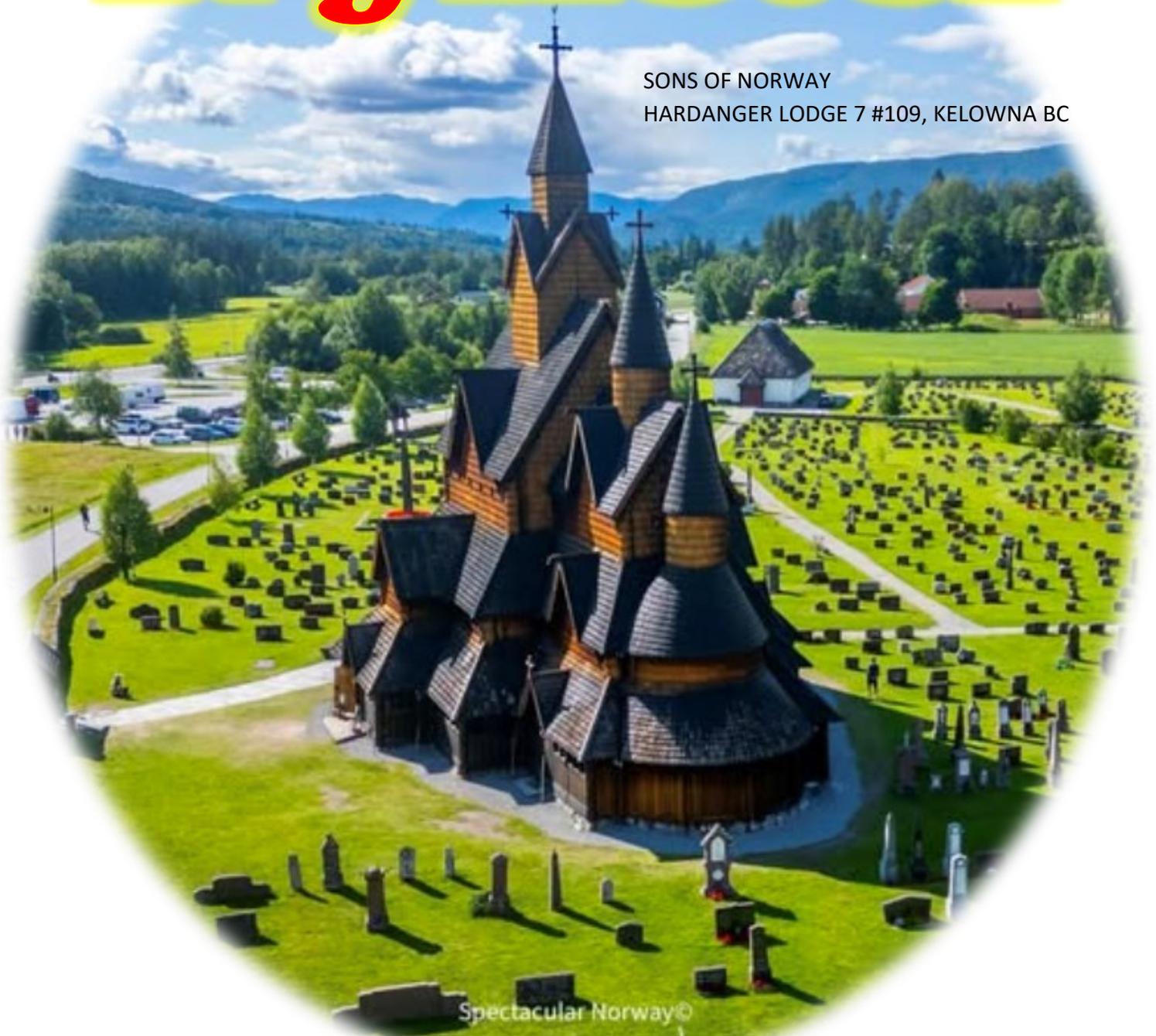


# Hardanger Nyheter

SONS OF NORWAY

HARDANGER LODGE 7 #109, KELOWNA BC



Spectacular Norway ©

*Featuring Hardanger Lodge 109 Christmas activities*

## Cover Page

A masterpiece of medieval craftsmanship.

