAC (lower level seating) / Sunday, April 19, 1:00 pm / Prices from \$40

Norwegian Genealogy: How to Find Your Ancestors

<https://www.lifeinnorway.net/norwegian-genealogy/>



Thanks to a new historical population registry, it's never been easier to research your own Norwegian family heritage.

Genealogy is the study of families, family history, and the tracing of their lineages. There are difficulties in researching genealogy in a different country, not least the language barrier and seeking out paper records.

Now, a new genealogical research project should make it easier to access information. The Norwegian Computing Center has been working on the registry for six years. Norway's Arctic University is managing the project with several partners, with finances from the Research Council of Norway.

During the period 1800 to 1964, 9.2 million people lived in Norway.

Several sources have been used to compile an overview of Norwegian lives throughout this period. They include censuses, parish registries and emigration records. The goal is to eventually have all deceased Norwegians entered in the register.

Information about a person and their close family members is linked. The ultimate aim is to be able to trace the population for up to seven generations. Living individuals are not included in the registry for privacy reasons.

The general public can access a lot of information for free, but only researchers have access to sensitive health information. It is hoped that researchers will be able to use information to find answers to historical questions such as the spread of disease and social/geographic mortality.

The results of the project should greatly simplify research for hobby genealogists. Access to the new registry is free for anyone searching for information on relatives.

Information such as dates and places of births, baptisms, confirmations, marriages and deaths should be instantly available. But! A word of warning first... It won't be possible to find everyone who lived during the period covered by the research project. At least, not yet.

All Norwegians born before the 1910 census are included. After that, inclusion varies by location. Obituaries from Norwegian newspaper Aftenposten between 1950 and 2000 have also been included.

Local historians in rural areas have been the more frequent contributors to the digitization of old parish registries. The cities are a bit behind, according to the project team. Head on over to histreg.no to get started with your own research or read on for more information.

The Norwegian Computing Centre ran into many challenges in the project, even when information was available. Making sense of old handwritten documents was top of the list. To digitize the documents and records, the center turned to artificial intelligence. Although there were plenty of humans involved, too! Fifty data analysts, mathematicians and statisticians played a part.

The team use handwriting recognition software to interpret names and dates. Such programs used to recognize single characters, but today's software is much more advanced and much faster.

Health records, which will only be made available to researchers, are already turning up interesting information. For example, researchers recently revealed that a hereditary form of breast cancer spread from Rogaland to Lofoten through fishermen who travelled there to work.

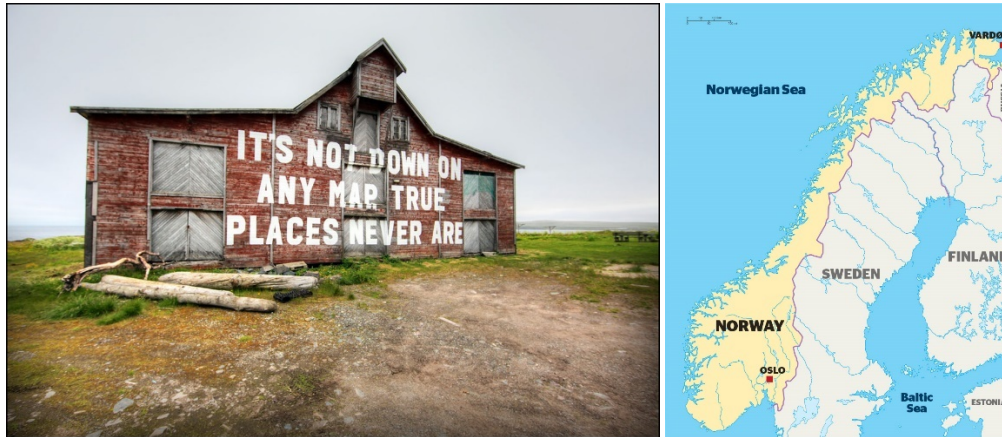
Researchers will only be given access for specific requests. All applications will first require approval from the ethics committees. But it's not just Norwegian health researchers interested in the project. Genealogical researchers from around the globe are interested in the register.

