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SONS OF NORWAY

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KELOWNA BC

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Hi everyone,

I am passing on the information for the District 7 Heritage Camp, held annually at Hatzic Lake, outside Mission BC. Please pass it on to family members who might be interested in some Norwegian cultural activities this summer. It is a fun time for children and adults. It is open for adults with no children but children must be registered with adults.

Sounds like some interesting activities have been planned for a variety of ages. The price includes the Saturday night dinner and Sunday morning breakfast so this is a very inexpensive cost for camp. There are T-shirts for purchase at an additional cost.

Start making your plans and register now. It will be a great time with members from across the District!

Fraternally,

Gloria Benazic, President

I do not have many answers as I have just received this news as well. The merger of Sons of Norway with BetterLife should take effect 1st July 2026, depending on government clearance. As noted in the presentation, we will still retain our name and fraternal structure of Districts and Lodges and the lodges and districts will continue to receive a portion of the membership dues from everyone renewing or joining. What will change? Well, the only thing I know for sure is our International Board of Directors will be renamed Sons of Norway Fraternal Board and will become a committee of the BetterLife Board. There was no opportunity for questions at this session so we do not really know what will change, only those things that will stay the same were highlighted. SoN Home Office (HO) will remain in Minneapolis and BetterLife is headquartered in Wisconsin. Sons of Norway financial products will remain in effect. After 1st July, new products will be purchased from BetterLife product listings.

<https://www.sofn.com/newpartnership/>

Gloria Benazic

President, District 7



SYTTENDE MAI

Sunday, 17th of May, Hardanger Lodge will hold a celebration to celebrate Norway's Constitution Day. This is an important date for Norway and Norwegians with children's parades, dressing in bunads and waving Norwegian flags as a central part of the celebration.

Wear your bunad and bring your Norwegian flag if you wish. We will have a potluck lunch so please **bring a dish to share**. The Lodge will provide European wieners and possibly lumpe (similar to lefse) to wrap them in. We will have something to drink but you may bring what you wish to drink. **Please bring a lawn chair**. We will have some lawn games for those interested.

Date: Sunday 17 May 2026


Location: 1590 Highland Drive North (Glenmore area)

Time: 12 noon to 3 pm

Thank you to Cal and Erica Benazic for hosting us for Syttende Mai. We will need to break at 3 pm as Cal, Erica and Mila are on a flight to Australia that evening.

Gloria Benazic, President Hardanger Lodge
Ph 259 613 9234

Historic Norway



This image showcases the national flags of the Nordic countries, including Denmark, Iceland, Sweden, Norway, and Finland. Each of these flags shares a common design element known as the Nordic cross, a horizontal cross that is slightly shifted toward the hoist side. This design reflects a shared cultural and historical heritage rooted in Christianity and centuries of close ties between these nations.

Despite their similar structure, each flag has its own distinct color combination that represents national identity. Denmark's red and white flag, known as the Dannebrog, is considered one of the oldest national flags in the world. Sweden's blue and yellow, Norway's red, white, and blue, Finland's white and blue, and Iceland's blue, red, and white all carry symbolic meanings connected to their landscapes, history, and values.

Together, these flags represent a region known for its strong sense of unity, cooperation, and shared values such as equality, sustainability, and high quality of life. While each country maintains its own language and traditions, the Nordic identity connects them through history, design, and cultural exchange.

What did children eat as candy in the old days?

