



ORD FRA PRESIDENTEN

KULTURHJØRNET (CULTURE CORNER)

Nancy L. Dunn, Cultural Director

As I write my last *Ord* as president, I must thank you all for your help and support these last two years. It has been a fun ride with your encouragement.

I recently looked over the tallies from the surveys you filled out when I took office and I believe I have kept within your expectations, including reinstating our *Syttende Mai* celebration. You were not sure, at the time you filled out the surveys, that you wanted to change to a potluck anniversary luncheon, but after very good reviews in 2010, I hope we have changed some minds. Our 35th Anniversary in 2011, being a catered, special affair, was well received, and now in 2012, we are once again planning a fine potluck luncheon, for our 36th Anniversary.

Outside events were added for those who wanted to partake – dinner at Perkins with a show, *Land of the Vikings*, following – Denver trip to *A Night in Bethlehem* to hear Tord Gustavsen – helping at DIA with the Ski for Light skiers – Hardanger class started – Victorian Sunday in the Park – Grand Marshal for our *Syttende Mai* Parade – Silent Auction for Foundation Month – and a trip to Fort Lupton to see all the work that John Everson has completed. We have been busy. I know our new officers will have many new ideas and Stein Fjell will keep a very active schedule.

Fraternally,
Marian Erdal

This month we feature a real delight. Lyle Berge and Richard Linsenmann will present a program on the history and culture of the Scandinavian drink *Aquavit* or “akevitt,” as Norwegians pronounce it. We will be regaled with tales and anecdotes of a beloved beverage. As an example, there is a long-standing feud between those who say *Aquavit* should sipped at room temperature and those who say it should be ice cold. No matter which side you are on, please join us at the December Lodge meeting for an interesting and fun program.



36TH ANNIVERSARY

Mark your calendar for our Lodge's 36th Anniversary on Saturday, January 28, 2012, at Zion Lutheran Church, 815 E. 16th Street, Loveland.

Social time begins at 11:30 a.m., followed by a potluck luncheon. The \$5.00 cost for the luncheon will help cover the appetizers, dessert, and other expenses. Please help fill out the menu by bringing your favorite dish to share. Anniversary pins and the Viking of the Year Award will be presented. We look forward to being entertained by Neil Johnson, "Educator, Composer, and Entertainer" – a fellow Norwegian.

Make your reservation by January 26th with Gary Zook: 970.493.9344 / 1100 Parkwood Drive., Fort Collins, CO 80525-1929. See *Januar 2012 Posten* for a map.

* * * * *

STEIN FJELL CONTACTS 2011

- President:** Marian Erdal – 970.225.9035
- Vice President:** Rod Skaflen – 970.484.5459
- Secretary:** Roxanne Storlie – 970.412.5713
- Editors:** Marianne, Bill Nesse – 970.330.7183
posteneditor@gmail.com

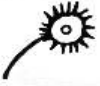
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*Reslighet er en dyd sa kjerringa,
hun vrenge underkjolen hver julekveld.*
“Cleanliness is a virtue,” said the old woman,
turning her shift inside out every Christmas Eve.

DESEMBER KALENDER

*Official Norwegian Flag-Flying Day

+Norwegian Public Holiday

- 1: Lodge Meeting**, 7 p.m. *Officer Installation, Aquavit program, Pick up ordered lefse, Bring inventory list*
- 3: Fjelldalen Lutefisk and Lefse Dinner** (Nov. Posten)
Fjellheim Scandinavian Christmas Tea (Nov. Posten)
- 11: Vestafjell Traditional Christmas Dinner** (p. 4)
- 13: Luciadagen** (Saint Lucia's Day)
- 15: Posten Submission Deadline** ****NOTE DATE****
Earlier again, due to the Holidays!
- 17: Juletreffest (Christmas Tree Party)**, 2 p.m. (p. 2)
Trollheim Family Jul Party (p. 4)
Vesterheim Christmas Party, Potluck (p. 4)
- 18: Fjelldalen Children's Christmas Tree Party** (p. 4)
Fjellheim Julebord (p. 4)
- 22: Winter Solstice**, shortest day of the year 
- 24: Julaften (Christmas Eve)**
- 25*+: Første Juledag (Christmas Day) God Jul!**
Public Holiday, Norway and USA
- 26+: Andre Juledag (Second Christmas Day), St. Stephen's Day, Boxing Day**, Public Holiday, Norway
- 31: Nyttårsaften (New Year's Eve)**
Stein Fjell Scholarship Postmark/E-mail Deadline
Member, Community, \$1000 each: www.steinfjell.com