Norway is further along the process of gathering such information into a central database than many other countries. Several international researchers are volunteering for the project to learn more about the process.



The Norwegian Town that Came Back From the Dead

<http://geographical.co.uk/people/development/item/3509-vardo-spotlight>



‘Cod is Great’ announces the massive graffiti lettering on the side of a waterfront warehouse in Vardø, northern Norway. A few blocks downtown, it is ‘Everything Is A Story.’ And just a couple of further streets away a dilapidated timber shed bears the legend in full white capitals, ‘It’s not down on any map. True places never are.’

Vardø sits at the extreme north-eastern edge of Norway, seemingly far from the rest of the world. The town’s population of 2,100 live on two islands: houses and terraced bungalows clustering around a protective harbour. Throughout history, access to the area was only possibly by boat. In more recent times, Vardø at least has tangible connections to the mainland – a 3km-long road tunnel opened in ‘82, stretching under the Bussesundet strait, reaching some 88 metres in depth.

The town’s history belies its current predicament. For centuries Vardø was a major fishing and trading centre, sharing with its neighbours – the Russian Pomor people – the Norwegian-Russian Barents Sea coastline. From the later Middle Ages onwards, up to and until the turn of the 19th century, the fishing port was the centre of the region’s busy seaborne commerce. In 1897, when construction of the harbour was completed, it was the largest in Norway, capable of sheltering 1,800 fishing boats and a hundred trading ships. This Arctic trading hub even included the town in its name – Vardøhus: the house of Vardø.

Through the last century, however, there has been a downward spiral. In the early 1900’s, the population rose to 8,000 or so, with seasonal labour from Russia swelling the numbers. But after the Russian revolution, the Pomor left and did not return. The collapse of cod fishing in the 1970’s was almost a knock-out blow, reducing the area to a shadow of its glory days. And in the 1990’s, when the rest of the fishing industry crumbled, the town went into freefall. People left in droves. Within a few years, the population shrank to just over 2,000, with most using the tunnel as a way to find livelihoods elsewhere on Norway’s mainland.

Today, many of the mainly timber buildings are in unrecoverable states of disrepair. A quarter of them stand empty and all need to have electrical heating on throughout the winter to forestall further decay. In the main, the cost has been born by the municipality, an example of just how many of the owners have disappeared and washed their hands of their properties. A few, however, have

seen repair work undertaken at the instigation of a project called Vardø Restored, an initiative whose aim is to turn the town's misfortunes around.

When local Vardø boy, Svein Harald Holmen, returned from a series of army tours in Kosovo, he began working in Hamningberg. A fishing village 50km up the Varanger coast, it had lost the last of its permanent residents, and Holmen was convinced that Vardø could go the same way within two generations. 'I'd already witnessed broken, dysfunctional communities, but Vardø was very troubled, although in different ways,' he says. He could see that the then top-down approaches to the problems were not working. However, it was only after some time spent in Canada, experiencing the restorative justice-like community processes in action there, that he began to introduce these in his home town. The new approach proved dramatically effective in bringing the community together, and in 2011 precipitated Holmen setting up Vardø Restored.

The built fabric was the immediate priority. Holmen co-ordinated a programme of workshops, initiating a dialogue aimed at helping to restore houses across the town. Conversation began with around 60 house owners, finding support followed, and connections were made with the main government bodies that could advise on building repair and restoration. People would not put their own money into what were the cheapest buildings in all of Norway, but with grants accounting for half the costs, and Vardø Restored's encouragement, a sizeable number took up the offer of support. It was, according to Holmen's Irish colleague, Brona Keenan, the beginning of a fragile recovery that has gradually aided the town to regain some of its self-belief and confidence.

