

Published in the interest of
North Americans of Scandinavian descent

Scandinavian Heritage News

December 2011



Photo by Al Larson



WHAT'S INSIDE

President's message	2	Scandinavian Heritage: Cotter's Son . .	10-11
From the office; calendar	3	Memorial bricks/Heritage Path	12
Visit the SHA Gift Shop	4	Scandinavian Society reports	13-15
Picture this: Winter wonderland	5	Tracing Your Scandinavian Roots: The gift of song	16
Gift memorials/membership form	6		
Ho, ho, ho! Santa riddles	7		
Scandinavian artist creates Coca-Cola Santas	8-9		

*Merry Christmas
& Happy New Year!*

President's MESSAGE

Mother Nature has spared us so far this fall!

by Gail Peterson, president
Scandinavian Heritage Association

We were lucky enough to enjoy a beautiful fall this year. As many other parts of the country experienced ice storms and snowfall, we kept dodging the inevitable: winter. No matter how long we managed to go without, snow always seems to come too early. Especially as many of us try to rebuild flood-damaged homes.

Although we experienced an unimaginable devastation this year with the flood, with many unable to return home, we are blessed that we did not lose any loved ones. I hope everyone had a happy Thanksgiving with their family and friends.

Since Minot's Oak Park was also flooded, it will not host the Christmas in the Park this year. Sertoma, sponsors of Christmas in the Park, has offered some of the displays for us to use in our park, which will be a wonderful addition to our decorations. I would like to thank Bob Sando, Bob Whetter and John Sinn for working so hard at

decorating our park. I think as usual, the park will be a beautiful and festive sight this holiday season, and I hope everyone will visit the park with their families.

We did get a nice crowd for Høstfest this year, including our Canadian friends and many out-of-state visitors. Thank you to all of our volunteers who help make the event possible.

Our annual meeting will take place on Saturday, Jan. 28, 2012, in the basement of the SHA headquarters building. Our next event will be our annual banquet and silent auction. It is a fun-filled evening for the whole family, with entertainment and good food. This year it will be held at the Grand International Inn, on Saturday, April 28, 2012. We'll have more details in the next newsletter. I look forward to seeing you all there.

I would like to wish everyone a safe and happy Christmas. God bless you and your families this holiday season. •



Gail Peterson

Scandinavian Heritage News

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ALL MEMBERS ARE INVITED...
to the SHA annual meeting
SATURDAY, JAN. 28, 2012 • 10 A.M.
SHA Headquarters Building, Minot, ND

The Scandinavian Heritage Association annual meeting is set for Saturday, Jan. 28, at 10 a.m. at the SHA headquarters building at the intersection of 11th Ave. S.W. and Broadway in Minot. All members are welcome to attend.

From the OFFICE

Christmas traditions, Scandinavian-style

by Verla Rostad
SHA office manager

When I think of my childhood Christmases, I don't remember fancy gifts, an elaborate tree and decorations or trips to exotic places. Our gifts were usually practical—something we needed. We always had a tree, but a modest one. The house was decorated with a few other decorations, and the farthest we ever traveled on Christmas was 11 miles to church in town; the extended family always came to our house for Christmas dinner!

But what I remember most about Christmas as a child is family and food. My dad was the son of Norwegian immigrants. Mom was "Norwegian through marriage." Her wedding vows must have included, "I will learn to make all the traditional Norwegian treats Johnny has grown accustomed to for Christmas."

Mom and my Norwegian aunts always filled the table with sweets consisting of rosettes, krumkake, lefse, fatterman, sandbakkels, julekake, spritz, sugar cookies, gingersnaps—making sure each person's favorite cookie or bar was included. My aunt Gertie made the best divinity! Mom made the best lefse.

I know now that the tradition of a table full of sweets had its roots in Norway, where there is a tradition of having at least seven Christmas cookies or biscuits.

Norwegian traditions

A tradition in Scandinavia for centuries, the straw Julebuk or "Yule Goat" was the bringer of gifts to the household. Having a Julebuk in your home is a symbol of "Jul" and a time of good cheer.

Nowadays, each of the Scandinavian countries has a Christmas gnome or elf. Norway has the Julenisse. Traditionally, the little man dwells in the attic or barn and is guardian of the family's welfare.

It is wise to please the Julenisse because he is apt to mix up the milk tins, tangle the horse's manes, and even make the cows sick, if he doesn't like your household. Consequently, every family tries to keep things orderly and



Verla Rostad

pleasant, without harsh words or needless bickering.

The children are careful to do their share, too, and every Christmas Eve they remember the little man with a bowl of "risengrynsgrøt" (rice porridge),

which surely is appreciated, because by morning it always is gone.

Swedish traditions

After a festive Christmas Eve dinner in Sweden, someone dresses up as Tomte (Christmas gnome) who according to Swedish myth, lives on a farm or in the forest. Tomte looks a little like Santa Claus and hands out the presents while doing funny rhymes.

Danish traditions

In Denmark, as a good elf, Nisse generally helps people on the farms and is good with children but plays jokes during the holiday season. On Christmas Eve, many families leave a bowl of rice pudding or porridge for him so that he is friendly to them and keeps his jokes within limits.