SAVE THE DATE 2012

- Januar 5:** Lodge Meeting, 7 p.m., Memorial Service,
Turn in completed 2011 Volunteer Hours forms
- Januar 7:** Zone 8 Leadership Workshop, 9:30 a.m.,
Trollheim Lodge, Lakewood (p. 4, 5)
- Januar 19:** Board Meeting, 7 p.m., K. Browne's
- Januar 26:** Reservation Deadline, 36th Anniversary (p. 1)
- Januar 28:** Stein Fjell 36th Anniversary Celebration,
11:30 a.m., Zion Lutheran Church, Loveland (p. 1)
- Februar 5-12:** Ski for Light, Provo, Utah (www.sfl.org)
- Februar 25:** *Barneløpet* (The Children's Race), Snow
Mountain Ranch, Winter Park
- Mars 3:** *Barneløpet*, Grand Mesa, Western Slope
- Juni 6-9:** Dist. 6 Convention, Mesa AZ (www.sofn6.com)
- Juni 23-24:** Scandinavian Midsummer Festival, Estes Park

MEETING REMINDERS FROM RAS

Ras Erdal, Stein Fjell Host Coordinator


Our next Lodge meeting is on Thursday, December 1st. Our Refreshment Hosts are: **Nissa Yestness** (chair), **Dana Englehardt**, **Janet Oien**, **Jane Robbins**, and **Jane Yestness**.

Looking to January 5th and a Happy New Year!... The Refreshment Hosts for the January 5th meeting are: **Neva Gullicksen** (chair), **Rick Bilstad**, **Midge Parkos**, **Jodi Sprague**, and **Lyn Warrick**.

Vær så god...

JULETRREFEST (CHRISTMAS TREE PARTY)

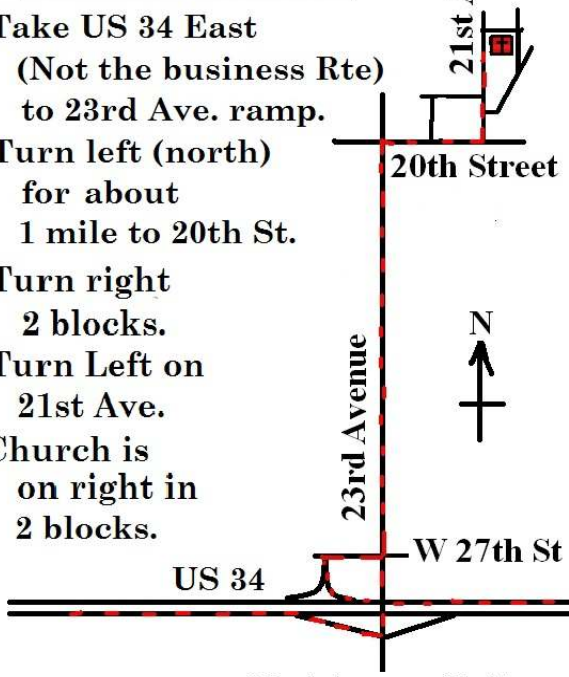
Saturday, December 17, 2 p.m., Greeley

Come to Stein Fjell's *Juletreffest* and enjoy food, *Nisse*, singing around the tree, the Christmas Story in English and Norwegian, and more. It also is your last chance this year to buy Christmas gifts at *Butikken*. The *Fest* will be held this year at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 1800 - 21st Avenue, Greeley. 

Please call **Patty Breien** at 970.330.7718 by **December 11th**, to let her know the **number of children** you will be bringing, so the *Nisse* can provide for them. Bring your children, your grandchildren, and/or your neighbor's children.

For the Potluck Dinner, if your last name begins with
A-M – please bring a main dish and salad, or with
N-Z – please bring a main dish and dessert.