Heddal Stave Church has watched over Norway since the 1200s.

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### President's message

Godt Nytt År We hope you all had a wonderful Christmas with family and friends! Now, as we begin a new year and prepare for new opportunities and goals, look at what strengths you have and how you might add new things into your plan. It might be as simple as planning a regular coffee with a friend or may be as complex as taking up a musical instrument or learning a new skill.

I want to thank our members who stood for election to the Board in December. The past Board remained in their positions with the addition of Darlene Osterlin as Vice President. If you wish to become more involved and would be interested in learning more or helping out, our Board members would be pleased to have an assistant to work with them. Our Editor will provide a list of the Board members in the newsletter so I will not include them but in no way does that diminish their importance to our Lodge.

As we return to monthly meetings/activities, I am delighted to hear from anyone who wishes to suggest or offer how you might contribute to our meetings. A couple members have volunteered to speak about their travels. Maybe you have a hobby or interest in your life that would be interesting to share with our members? Please let me know and we will look at scheduling you in. Each member has the right and responsibility to make our Lodge successful – not just your Board of Directors – so we look forward to hearing what you might be able to offer. We have the Olympics coming up in Italy shortly – maybe we could have hosts to invite members to watch some of the Norwegian and Canadian competitors? Or a host for a Norwegian movie night? In the recent past, my former lodge had an evening each week of the month for SoN – Lodge meeting one week, Ladies Auxiliary meeting another, movie night, and library night. Or, do you have a Norwegian or other treat you might wish to bring to a monthly meeting for coffee time? Let me know as we would be delighted to share it with you.

I look forward to seeing you at our 21<sup>st</sup> January meeting. Our new home at 1450 Bertram is working well – thank you Erna Johnston – and our Christmas dinner in December was an array of great potluck treats! The secret Santa was a delight with our very own Santa Lloyd! Thank you to everyone for participating.

Hilsen, Gloria



# Hardanger Lodge Christmas



Our Santa Clause was Lloyd Coltman and Mrs Clause was his wife, Agnes



Santa & Gloria Benazic



Erica Benazic with Santa



Wilf Akerlund on Santa's Lap



Delores Jensen & Santa



Santa got the greatest gift of all. He got a package of lefse. He was pleased



Seated at one of the tables from L to R are Wilf Akerlund, Nancy & Gary Goplin, Erna Johnston, Delores Jensen and Darlene Osterlin

## Folk High School Proposal Sons of Norway Newsletter Service

The Norwegian government has recently proposed that the share of scholarships for folk high schools (*folkehøgskoler*) be cut to 15% from its current 40% standing. This proposal has many fearing that it will quickly reduce the number of students that can afford to go to these high schools.

A couple students at the Namdals Folkehøgskole in the Grong municipality in Norway explained that they may not have been able to participate had the proposed changes been in effect due to the idea of increasing loans as they navigate their education journey.

CEO of the Norwegian Folk High School Council Anne Tingelstad Wøien believes that some students need the environment that a folk high school offers in a time where many young people are struggling with mental health and the feeling of exclusion. These types of schools allow youth a pressure-free environment to learn and explore their passions without receiving grades. The decision from the government on this proposal is being anxiously awaited by those connected to the strong tradition of Norwegian folk high schools.

## Mølje - A Fisher's Feast Sons of Norway Newsletter

In the northern part of Norway, during the winter months, a certain and unique meal takes the stage. This meal is known as Mølje. The main ingredient of mølje is cod, but more specifically it is cod, cod roe, and cod liver.

The migration pattern of Arctic cod is the main reason for the dish being a common cuisine in the winter. The cod spawn in the archipelago of Lofoten, Norway, from January to April, which provides an abundant catch for the fishery there.

For many years, the fisherman of Lofoten have enjoyed what the waters have to offer. They would take their one cooking pan and add cod roe, potatoes, and water to cook. Then they would add the liver and cod for a few more minutes and mix it all together.