Finnish traditions

The Christmas presents in Finland are usually given out in the evening during a personal visit from the local Santa Claus.

Icelandic traditions

Icelandic children have it the best! Expect no fewer than 13 Icelandic Santa Clauses, or jólasveinar; each has his own name, character and role.

A special Icelandic custom for children is to put a shoe in the window from Dec. 12 until Christmas Eve, as the jólasveinar make their rounds, one each day. If the children have been good, one of the "Santas" leaves a gift; bad children receive a potato.

Shared traditions

All of the Scandinavian countries have traditions that involve a special meal and attending church services on Christmas Eve.

It is common throughout Scandinavia to serve rice pudding, with the batch containing one whole almond. The finder of the almond wins a prize, which is usually chocolate or marzipan, in Denmark. In Finland the finder has to sing a song. In Sweden the person finding it gets to make a wish, or is believed to get married the coming year (this varies from family to family).

Did you know that the Christmas tree at Union Station, Washington, D.C.,

CALENDAR

WINTER 2011-12



- **Scandinavian Heritage Association Annual Meeting**, 10 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 28, 2012, lower level, Scandinavian Heritage Center headquarters building, Minot
- **SHA Annual Banquet**, Saturday, April 28, 2012 International Inn, Minot (Watch for details in next SHA Newsletter)

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:
Copy and pictures—Feb. 15, 2011
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is a gift from Norway to the people of Washington and a symbol of the friendship between the United States and Norway? Each year the tree is lit by the Ambassador of Norway. In 1947 the British authorities received a Christmas tree from Oslo as special thanks for the help and support Britain gave to Norway and Norwegians during the occupation years from 1940 to 1945. Since then, the Christmas tree at Trafalgar

Square in London has become an annual tradition.

Each of us has holiday traditions. Some go back generations to our grandparents' homelands. Other traditions have evolved in more recent times. Traditions of food, decorations, music, celebrations of faith, gifts and travel all vary from family to family.

Whatever your traditions are, I hope the season is filled with joy!

God Jul!

Hyvää Joulua!

Glædelig jul!

Gledileg jó!

Merry Christmas! •



Straw replicas of (from left) the Julebuk, angels and Julenisse make attractive ornaments for the home at Yuletide. All are available at the Gift Shop in the Scandinavian Heritage Association's headquarters building.

Visit the Gift Shop!

by Verla Rostad

Be sure to check out the SHA Gift Shop! We have several collectible plates, figurines and Christmas ornaments featuring Julenisse, Julebuk and many other straw ornaments shaped as angels, snowmen, wreaths and stars. We also have rosemaled tree ornaments and other decorations with Scandinavian flair, including garlands of the flags of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark.

If you are substituting for Julenisse, Tomte or one of the jolasveinar this year, how about some stocking stuffer treats from our Gift Shop? We have Norway's Freia chocolate bars (with or without hazelnuts), Finnska licorice bites (black licorice from Finland) or Nordic Gummi Fish from Sweden. We also have Norway's Toro rømmegrøt mix and Vestland's flour lefse, lingonberry preserves and Ballerina cookies (shortbread cookies with hazelnut cream filling) from Sweden, and for the person who has everything, fish balls! Add some fun to

your holiday party with Ole & Lena fortune cookies. For a warm holiday drink, make your Glögg with our spice mix and add your own port wine or fruit juice.

For non-food gifts, consider our mugs, Uff da! keychains or t-shirts, magnets, Viking figurines, Dala horses, or large selection of books with Scandinavian themes. We have Lauraine Snelling's historical fiction about the Bjorklund family who immigrated to North Dakota from Norway. We have several books by contemporary Scandinavian authors, and books about the Vikings. We also have a large selection of maps, dictionaries and self-guided audio language lessons for someone planning a trip to Scandinavia.

Our children's books include the Mummies (a popular Swedish-Finnish cartoon family), color and activity books, and many others. We have several Scandinavian cookbooks and recipe books with old favorites. You'll also find several books filled with Nordic traditions.

To read more about the Norwegian resistance to the Occupation during World War II, check out some of the books in the Gift Shop! •

PICTURE THIS!
SHA Park:
Winter
wonderland



RIGHT: Bob Sando (left) and Bob Whetter were among the elves—er, crew—putting Christmas lights on trees and other objects in the park. Other helpers included Dave Gowan and John Sinn. This year’s Christmas display includes decorations normally appearing in Minot’s Oak Park, which was impacted by last summer’s flood. The holiday Lights in the Park event was switched to SHA Park, resulting in a winter wonderland. (The cover photo of the park’s lighting display was snapped by Al Larson, Minot.)



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SHA memorials: Gifts that keep on giving

by Jo Ann Winistorfer

When a friend or loved one has just passed away, it's often a struggle to come up with a fitting tribute to that person's memory. Making a gift donation in that person's honor to the Scandinavian Heritage Association is one way to acknowledge how much the deceased meant to you. It's also a way to keep the heritage of our immigrant ancestors alive and well through our beautiful park in Minot's heart.