From I-25 (Exit 257)

- Take US 34 East
(Not the business Rte)
to 23rd Ave. ramp.
- Turn left (north)
for about
1 mile to 20th St.
- Turn right
2 blocks.
- Turn Left on
21st Ave.
- Church is
on right in
2 blocks.
- 
- 23rd Avenue Exit

SOLSKINN (SUNSHINE)**Marian Erdal**

We are glad to see Rod Skaflen back on his feet after a scare concerning his heart. He must take life a little slower, with other precautions also, but we are happy to see him again.

**2012 OFFICERS**

The Nominating Committee – Midge Parkos (chair), Rosalind Larsen, and Jane Strand – are to be applauded for completing our 2012 slate of officers. In the process the following offices have changed since the last

Lodge meeting: Roxanne Storlie, president, Rod Skaflen, vice president, and JoAnn Kison, secretary. Midge, in particular, practically wore out her phone in accomplishing this feat. And *Tusen Takk igjen* to all those who have been willing to give of themselves and their time to the Lodge during this next year!

INVENTORY

If you have anything belonging to Stein Fjell Lodge stored in your home, please write down your name and how many of the items, so we can keep an account of our articles not presently at the Lodge. Give the list to one of our Trustees – Rod Skaflen, Jane Strand, or Maria Reichel – at the December Lodge Meeting.

VOLUNTEER HOURS

With a change of due date, we need to have your volunteer hours and events by our January Lodge meeting. Please look at your calendar and jot down everything you did for SON this year on your forms. You'll be amazed at how hard you have worked. If you need more forms, they are on the Lodge meeting sign-in table. Please return completed forms to Roxanne Storlie or JoAnn Kison for tabulating.

DIRECTORY 2012 AND E-MAIL POSTEN

Help make our 2012 Membership Directory as accurate as possible. Please send the editors your latest address, phone number(s), and/or e-mail, if there's been a change and you haven't already notified us.

Also, please let us send you *Posten* by e-mail if at all possible. This saves money, and you will get it faster and in color. Just send your e-mail address to the editors.

Mange takk.

VELKOMMEN NYTT MEDLEM**KAREN EVERETT**

Stein Fjell Lodge extends a hearty *velkommen* to Karen Everett. Karen was born, raised, and attended school in Sheridan, Wyoming. After high school, she earned her B.A. from St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota and her M.A. from the University of Chicago.

For 25 of her 30 years in Montana, Karen was Registrar and Director of Admissions at Montana State University in Billings. She has lived in Cheyenne for the past seven years. Karen is retired from a full time position as administrative manager with the state of Wyoming. Currently she works part time for the state of Nebraska. Her original connection to Sons of Norway is with Jotunheimer Lodge of Billings.

Family ties to Norway on her father's side are from Mo i Rana, Nordland fylke, 80 km (50 miles) south of the Arctic Circle. Her mother's parents are from Trysil, Hedmark fylke, Norway.



Nordland
Fylke



Hedmark
Fylke

In the summer of 2006 Karen visited Norway via a *Hurtigruten* cruise. She returned in 2007 to attend her grandmother's family reunion in Trysil.

Karen's husband, Paul, is a Lutheran pastor. They have three sons: John (an astrophysicist at U. of W. in Madison), Peter (at General Mills in Minneapolis), and Michael (in Denver real estate).

Reading and handiwork are her hobbies and interests. For Norwegian Cultural Skills she lists Genealogy, Hardanger Embroidery, Reading Norwegian and Norwegian-American Authors, Norwegian Language and Culture, and Chip Carving.

Karen's 'share with us' response was "Your lodge is very active which I appreciate, and your members are very welcoming!"