NATURE

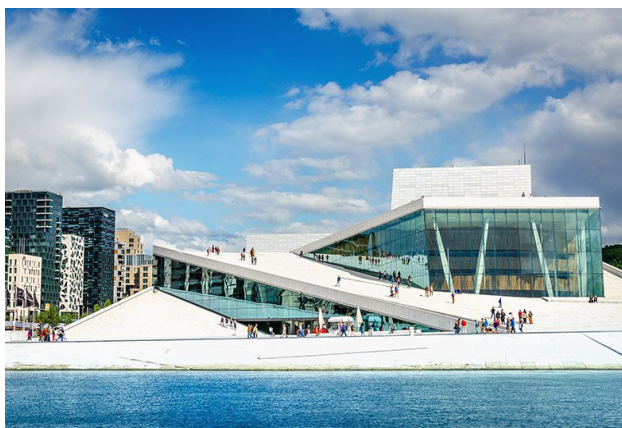


Internationally, Vardø and Varanger are well known as one of the world's foremost Arctic birding destinations. The rich Barents Sea provides all of the components needed for an impressive array of bird life (such as the white-tailed eagle, above). Hornøya Nature Reserve is now established as one of Norway's most popular nature attractions. Nearly 100,000 seabirds live around the reserve. Species include puffin, guillemot, shag and razorbill in large numbers. The birds spend their life at sea, only landing to nest. The Arctic fox also lives in the region being very well-adapted to the cold climate conditions. They build dens in the low mounds or eskers in the Arctic tundra. These dens will often have many entrances and be used by many generations, some have been inhabited for hundreds of years.



A New Name for Oslo

<https://www.lifeinnorway.net/oslo-sami-name/>



The Norwegian capital is known around the world as Oslo. But the municipality will soon get an additional name in the Sámi language.

Oslo city council wants to give the municipality a new official name. The new name won't replace Oslo, rather it will be a name for the municipality in the Sámi language. The language—actually a group of languages—is spoken by the Sámi people, the indigenous people from northern Scandinavia.

Campaigns to create a Sámi name for Oslo have been underway for several years. Earlier this month, the city council added the matter to its business for the coming four years. Although the decision hasn't been made yet, there is expected to be little resistance when the proposal is discussed.

Councilor Inga Marte Thorkildsen is pleased that the item is included in the agenda: “We want to show that we recognize and are proud of our indigenous people. It is therefore quite natural that Oslo, our capital, also signals this through the name of the city.” While the communities are traditionally located in northern Norway and parts of central Norway, there are significant numbers of Sámi now living in Norway's capital.

Kristine Ballari, a former leader of a youth Sámi organization in Oslo told NRK it was a “huge victory” for the Sámi. “The city will feel closer to our hearts once the Sámi language is more visible,” she said, adding that she hoped to see Sámi street signs emerge in future years. Sámi youth have long been active in Oslo's cultural life, organizing meetings and making their presence known on a variety of local, national and global issues. Thorkildsen said they deserve praise for their visibility in the community and for moving past the issues of the past. A cultural center *Samisk Hus* (Sami House) recognizes the growing community. It provides a meeting place but also a venue for language and cultural classes.

Options for the new name

The name of the youth organization *Oslove Noereh* was based on the Southern Sámi language. Any new name for the municipality would also have to be based on Southern Sámi, as dictated by the Local Names Act of Norway. The Sámi Parliament say there are two alternatives to refer to Oslo municipality: **Osloven tjielte** and **Oslon tjielte**. What will Oslo municipality's new Sámi name be?....

Message from the District 3 President, Kathy Dollymore



Godt Nyttår Alle Sammen!

I hope that you all had a great Christmas, and Santa found his way to your home. Was your Juletreff just what you hoped for? Did you sing some Norwegian favorites and dance around the tree? Did you enjoy visiting with friends and family you haven't seen in a while? I hope it was the most wonderful time of the year for you all!!

I also hope that many of you took the opportunity to enroll your family and friends in the wonderful organization we call "Sons of Norway" again this year. There are some new products in the financial area of our organization that make it beneficial to call out to SON International or your local FBC representative. Speaking of FBC's, there are a number of new representatives so call SON to check that out. 2019 had been a tremendous year for new members – especially in the "Tremendous Third". We reached our goal of new memberships but need to work on retention. Sometimes this takes some shaking up of lodge meetings. New ideas, meeting time, programs, shared leadership, using technology, etc. Get some input from your members and see what works for your lodge. We want 2020 to outshine 2019 in membership growth and retention.