There are many ways to give a memorial to Scandinavia Heritage Park in

a loved one's memory. For example, you can choose to support a specific project, such as our Heritage House museum. Or, you can choose an ethnic group's project within the park (such as the Danish windmill, Swedish Dala horse, Gol Stave Church, etc.). You can also give a donation directly to the association to be used where needed.

Contributions of \$1,000 or more are acknowledged with a plaque on the Scandinavian Heritage Association Wall of Honor. Lesser amounts of \$25 or more are recognized in the Golden Book of Memory in the SHA headquar-

ters building.

It's a good idea, too, for each of us to sit down with our families to discuss where we would like our own memorials to go someday. We should write down our wishes so that other family members have the information and can follow through with our wishes. Remember, too, that placing a notice in an obituary indicating where memorials are to be sent helps others who wish to honor the deceased.

And finally, the ultimate gift is to become a benefactor of SHA through your estate. It's a way for you to leave a lasting legacy to your Scandinavian heritage as well as a memorial to you or a family member.

We hope you will consider the Scandinavian Heritage Association when you discuss memorial donations or estate gifting. For information, contact the SHA office at (701) 852-9161. •

Join Us In Preserving the Traditions of Our Proud Heritage

THE SCANDINAVIAN HERITAGE PARK, the only park in the world representing all five Nordic countries, hosts thousands of visitors each year from around the world; as well as providing a picturesque setting for weddings and family gatherings.

As a member of the Scandinavian Heritage Association, You help support:

- Interpretative Tours of the Park
- The Heritage House Museum
- Local School Field Trips
- The Annual "Midsommar Natt"
- "Arts in the Park"
- Seminars on Heritage and Culture
- The on-going preservation and promotion of Scandinavian traditions, positive values and ethics
- And much, much more!

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

SUSTAINING MEMBER

\$35.00 per year

Will receive the SHA Membership Package, which includes:

- Membership Card good for 10% off Scandinavian Gift Shop items

- Membership Pin (initial membership)
- The Scandinavian Heritage News, official newsletter of the Association
- Invitation to Annual Banquet and other SHA events
- Annual SHA Gift Packet
- Logo window Sticker

SPONSOR MEMBER

\$100.00 - \$499.00 per year

Receives the SHA Membership Package, plus:

- Recognition in Newsletter (one issue)
- One (1) Complimentary Ticket to the Annual Banquet

BENEFACTOR MEMBER

\$500.00 and above per year

Receives the SHA Membership Package, plus:

- Recognition in Newsletter (one issue)
- Two (2) Complimentary Tickets to the Annual Banquet

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name (please print) _____ Phone _____

Address _____ E-mail _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

I/We wish to support the Scandinavian Heritage Association at the level checked below:

Sustaining Member Sponsor Member Benefactor Member

Yes, I/We give permission to print our name in the SHA publications

Please contact us. I/We would like to become Volunteer(s) at SHA.

Check enclosed \$ _____ Credit Card: MasterCard Visa Discover Am. Exp.

Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____

Name on Card (please print) _____ Signature _____

Please mail to Scandinavian Heritage Assn., P.O. Box 862, Minot, ND 58702. Thank You!

Ho, ho, ho!!!! Santa riddles



1. Why does Santa have three gardens
2. What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire?
3. Why was Santa's little helper depressed?
4. What do you get when you cross an archer with a gift-wraper?
5. What do you call people who are afraid of Santa Claus?
6. What do snowmen eat for breakfast?
7. What do you get if you cross Father Christmas with a detective?
8. What do the reindeer sing to Father Christmas on his birthday?
9. Where does Santa Claus keep his red suit?
10. What do you call a man who claps at Christmas?
11. Who delivers presents to baby sharks at Christmas?
12. What's red and white and full of holes?
13. What happens when two Christmas angels meet?
14. Why is a cat on a beach like Christmas?

Answers:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. So he can ho-ho-ho! | 6. Snowflakes | 11. Santa Jaws! |
| 2. Frostbite | 7. Santa Clues! | 12. Swiss Kringle |
| 3. He had low elf esteem | 8. Freeze a jolly good fellow! | 13. They both say "Halo!" |
| 4. Ribbon hood | 9. In his Santa Clauset | 14. Both have Sandy claws |
| 5. Claus-trophobic | 10. Santaplause | 15. Elfs Presley! |

15. What would you get if you crossed one of Santa's helpers with the King of Rock 'n' Roll?

.....

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Scandinavian-American artist Haddon Sundblom created Coca-Cola's Santa



For more than three decades, famed illustrator Haddon Sundblom was the creative genius behind the Coca-Cola Santa campaign. Today, his work is on display in galleries and sought after by collectors.

2011 marks the 80th anniversary of the first Coca-Cola Santa illustration crafted by a clever artist with Scandinavian roots. His images continue to influence our impressions of Santa today!

by Jo Ann Winistorfer

Ever wonder where our modern-day version of Santa Claus comes from? In part, we can thank the son of Scandinavian emigrants who settled in Muskegon, Michigan.