A child who lived during the Viking Age - more than 1,000 years ago - never tasted sugar or candy like we eat today. But they had other sweets. The plant angelica was eaten like candy. It tastes a little sweet, but also bitter. The Viking children may also have used resin as chewing gum, because people have chewed it since the Stone Age. Resin is a sticky and thick liquid that flows out of spruce and pine trees. If they wanted more sweetness, they could eat honey and sweet berries and apples. Sugar for Norway Sugar cane is a grass that does not grow in Norway. That is why [Norway] did not have sugar until the 17th century. Then it arrived by boat along with other new foods such as coffee, tea, spices and cocoa. With sugar and cocoa, it became possible to make many kinds of candy. Sugar was expensive and not for everyday use. Hard candies came in many fruit flavors and were sold in bulk, meaning you could buy one at a time. Caramels didn't cost that much The most popular chocolate Licorice, the juice of the licorice plant, is used to flavor candy. Licorice came in long sticks and was cut into pieces. Marzipan is made from almonds, powdered sugar and egg whites. Almonds had been coming to Norway by ship for hundreds of years. Then in the 19th century, powdered sugar arrived, which is finely ground sugar. Then people started making marzipan. Marzipan was used in cakes, but also as candy, especially at Christmas and Easter. Freia was the first chocolate factory in Norway. From 1889, children could buy milk chocolate. It is still the most popular chocolate today. Now you can choose from a wide variety of different sweets. A child from the Viking Age either. People could also make them at home. "Love on a stick" - also called lollipops - is actually a hard candy or caramel put on a stick. These also existed in the old days.

What Is Syttende Mai and Why Celebrate?

Syttende Mai, or Constitution Day, is Norway's National Day celebrated on May 17th each year, marking the signing of the Norwegian Constitution in 1814. The day is characterized by parades, traditional costumes, and various festivities, emphasizing national pride and community spirit. Overview of Syttende Mai Syttende Mai, also known as Norwegian Constitution Day, is celebrated on May 17 each year. It commemorates the signing of the Norwegian Constitution in 1814, marking Norway's independence from Denmark. This day is a significant national holiday in Norway, symbolizing unity, independence, and national pride. Celebrations and Traditions Parades and Activities Children's Parades: Central to the celebrations, these parades feature children dressed in traditional costumes called bunads, waving flags, and marching with school bands. Community Events: Activities include speeches, games, and various festivities that bring families and communities together.

Food and Drink Traditional foods enjoyed during Syttende Mai include: Hot dogs wrapped in lefse Ice cream Kransekake (a traditional cake) Krokaneer (caramelized almond candy) Significance Syttende Mai is not just a celebration of Norway's history; it also represents the values of democracy and equality. The parades, especially those involving children, symbolize hope for the future and the importance of preserving Norwegian culture. This day is celebrated not only in Norway but also in Norwegian communities worldwide, showcasing the global reach of Norwegian heritage.

(This article is the result of the question, "What is Syttende Mai"? and was generated by Artificial Intelligence.)

Reduce stress with half an hour in nature



Reduce stress with half an hour in nature 20 to 30 minutes in contact with nature is the most effective length of time to lower stress hormones in the body, a new study shows. If you go for a walk or sit in a place that makes you feel connected to

nature for 20 minutes, it will make you less stressed. This is what researchers write in a new study in which they claim to have found the most effective length of time to reduce stress. The researchers go so far as to call it a "nature pill." "We have known that time in nature reduces stress, but until now it has been unclear how much is needed, how often and what kind of nature experiences provide these benefits," says the lead researcher of the study, MaryCarol Hunder at the University of Michigan, in a press release. The study shows that 20-30 minutes in nature lowers stress hormones in the body most effec-

tively. Urbanization, sitting indoors and watching screens can have negative health effects for many in today's society. The 20-30 minutes could be a budget-friendly and achievable solution to improve these, according to the researchers.

Timeout from everyday life "The new study is interesting, but not very surprising," says Thomas Hansen, researcher at the Welfare Research Institute NOVA and OsloMet, to forskning.no. There are several things that can contribute to more people being less stressed when they encounter nature. "It provides a completely different presence where you can clear your mind, forget about time and place and be in tune with nature. It can feel like a timeout from everyday problems," says Hansen. He also believes that it may be due to a natural need to be in contact with nature. "From a historical and evolutionary perspective, nature has always been central to humans. Living in line with our evolutionary heritage can be thought of as not only strengthening the positive aspects of well-being but also helping to reduce mental discomfort and ill health."

Vikings In Scotland, during the late 8th to early 9th century, Vikings buried a remarkable treasure



that has fascinated historians. Among the items in the Galloway Hoard was a tiny Roman rock crystal jar, meticulously wrapped in gold thread.