January will see some new lodge officers installed. I want to thank and congratulate all the officers for taking on their new positions. Know that there are people you can go to for guidance, past lodge officers, Zone Directors and the District Board is always ready to assist. The District Presidents have been working on updating our Guide for Leadership into modules for each lodge to use, so watch for that on the website. I also appreciate the officers who will either be continuing or returning to positions. I want to emphasize that a lodge cannot run with just the same people changing hats, so I encourage membership to assist in whatever capacity you are able. Get involved! I am sure that you will find it rewarding. Lodge of the Year forms are being filled out now. These forms show our activities and document that we are a not-for-profit organization and keep our tax status intact. I hope you have found the Fraternalgives.com convenient to use once you get the hang of it. I would like to see all our lodges fill out the forms even if they are hard copy. There are awards presented at the convention and your lodge may receive one of the awards. All members should be recognized for their work and efforts through the year.

A sad decision was made at the suggestion of the Land of the Vikings Board that you may have already read/heard about. The decision to cease operations at Land of the Vikings. Closing LOV was a hard suggestion for the LOV Board to make but I congratulate them for making it. The suggestion was approved by the Third District Board and now we are in the process of looking into the assessment value and see if we can find a buyer for the property. I suspect that the families and lodges who have gathered at LOV will continue under the new ownership, with the District not having to pay taxes and insurance on the property, so if we can find a buyer, I consider it a win for everyone.

In June our delegates will travel to Jacksonville, FL for our 3D meeting and convention. Start thinking about who will represent your lodge as a delegate. There are timeframes for resolutions, reporting delegate names, cultural entries, registrations, etc. There will be more information coming from the Convention committee and the District Secretary. All the forms will be on the 3dsofn.org website soon so be on the lookout for those. I already decided 2020 will be amazing!!

Fraternally, Kathy Dollymore, 3D President

Find out more about Sons of Norway!

Sons of Norway Website	https://www.sofn.com/
Facebook	http://www.facebook.com/groups/SonsofNorway/
Twitter	http://twitter.com/#!/SonsofNorway
LinkedIn	http://www.linkedin.com/company/2080826

... and here are some informative Genealogy Websites!

A comprehensive list of sites related to Norwegian-American genealogy.

<http://homepages.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~norway/>

Oldest church registers in Norwegian Parishes. Shows the year in which different parishes began keeping church records.

<http://www.nndata.no/home/jborgos/register.htm>

<http://www.cyndislist.com/norway/>

List of sites related to Norwegian-American genealogy

The National Library of Norway, including Norwegian newspapers / <http://www.nb.no>

The Norwegian Emigration and Genealogy Center / <http://www.emigrationcenter.com/index.cfm>

Norwegian National Archive. Includes the 1660, 1801, 1865 and 1900 censuses /

<http://digitalarkivet.uib.no/cgi-win/WebFront.exe?slag=vis&tekst=meldingar&spreek=e>

Search amongst 16,000 documents from Norway during the period 1050 – 1590 /

http://www.dokpro.uio.no/dipl_norv/diplom_field_eng.html

And here are some interesting sites related to travel to Norway / Scandinavia –

Norway's Official Site	www.Norway.org
Royal Norwegian Embassy, Washington D.C.	http://www.norway.org/embassy/washington/
Royal Norwegian Consulate General New York	http://www.norway.org/News_and_events/CG-New-York/
Norway's Travel Requirements	https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country/norway.html
Hurtigruten Voyages	http://www.hurtigruten.us
Viking River Cruises	http://www.vikingrivercruises.com
Norwegian American Genealogical Center & Naseth Library	http://www.nagcnl.org
Vesterheim Museum: "A Norwegian American Treasure"	http://vesterheim.org/index.php