Today's preparation of mølje is a bit more complex with upwards of four pans used to prepare each ingredient separately. You can enjoy this delicacy in restaurants in Northern Norway in season. In fact, it is a "self-contained meal" and will give you everything you need by adding some carrots and potatoes. What a unique meal to try.



# The Mollestad Oak



Norway's second largest tree. Reckoned to be over 1000 years old.

Mollestadeika is Norway's second largest tree measured by trunk thickness and circumference, and is considered one of the country's oldest and largest oak trees. The tree is believed to be over 1,000 years old, stands about 15 metres tall and has a trunk diameter of approximately 3 metres. Despite being hollow, the oak continues to grow, and with its six strong branches, the crown covers an area of more than 200 square metres. This makes Mollestadeika an impressive and living natural monument.

Mollestadeika is also known as Vetteeika, and many legends and beliefs about supernatural powers are connected to the tree. In earlier times, people believed that the man who first cleared the farm continued to live on as a protective spirit in his burial mound. The mound was considered sacred, and trees growing there were called

guardian trees and had to be protected. Over the years, offerings of food, milk and beer were made to the oak, and it was considered important that the tree received the first beer drawn from the barrel. If this was not done, people believed that prosperity on the farm would disappear. Damage to a guardian tree was also seen as a bad omen.

The farm Vestre Mollestad is among the oldest farms in Birkenes, and both its name and well preserved archaeological finds from burial mounds indicate settlement dating back to the Viking Age or earlier.

Today, Mollestadeika is a popular stop for both nature lovers and those interested in history who wish to experience a unique cultural and natural landmark.

Other memories include the morning the snow had drifted against the house door so that Dad had to bash his way out; the two boys then shovelled steps so that we could all get out. We all went to a country school a 1/2 mile away, Nut Lake, where our dad had attended school too when he was young. My older brother had to take grade 9 by correspondence and then he went to a boarding school in a town about 90 miles away.

And we all got skates for Christmas one winter when the slough froze over. We skated every day and then after school until dark. Our young teacher came and joined us and played hockey against all of us. Our hockey sticks were bent willows.

There were many winter journeys to town (Kelvington), 12 miles away, when Marlene and I had to go to town for grades 11 and 12. Often our dad was on the tractor and snow blower ahead of our mother driving the car. It meant early mornings for this slow trip. The snow drifts were much higher than the car. We had a little room in town where we batched some weeks. All my younger brothers finished their schooling in Saskatoon when Marlene and I went there to University.

## The 50-øre's journey from a meal to half a plastic bag

Since the first 50-øre coin (then made of silver) was minted in 1877, hundreds of millions of such coins have circulated in Norwegian homes and shops. But 135 years later [in 2012], this has stopped. The 50-øre coin, which has existed in 10 different versions, will no longer be able to be used for payment.

Last year [in 2011], it was decided that after May 1, the 1-kroner will be the least valued legal tender in Norway. Then, only Norges Bank will accept the little brown coins.

### Filled up on 50 øre

People who have lived a little may remember that they could get quite a lot of candy for 50 øre a few decades ago. However, in the early 20th century people could make themselves a whole meal for fifty øre — which was probably fine, since many had an hourly wage that did not exceed 50 øre.

### No longer in circulation

Trond Eklund, Director of Cash Payments at Norges Bank, explains why the 50-øre coin, which was produced at Kongsberg, will soon die.

“The reason is that it is no longer in circulation. We issue 15 to 20 million 50-øre coins each year. The shop returns the change, but the customers put them aside or put them in a jelly jar,” he says.

In recent years, 50-øre coins worth up to 10 million kroner have been issued by Norges Bank, but that is no longer the case. Inflation is the reason why the coins are slowly but surely dying out.

So now the 50-øre coin will suffer the same fate as the 25-øre (1982), 10-øre (1991), 5-øre (1982), 2-øre (1973) and 1-øre (1973).