The jar itself is small, yet its careful preservation shows that the Vikings recognized its value, both materially and symbolically. Wrapping it in gold thread elevated the object, perhaps as a display of wealth, reverence, or ritual significance. The combination of Roman craftsmanship and Viking care highlights cross-cultural interactions and the appreciation of artifacts across centuries.

Hiding the jar within the Galloway hoard suggests that it was meant to be protected, perhaps from conflict or looting. The hoard contains a mix of coins, jewelry, and other treasures, providing insight into Viking society, trade networks, and connections to earlier civilizations.

This tiny container, preserved for over a millennium, tells a larger story about the Vikings' ability to value, protect, and carry forward artifacts from the past. It demonstrates a blend of artistry, cultural memory, and practical care, showing that even small items could hold enormous im-

portance.

Discoveries like this remind us that history is layered, with objects moving across time, cultures, and hands, leaving traces that reveal both ancient human skill and the stories they carried forward.



Lost History ·

During a routine sewage system project in Norway, construction workers made an unexpected discovery: 3 oak barrels dating back to the seventeenth century. Buried beneath layers of demolition debris, the barrels have been remarkably preserved, sparking curiosity among archaeologists.

Analysis suggests the barrels once contained slaked lime, a key component for building projects of the time. Slaked lime may have contributed to the preservation of the wood, slowing decay and protecting it from environmental damage over centuries.

The barrels provide more than a glimpse into materials, they reveal aspects of historical construction techniques and the daily practices of artisans and builders in seventeenth-century Norway. Studying the wood, its treatment, and the contents can shed light on both technology

and resource management of the era.

Recovering the barrels requires careful handling, as centuries of burial and exposure to soil and debris make the wood fragile. Conservation specialists will stabilize the artifacts to allow further research, ensuring the story of these centuries-old objects is preserved.

Finds like these remind us that even everyday items, like barrels used in construction, can carry extraordinary historical value. They connect us to the people, materials, and practices of the past, offering tangible evidence of life and labor in early modern Europe.



A Note From Bev Akerlund

Following his mid-April knee replacement surgery Wilf is recovering nicely and is attending KGH rehab for physiotherapy twice a week. As we drove up the entrance on Tuesday we noticed Wenche out in the sunshine pushing a walker under the supervision of a care aid. What a surprise! She said that in April she had broken her hip and had received a new hip replacement. She said that she will also be receiving physiotherapy at KGH. Just this week she moved to Village of Mill Creek which will be her new home as her house has been sold. Interestingly she says that this is where she worked as a care aid years ago.

News from Norway

Norway Heat Zones

Norway just confirmed the largest geothermal energy reserve ever identified in Europe — a volcanic hot zone beneath the Oslo Fjord providing enough thermal energy to heat all of Norway indefinitely without any external fuel input of any kind.

The Norwegian Geothermal Survey mapped heat flow anomalies beneath the Oslo Rift — an ancient continental rift system where Earth's crust thinned dramatically 300 million years ago — finding temperatures of 250 degrees Celsius at 6-kilometer depth across a 12,000-square-kilometer area underlying Oslo, Drammen, and Kongsberg. The anomalous heat arises from radiogenic decay in uranium-rich granites exposed during rifting, providing a self-renewing heat source independent of any magmatic activity. Total thermal energy within technically drillable depths exceeds Norway's cumulative energy consumption for 10,000 years.

Norway plans to drill 200 deep geothermal boreholes targeting the most concentrated heat zones beneath the Oslo metropolitan area, aiming to convert Oslo's district heating system — currently 60 percent biomass-fueled — to entirely geothermal supply by 2033.

Da Yokes On Yu

Q: Why did the Norwegian take a ladder with him to the supermarket?

A: Because he'd heard the food prices in Oslo were extremely high.

What do you call Norway's southern border? The Finnish Line

Just got back from a two week cruise through the fjords.

"Norway?"

"Yes way, it's true!"

Here's wishing you a very Happy Syttende Mai

Hilsen, Wilf Akerlund, Editor.



Next issue of the Hardanger Nyheter will be in June.