Haddon Hubbard "Sunny" Sundblom was born on June 22, 1899, to Karl Wilhelm Sundblom, from the farm Norrgårds in the village of Sonboda in Föglö in the Swedish-speaking Åland Islands (at that time a part of the Russian Grand Duchy of Finland, now Finland), and Karin Andersson of Sweden.

A talented illustrator, Sundblom studied at the American Academy of Art in Chicago. He was a partner in several Chicago-based advertising agencies over the years.

In the 1920s, the Coca-Cola Company was under attack by the Women's Christian Temperance Union and others who were critical of its formula, claiming it was addictive and harmful to one's health. In 1921, one U.S. senator went so far as to claim it caused "sterility in women and dissolved brain power, the

digestive power and the moral fabric."

The company needed a positive image to advertise Coke as a refreshing drink with no harmful effects. Their motive was to increase sales.

In 1931, the Coca-Cola Company hired Sundblom (described as a "hard drinking" man standing at 6 foot 3 inches) to paint Santa Claus as part of an annual advertising campaign. After all, if Santa enjoyed Coca-Cola, it had to be wholesome!

Sundblom's assignment was to depict Santa as a real man, not just a man dressed as Santa. A neighbor was his first model, and after the man died, he himself became the model, painting while looking into a mirror.

To come up with the "ideal" Santa, Sundblom did considerable research. He patterned his Santa after Clement Clark Moore's "A Visit From St. Nicholas" (more commonly known as "'Twas the Night Before Christmas"). The resulting Santa evolved from a "jolly old elf" to a full-sized grandfatherly fellow dressed in red and white. By coincidence, those just happened to be Coca-Cola's logo colors.

Santa is descended from St. Nicholas (also called Nikolaos), Bishop of Myra in modern-day Turkey in the 4th century (also known as Nikolaos the Wonderworker because of his many miracles). He had a reputation for se-

Old-time Santas were not necessarily chubby, dressed in red—or jolly! The Santa at near left, created by Thomas Nast in the latter 1800s, wore a tanish-brown outfit.



cret gift-giving, and thus became the model for Santa Claus, whose modern name comes from the Dutch Sinterklaas.

Through the centuries, Santa Claus has been depicted from tall to elf-sized, and depending on the country, wearing a bishop's red robe or a Norse huntsman's animal skin. A 1653 woodcut of the English Father Christmas depicts him wearing a red-and-white outfit.

As early as 1841, Santa was used as an advertising device by merchants promoting their stores as "Santa's headquarters." By the 1870s, Santas were appearing in department stores in the U.S. and Canada. The first Christmas cards, designed by Louis Prang of Boston, were published in 1874.

The Civil War cartoonist Thomas Nast drew Santa Claus for *Harper's Weekly* in 1862; Santa was shown as a small elf-like figure who supported the Union. Nast continued to draw Santa for 30 years and along the way changed the color of his coat from tan to red, the color Sundblom used for all his Santa paintings.

Prior to Sundblom's rendition of Santa, Norman Rockwell had painted saintly Santas, but without consistent features. Sundblom's designs standardized the character of Santa. His work appeared in magazines and on posters and billboards.

In 1949, Sundblom created the "Sprite Boy" (right) character, who appeared with Santa on Coke ads in the 1940s and 1950s. By that time he was living in Tucson, Arizona. His last work with Coca-Cola was done in 1964.

Besides his work for Coca-Cola (which he did for 33 years), Sundblom designed the Quaker Oats man and the Aunt Jemima "mammy," and was a well-known pin-up artist, painting pieces for calendars, posters and magazine covers. In 1972, his work—a buxom beauty clad in a low-cut Santa suit—appeared on the cover of *Playboy*.

Haddon Sundblom passed away on March 10, 1976. Through his many paintings, he left behind a version of a mischievous, roly-poly, likable Santa that changed the world's perception of the North Pole's most-famous resident forever. •



Sundblom's Santa was portly and grandfatherly, with a fluffy white beard and dressed in a red suit with lush fur trim. So popular and prolific were these ads that people around the world grew to accept the artist's rendition as the "official" portrait of Santa Claus.

The Scandinavian Heritage • 24

The Cotter's Son: A story of courage and love

There are many cotter's sons who left the Old World for the New. Their departure did not mean a lack of love for parents or native land. They left because they had a desperate dream for a better life.

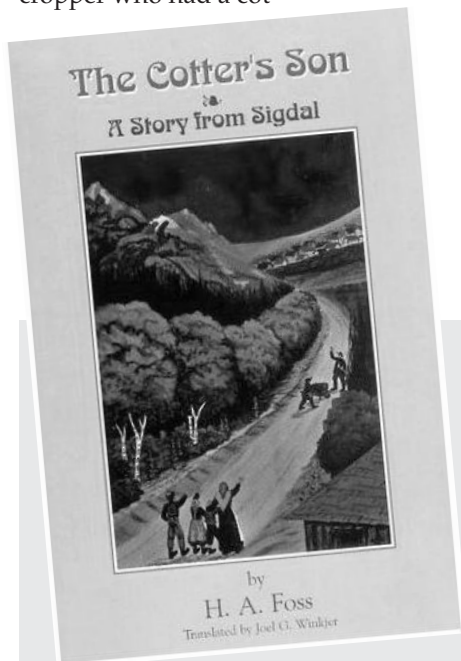
A "cotter" (husmann) was a sharecropper who had a cot-

tage on the edge of the main farm. It was often on a hillside and had to first be reclaimed by removing rocks. But this was the only way that a young man could have a home. He could not, of course, expect to accumulate savings. Most of his time was spent working for the landowner, called a "bønde." I have seen these hillside huts. They may look pretty, but they are humble shelters.