This is what you could buy for 50 øre:

2012: nothing (half a plastic bag)

1990s: A piece of Bugg chewing gum

1968: Half a kilo of potatoes

1948: The first Donald [Duck] comic

1930: Three tram tickets in Oslo

1900: 3 liters of milk

# A Christmas tradition by Bev Akerlund

A couple of weeks before Christmas I invited our friend, Clea Haugo and her 8-year-old daughter, Svea to join me for a lefse making session. We have made lefse together before Christmas for the past three years. This time I had Clea do the preparation of the dough to get a feel of it before rolling. Once the griddle was hot Svea went right to work rolling and baking with confidence. She'd done it before! Clea took her turn and learned to judge the thickness of the lefse before lifting it onto the griddle. Before long we had a pile of lefse layered in between tea towels. Svea wanted to make mini-lefse using marble-sized pieces of dough. She made several which she ate as we shared lunch of homemade soup and freshly baked lefse. With lefse in hand we bade goodbye. As always it was a joy to share this Norwegian tradition together.



## Mining News from Norway Norway News

Gold mining in Norway has a history dating back to the 1700s, particularly in areas like Eidsvoll, Bømlø, and Bindal, with past commercial operations yielding significant finds, though it's not a major modern industry; today, it's mostly small-scale recreational panning allowed with landowner permission, focusing on [placer gold](#) in rivers, while larger-scale exploration continues, facing strict [Norwegian environmental regulations](#).

### Historical Mining Areas

[Eidsvoll](#): The first gold mines were established here in the 1750s after gold was found in quartz veins.

[Bømlø](#) (Lykling): A significant gold rush occurred in the late 19th century, producing hundreds of kilograms of gold from quartz veins; it's now a tourist site with limited panning opportunities.

[Bindal](#) (Kolsvik): Large gold-bearing deposits were found here, with potential for modern operations.

### Modern Gold Prospecting

- **Recreational Panning:** Allowed for personal use, but requires landowner permission, especially on private land.
- **Types of Gold:** Expect fine placer gold in rivers rather than large nuggets.

**Regulations:** Stringent environmental laws apply; check with local authorities for rules.

### Challenges & Opportunities

- **Challenges:** High operational costs, remote locations, and strict environmental laws.

**Opportunities:** Strong global gold demand, potential for eco-friendly mining, and new discoveries in geologically similar areas to Sweden/Finland.

**Key Takeaway:** While Norway isn't a global gold giant, its history and geological potential continue to attract interest, from hobbyists panning for flakes to potential larger-scale exploration projects.

**The Weather Fore-caster:** Did you hear about the Viking who looked out the window and said it was going to rain? His wife asked how he knew, and he replied, "Because Rudolph the Red knows rain, dear".

## The Yokes on Yu

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

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

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

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

## NEWS FROM NORWAY

### Norway's Oil Fund Grows on Strong Equity Markets

The fund has a stake in more than 9,000 companies, equivalent to holding 1.5% of every listed company in the world. Dominic Chopping Oct. 29, 2025 at 5:51 am Norway's sovereign-wealth fund returned 5.8% in the third quarter, driven by strong equity markets. Norges Bank Investment Management—the arm of the central bank that manages the world's largest sovereign-wealth fund, commonly known as the oil fund—said Wednesday that the fund had a market value of 20.44 trillion kroner (\$2.046 trillion) as of Sept. 30. That marks an increase of 854 billion kroner from the end of the second quarter. "The result is driven by strong returns in the stock market, particularly in basic materials, telecommunications and the financial sector," said Norges Bank Investment Management Deputy Chief Executive Trond Grande. Equity investments returned 7.7% in the quarter, while fixed-income investments returned 1.4%, unlisted real-estate investments returned 1.1% and unlisted renewable energy infrastructure returned 0.3%. The Norwegian krone appreciated against several major currencies during the quarter, with currency movements contributing to a 259 billion-krone hit to the fund's value, it said. The fund was 71.2% invested in equities, 26.6% in fixed income, 1.8% in unlisted real estate and 0.4% in unlisted renewable-energy infrastructure. The oil fund has a stake in more than 9,000 companies globally, equivalent to holding 1.5% of every listed company in the world.

**Happy New Year to all.** The February meeting will be held on January 17th. Lodge members will receive further information at a later date. The next newsletter will be March 2026