**GRATULERER MED DAGEN!
HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**

02 Makenzie Kvasager	15 Jane Strand
06 Crystal Sundet (Z8 Dir.)	16 Russell Knutson
11 Inger Froyland	19 Ras Erdal
11 Paul Fuglestad	24 Tami Bothwell
11 Rick Bilstad	28 Bill Nesse
11 Heather Leppert	31 Blaine Johnson
13 Nancy Dunn	31 Paula Sutton
14 Stephanie Sikes	



Names, Phone Numbers, and Addresses must not be redistributed, or used for commercial purposes

DITT OG DATT (THIS 'N' THAT)

- ★ **Jodi Sprague** was featured in Nordic Needle's October 17th weekly online newsletter. *Veldig fin!*
- ★ At the October Lodge meeting, Sports Director Jon-Eirik Holm-Johansen presented **Gary and Susan Zook** with their bronze *Gangmerke* (walking medals). Not pictured: **Kris Bakish**, who earned a silver *Sykkelmerke*.



L-R: Gary, Susan, Jon-Eirik

- ★ Once again the **Zone 8 Workshop** will be held at **Trollheim Lodge**. Mark your calendar for **9:30 a.m., January 7th**. All officers are invited to give and take ideas, brainstorm new ideas, and meet with members of other lodges who hold the same offices. Brunch will be served at 11:00 a.m. and all will be finished by 2:30 p.m. Please let the Erdals know if you are going and they'll try to arrange car pools.
- ★ We have **magnets for name tags**, to replace the safety pins, if desired. Ras Erdal will secure them to the tag – just leave your name tag and \$1.00 with Ras or Marian Erdal, and they will take care of it.

GIFT FOR YOUNG ONES YOU CARE ABOUT LaRue Hanson, Financial Benefits Counselor

Sons of Norway has a great plan for children 17 years of age or younger. VIKING VOYAGER is a simple, economical way to introduce children to the benefits offered by Sons of Norway. It is a way for parents, grandparents, and other relatives to help the next generation learn about the importance of owning life insurance. Viking Voyager provides level term life insurance that is convertible at age 26 for up to three times the original death benefit. There is no pre-qualification to obtain this convertible plan at age 26. The original policy comes in three benefit amounts of \$10,000, \$15,000, or \$25,000. An example of the cost for a 5-year-old for a \$10,000 policy would be a one-time payment of \$341. This is a gift that never breaks or gets out-dated and costs less than most electronic devices. Give me a call for more information on this great gift idea.



lhanson1@q.com - 719.599.8546(w) - 719.237.7314(c)
2523 Shalimar Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80915-1030

THANK YOU FROM SON FOUNDATION

Dear Stein Fjell Lodge,

Thank you for your donation of \$400.00 to the Sons of Norway Foundation Humanitarian Fund.

Your generosity allows us to offer Helping Hands to Children Grants enabling lodges to offer quality Norwegian programming for children and Helping Hands to Members Grants to assist our members following natural disasters.

Fraternally,
Cindy Olson,
Director
Sons of Norway Foundation



ZONE 8 JUL PARTIES



December 11: Vestafjell – 2 p.m., Shepard of the Valley Lutheran Church, 3133 F Road, Grand Junction
Traditional Christmas dinner with meat provided by the lodge. Bring generous side dishes (M-Z) or desserts (A-L). Sale of Christmas cookies baked by members. Bring a clothing item and/or toy to be donated to Latimer House.

December 17: Trollheim – 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., 6610 West 14th Avenue, Lakewood
Free crafts workshop (10-11:45 a.m.) and dancing, music, Nisse stories, Christmas in Norway program, Santa Claus (12:30-2 p.m.). Lunch at Noon – *lumpa* dogs, DIY open-faced sandwiches, fruit, vegetables, *saft*, juice, milk, coffee, tea, *waffler* (\$6 – adults, 16 years and up; \$4 – 4 up to 16 years; free – *barne*) RSVP by December 14th to Diane Molter at grnbviking09@live.com or 303.288.6014.

December 17: Vesterheim – 4 p.m., Atonement Lutheran Church, Inca Parkway & Baseline, Boulder
Annual potluck, ham provided, bring dish serving 8-10. Crafts for children, singing, visit from Santa. Bring wrapped gift for each child you bring, marked with name (no more than \$10). Families, singles, friends all invited. Questions? Contact Addy Martinez at 303-499-5589.

December 18: Fjellidalen – 3 p.m., SouthPark II Club House, 2850 W. Long Drive, Littleton
Children's Christmas Tree Party – trim the tree and sing Norwegian Christmas songs – call 720-283-8592.