Hans Andersen Foss wrote a story called "Husmannsgutten," or "The Cotter's Son." It was first serialized by the *Decorah-Posten* in 1884 and was claimed to be the most-read book written by a Norwegian-American.

The story is about Ole Haugen, born in the Sigdal area west of Oslo. (A "haug" is a hill or hillside, accounting for his last name.) His parents, Torkil and Randi, were cotters on the land of the wealthiest farmer in the valley. The bønde was a hard man, but his wife was known for her kindness.

The custom in those days was that when there was a baptism or confirmation, the request to the pastor had to be accompanied by a gift of money. It was not unlike the Levitical laws of the Old Testament, which prescribed sacrifices. Like Joseph and Mary, who could give only a poor family's offering when their son was brought to the



Hans Andersen (H.A.) Foss

BORN 1851 IN VIKERSUND IN MODUM, NORWAY

DIED 1929 IN MINOT, N.D., BURIED IN ROSEHILL CEMETERY

"The Cotter's Son," a fictional story of a Norwe-

gian emigrant to America, has been

called one of Norwegian literature's greatest successes, one of the most important books in Norway's emigration literature, and the most popular Norwegian-American novel. Its author, Hans Andersen Foss (himself a cotter's son) left Norway for America in 1877, at the age of 26. By the time he died, he had written six novels and several poems and short stories. During his early years in America, Foss worked on farms, railroads and as a teacher in Minnesota and Wisconsin. He settled in Portland, Dakota Territory (now North Dakota), in 1884. That winter, he completed his first novel, called "Husmannsgutten," written in Norwegian. That same year, the Iowa-based Norwegian-language *Decorah-Posten* began publishing the book in serial form. The newspaper, in dire straits financially, had a surge of new subscriptions from Norwegian-American readers not wanting to miss out on the next installments. Thus, "The Cotter's Son" (its title in English) is credited with saving the newspaper. The *Decorah-Posten* later went on to publish the story in book format. Foss himself got into the newspaper business, serving as editor of

two Norwegian-language newspapers, *Dakota-Bladet* (*The Dakota Newspaper*) from 1886 to 1887, and *Normanden* (*The Norseman*), based in Grand Forks, from 1888 to 1893. A life-long advocate of the temperance movement and the Populist Party, Foss quit the newspaper business, becoming a grain dealer and in 1906 settling in Minot. In 1962, the book was translated into English by Joel G. Winkjer and published. His great-niece, Andrea Winkjer Collin and her husband, Rick Collin, co-owners of Smoky Water Press, republished the book in 1998, thus bringing the story to new generations of readers. (Andrea is editor of *North Dakota Horizons* magazine.) The book can be ordered at www.Dakota-BookNet.com or by sending \$16.95 (\$12.95 plus \$4 shipping and handling) to: DakotaBookNet.com, P.O. Box 2322, Bismarck, ND 58502-2322. •



H.A. Foss, author of "The Cotter's Son," written in 1884.

Temple, Ole's parents also struggled to provide the prescribed gift. The bønde refused to give Torkil a loan for the baptism, so his wife secretly sent some of her own silver coins to them. The bønde's rule was: "The more you give them, the more they want and the less they will work."

Ole amazed everyone at his confirmation with his sincere and quick answers during the catechization. This was a custom where children publicly recited their knowledge of the Bible and their faith. Some people thought that Ole should be a minister and raised money to send him to school. The bønde, however, put a stop to that. To complicate matters more, the bønde's daughter, Marie, was the same age as Ole. They played together as children and became fast friends.

To separate them, Ole was sent up to the seter (mountain pasture) early in the spring. There he stayed with the farm animals until just before snowfall, when he returned to school. The bønde was taking no chances. He didn't want his money to fall into a coter's family.

Despite the attempts to keep them apart, Ole and Marie came to have a deep love for each other. They realized that the only hope they had for a future together was if Ole went to America. So he went.

His best friend in the New World was Nils, also from Norway. Nils had a brilliant head for business, but was a constant failure who could not say "no" to the bottle. Ole's friendship gave Nils the new direction that he needed. He later repaid with good

business advice.

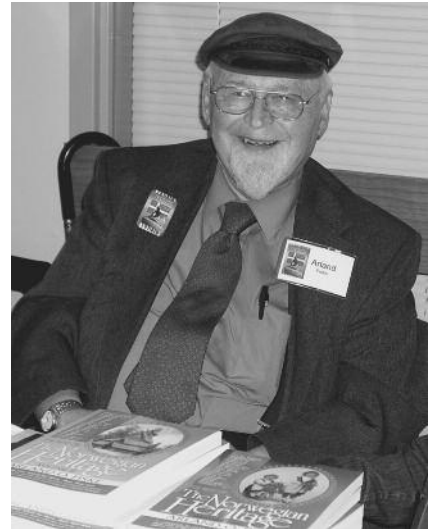
It was Ole's intention to send money back to his family and then return for Marie. In his first job, west of Chicago, he was cheated out of wages for the whole summer. So he set out on foot to look for work in Wisconsin, as winter approached. On the way, he was mistaken for a bank robber and was arrested. After his innocence was proved, he was released and nearly lost his life in a snow storm north of Madison. He found refuge with an American family, who also gave him a job on their farm.

During another sudden winter storm, Ole rescued the family's two teen-age daughters at great risk to himself. He carried them to their home in a blinding blizzard. The farm dog led him. One daughter, Nellie, survived.

The neighbors, of course, began to talk. Ole's brave deed got into the newspapers and was reprinted in Norway. It also said that Ole was going to marry Nellie!

This was all the bønde needed to see. He showed it to Marie, but she refused to believe it. Then the bønde intercepted the mail so that there was no correspondence between Ole and his family or with Marie for a year and a half. Money sent home was also stolen by the bønde.

Stories like this were not uncommon, and not all of them had happy endings. In this case, the love between Ole and Marie stood the test. With the help of Nils, Ole made a good business investment in Chicago that made it possible to go back to Norway with lots of money in his pocket. The high



Author Arland Fiske

PHOTO BY MARY PAT FINN-HOAG

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Editor's note: This column is the 24th in a series by former Minot pastor, Arland Fiske (now living in Texas), retired from ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Fiske has written nine books on Scandinavian heritage. The chapter reprinted here is from his book, "The Scandinavian Heritage."

point in the story is when Ole bought the bønde's farm at an auction. The mail fraud had caught up with the rich farmer, and he died a poor man.

The story has more pathos than can be retold here. But stories like this from the Sigdal-Numedal area have been preserved as a reminder to the children of immigrants that courage and love still have their rewards. •

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Path leads visitors to SHA Heritage House Museum

The Heritage Path connects the Heritage House Museum with the Scandinavian Heritage Park. The cement sidewalk leaves the park near the Stabbur and meets up with a newly constructed ramp that leads to the entrance door of the museum.

The goal of the path was to provide easier access to the museum. No longer will visitors have to walk across the lawn and climb the steps to get to the museum. No longer will they question whether the little house across the lawn is a public building or a private home!

In addition to providing better access to the museum, the path will offer visitors a pleasant place for a quiet stroll through a park-like setting. Plans are coming together for the addition of flower beds, benches and trees along the path.

The cement work was completed prior to Høstfest. Some landscaping was done in October, and more will be done next spring. The project was successful in increasing the number of visitors to the Heritage House Museum during Høstfest week. Several visitors asked how long the museum had been here. One even commented that he had been to the Scandinavian Heritage Park several years in a row and had never seen the museum! He was pleasantly surprised when he looked around.

Memorial bricks will line the path

Heritage Path bricks are being sold and will line the path between the park and the Heritage House Museum, providing donors a way to honor or memorialize individuals and publicly proclaim their support of the Scandinavian Heritage Park. Proceeds from the sale of the bricks will be used



The Heritage Path leading to the Heritage House has been completed. Plans are to line the path with bricks memorializing friends and relatives of the donors.

to supplement memberships and other gifts for the ongoing expenses of the Scandinavian Heritage Association.

Bricks are available in two sizes: 4-by-8 inches and 8-by-8 inches. The smaller bricks will be sold for \$100 and will include up to three lines of engraving with 20 characters per line. The larger bricks will be sold for \$225 and will include up to seven lines of engraving with 20 characters per line. Custom logos and stock symbols are also available at extra cost. Details are available on our web site: www.scandinavianheritage.org, or by contacting the office at (701) 852-9161 or by e-mail at scandha@srt.com. Stop by the office during business hours to see a sample 4-by-8 brick.

Orders will be taken this winter, and by next spring we hope to be ready for installing the first group of bricks. •

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SCANDINAVIAN SOCIETY NEWS...

Swedish Heritage Society-NWND NEWS



Santa Lucia Day

by *Bev Jensen, secretary*
Swedish Heritage Society-NWND

God Jul! On Dec. 13 we celebrate Santa Lucia Day, a holiday observed in Sweden and Finland and other Scandinavian countries. Each year every town chooses a young girl to be their "Santa Lucia." She dresses in a long white gown, wears a crown of candles in her hair, and

walks in a procession, "serving" coffee and saffron buns to symbolize the charity and generous spirit that characterized the real-life Lucia. (Also see page 16.)

One of the legends about her is that she was sentenced to death at the stake because of her refusal to marry a man she didn't love. But her spirit prevailed. And when the pyre was lit, the fire could not be persuaded to take her life; she glowed with inner light of innocence as she died. The white gown and crown of candles represent this triumph of light over the darkness.

Santa Lucia Day is celebrated, especially in dark northern landscapes, to kindle the spirit and offer hope at this time of the year leading up to the winter solstice.

The Minot Society presented the Lucia Pageant at its December meeting in 2010, with local girls portraying the story in costume and song. It will be celebrated again next year.

In observance of our Swedish customs, we chose this recipe to honor the legend.

Our last meeting was held on Dec. 10, at which time we enjoyed a "Swedish Menu" Potluck. •



SWEDISH SAFFRON BUNS

—Submitted by *Cheryl Willoughby, Vermont Public Radio*

- 1 teaspoon saffron (whole threads, not powdered)
- 1 cup half and half cream
- ½ cup (1 stick) butter
- 5 cups white flour
- 2 large eggs, beaten
- ⅔ cup white sugar
- 2 packages active dry yeast
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 egg yolk, separated and beaten with 1 tablespoon water
- 1 egg white
- ½ cup raisins, dried cherries or cranberries (softened with a little water)

Crush saffron threads until fine; combine them with the half and half in a small saucepan. Bring to a simmer over medium heat. Remove from heat; stir in butter until melted.

Combine flour, sugar, yeast and salt in a large bowl. Stir in the milk mixture; add whole eggs and beat well. Knead the dough ball on a floured surface until it's springy. Put it in a buttered bowl, cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled in bulk (about 1½ hours).

Oil 3 baking sheets. Punch dough down; knead again briefly. Divide dough into 6 balls, then divide each ball into 8 pieces. Roll each piece out in a 6-7-inch long bar.

Place two bars side by side; pinch the middle together to join them, then curve the four ends outward. (The shape should look like back-to-back capital C's.) Repeat with remaining bars, spacing them about 2 inches apart. Let rise in a warm place until puffy, 30 to 45 minutes.

Heat oven to 375 degrees. Brush buns with the egg yolk/water mixture. Bake around 15 minutes until lightly browned. While buns are still hot, use a little egg white to affix the raisins or cherries to each of the curves.

Serve warm with butter and enjoy!

Best wishes from the Scandinavian Heritage Association





Thor Lodge Sons of Norway NEWS

Royal visit and Thor Lodge Julfest

by Rob Odden,
president
Thor Lodge 4-067
Sons of Norway

Recently the Norwegian royals paid a visit to Minnesota. King Harald and Queen Sonja visited the United States, spending Oct 11-18 in Minnesota. Among their sight-seeing adventures were Nortun Lodge in Duluth and Mayo Clinic in Rochester.

In Minneapolis 1,100 were invited to attend a banquet at the Hilton Hotel in their honor. Two of the King and Queen's last Minnesota stops were the rededication of the Enger Tower and welcoming to the Minneapolis Airport the traveling exhibit, Cold Recall: Reflections of a Polar Explorer. Their majesties will have a lasting impression of America from visiting its sites, culture and everyday people. One of their last stops will be in New York, visiting Ground Zero.

During their time in Minnesota, King Harald shared a few words of esteem with his friends in America.

"...and I am grateful to the Sons of Norway and the many other organizations that preserve Norwegian heritage and traditions.

"Norway looks to its Sons and Daughters in the United States as a bridge between our two cultures. ... It's very important to get to know each other better, because more people here are calling themselves Norwegian-American than we have Norwegians in Norway."

Thor Lodge is busy as usual, but still many of us have been impacted by challenges locally. S.O.N. International Foundation was able to give some small help to our Minot community. District IV Vice President Martha Elliott facilitated this Helping Hands project during the Souris flood recovery.

Now that cold weather is here, we



are interested in having more cultural classes and activities. The weekend of Nov 18-19, we had our Autumn Bake Sale and Christmas on the Prairie. The annual Julfest will be Monday, Dec. 12. For tickets, please call 839-1308.

We also continue to play cards in the SHA lower level meeting room every Tuesday at 1:30 p.m., periodic cultural classes and movie nights. Please call Mary Zurcher at 362-7468 if you would like to know more about our cultural activities.

I look forward to seeing you at Thor Lodge soon. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all. •

Icelandic Heritage Society NEWS

Holidays in Old Iceland

From *Icelandic Americans—History, Modern Era, The First in America*

Iceland's holidays are typical of those celebrated in other western, Christian nations, though with a whimsical twist. The Christmas season lasts several days and is traditionally celebrated with bonfires, dancing, and stories of elves and trolls.

On New Year's Eve, it was the custom to invite the elves into one's home. Lights or candles would be lit throughout the house in order to drive out the shadows. The mistress of the house would walk around the outside of the house three times,

chanting an invitation to the elves to come, stay, or go. At least one light would remain burning throughout the night.

Also on New Year's Eve, the pantry window would be left open to receive the hoarfrost, the frozen dew that forms a white coating on surfaces. It does not accumulate, and it fades quickly. A pot would be placed on the pantry floor in an attempt to capture it, and the house mistress would re-



main in the pantry all night. In the morning a cross-tree would be placed over the pot to keep the hoarfrost in. Known as the "pantry drift," capturing it in this way was thought to bring prosperity to the household.

Twelfth Night, celebrated 12 days after Christmas on Jan. 5, is often called the "Great Night of Dreams" in Iceland. This refers to the night when the Kings of the Orient are thought to have dreamed of the birth of Jesus. In some parts of Iceland, Twelfth Night was referred to as "The Ole Christmas" or "The Old Christmas Eve." Twelfth Day is celebrated on Jan. 6 with bonfires and dancing.

To read more, visit: <http://www.everyculture.com>. Then search for Icelandic Americans. •



Souris Valley Danish Society NEWS

Flaxton, N.D.: Hotbed for Danes

Again in this issue, we are highlighting family histories of our members. The following is the ancestry of Souris Valley

Danish Society member, Dennis Jacobsen of Minot. The article has been compiled by Pam Orth.

The town of Flaxton was first called Postville, named for its first resident, William Henry Post, who became the first postmaster in 1900. The town name was changed to Flaxton in 1901, when most of the townsite was seeded to flax.

Etlar Jacobsen, father of Souris Valley Danish Society member Dennis Jacobsen, was born in 1925. He was reared in the Danish community of Flaxton. He spent two and a half years in the Army. Etlar married Elaine Anderson from the Bowbells area, where



Lars and Kirstine Jacobsen family (shown here with baby Berman).

they farmed and raised four children: Dwight, Dale, Donna and Dennis.

Etlar's grandparents, homesteaders Lars and Kirstine Jensen Jacobsen, were both born in Moen, Denmark. They first came to Alden, Minn., where Etlar's father was born. When his uncle, Berman Jacobsen, was 8 years old, his father (Lars) had shipped livestock to Bowbells, N.D.



Rudolf and Olga Jacobsen with daughter Herdis and son Etlar (father of Dennis Jacobsen).

Little Berman and another fellow started out on foot with the cattle and ran into a hailstorm. Lars caught up with them, and they got a ride the rest of the way to Richland Township near Flaxton, where Lars had built a home and housing for horses and other livestock.

Meanwhile, Etlar's mother, Olga Sorensen Jacobsen, and her parents, Martin and Juline Sorensen, left the Hjorring vicinity in Denmark on November 1909, traveling on a ship named "United States." Before they could get to the Flaxton area, son Frits came down with pneumonia, and they had to stay on the ship. Frits was sent to a hospital in Brooklyn, while the rest of the family went to Ellis Island. The Sorensens eventually bought their own farm with a loan from First Bank of Flaxton. There were already buildings and a well on the property

"The Meeting House," the name preferred for the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, was prominent in the community. Built in 1907, it stood until 1958. Because they did not always have a resident pastor, many of the children were confirmed in the Norwegian Lutheran Church at Flaxton. Others were confirmed at Dagmar, Mont., another hotbed of Danes. •

Dakota Finnish Society NEWS

Finns celebrate 'Little Christmas'

*by Marion Anderson, president
Dakota Finnish Society*

The Dakota Finnish Society had a very successful Hostfest booth—thanks to the many volunteers who helped make this happen.

We held our annual Pikkujoulu (Little Christmas) celebration on Dec. 11, 2011, at the SHA Center. A catered meal was served.

Brad Tengesdal is now at his home in Minot and recovering there. He is in good spirits. He is very thankful for all of the prayers and concerns on behalf of him and his family.

The "Friends of Brad Tengesdal" account is still active at First Western Bank in Minot, for your consideration during this season of giving.

It is the time of the year to celebrate



and be thankful for all that we have.

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a great 2012. •

Tracing your Scandinavian ROOTS • 35

The gift of song

by Jo Ann Winistorfer

As I write this, I am half watching, half listening, to a fantastic, hour-long video performance of a Santa Lucia pageant televised in a cathedral in Sweden. You, too, can enjoy this beautiful pageant, thanks to Loren Anderson of the Swedish Heritage Society, who emailed it to friends. I was lucky enough to receive it from him. You can view it on the internet through Jan. 12, 2012. Here's the web address: http://svtplay.se/t/123386/luciafirande_i_svt.

The tune to "Santa Lucia" is one I recognized from my childhood. My folks had an old copy of "The Golden Book of Favorite Songs." That book always perched above the keyboard of our piano. Now and then my mother would sit down at the piano to play numbers from that book, including the song "Santa Lucia." The music would draw

my brother, my dad and me to the living room, gathering around the piano to harmonize with Mom's soprano. David and I didn't fare too badly in the harmony department, but Daddy, who was several steps above being a monotone, would groan off-key bass in the background. How I treasure those days!

Today, I am again looking at that old song book that brings back so many memories. No wonder I didn't recognize the tune from my girlhood as a tribute to a religious saint! The subtitle "Neapolitan Boat Song" appears near the top of the page. The chorus reads: "Hark, how the sailor's cry, Joyously echoes nigh..."

In contrast, the Swedish Festival of Lights lyrics refer to "Sankta Lucia," a Christian martyred in 4th-century Italy during the Diocletian persecution. Her crime? Refusing to marry a pagan.

When attempts to burn her at the stake miraculously failed, her eyes were put out by the guards. Today, she is venerated as the patron saint of the blind



and a "bringer of light." (For more on the annual festival, see page 13.)

Meanwhile, share your favorite musical memories with your family when you gather for the holidays. After all, they're part of your heritage •