December 18: Fjellheim – 3 p.m., (2:30 - 3 social time)
Viking Hall, 1045 Ford Street, Colorado Springs
Julebord, Caroling around the tree, visit from Santa. Adults: \$15, Children 6-12: \$6. Reservations prior to the 14th: Cleo Allgood 719.598.1982 (give ages of children).

ZONE 8 MESSAGE – NOVEMBER 2011

Greetings to all Colorado lodge members – and best wishes for a very HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON! Hard to believe that Thanksgiving is upon us, and then Christmas will seem like days away! The start of the season took place this weekend with the Trollheim Fair. It was wonderful in the newly refinished meeting room; the store in its new location allowed for more space for the Christmas vendors and those coming for a lunch of *lump* dogs and/or meatballs – so good! And now we look forward to lutefisk dinners – be sure to check the lodge newsletters so you won't miss out on this!

January starts us off with installations of officers – many of them new and bringing new ideas and enthusiasm to our lodges. Thank you and Best Wishes to you all!

Our annual Zone 8 Workshop will be at Trollheim Lodge in Lakewood, Saturday, January 7. We'll start at 9:30 a.m. We'll have coffee ready, and we will break at about 11:00 a.m. for brunch – then continue with our brainstorming until about 2:30 p.m. We'll concentrate on fresh ideas to make our monthly meetings/gatherings more fun – ideas you have tried and have been well received, and ideas that you have thought about – that can be shared with all lodges. We need to find ways to retain our membership and find those new members. We will discuss our 2012 events and how to make them more attractive to members and prospective members. Be sure to bring your lodge 2012 event calendar so we can update our zone calendar for 2012.

Barneløpet at Snow Mountain Ranch – near Tabernash – is on Saturday, Feb 25 and on the Western Slope, at Grand Mesa on March 3. This is a fun day for the kids to show their cross-country ski skills, and take home a beautiful gold medal and Norwegian flag – District 6 thanks to all who take part in the event. Our lodges furnish snacks for the kids following the race, so plan now on what your lodge wants to provide and be sure you connect with someone who will be attending the event to get it there. Items needed include “Cutie” oranges, apples, individual raisin boxes, string cheese, cheese crackers, peanut butter cheese crackers – and of course cookies. We also need coffee, hot chocolate, and a soft drink. Most of you know the drill, and your help is greatly appreciated!

June 6-9, 2012 is our bi-annual District 6 Convention in Mesa, Arizona. Lodges will receive a letter in January with information about the convention and how many delegates their lodge is entitled to. Hopefully we will have all Colorado lodges represented this year and we need to be thinking now of who will represent our lodges as delegates. We have many in our lodges who take part in the Cultural Skills program. Please enter into the Cultural Skills competition! You can enter to either take part in the competition or just to display. This information will be included with the January letter. Please begin working on a

special piece (if you haven't already) and plan on entering it. If you don't expect to attend the convention, someone from your lodge can take it for you – or I will be happy to do so.

Seek within your lodge a member who would be willing to run for Zone 8 Director. This is really an interesting and enjoyable position to hold, and there are many in our zone who would do a great job in this position. I am not able to hold this position for another term. The delegates from each zone gather at the end of the convention to vote to fill this position. Please consider this seriously. It is a good way to learn more about Sons of Norway and be more on the inside of the workings of the organization.

This has gotten longer than I had planned. We will have most all of this and much more to discuss at our January workshop. Officers should be at the workshop, and all members are welcome and encouraged to attend! We need the ideas of all! See you there!

Fraternally,
Crystal Sundet
District 6, Zone 8 Director

INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL June 23 - August 3, 2012

For a unique cultural experience, attend the International Summer School (ISS), University of Oslo, along with 600 students from 90 nations. Courses focus on Norwegian language, culture, and society, as well as undergraduate and graduate courses taught in English. Cultural and social activities and events are included, in addition to a varied program of weekend excursions. Much more information is at www.summerschool.uio.no. U.S. contact info: Oslo International Summer School, North American Branch Office, c/o st. Olaf College, 1520 St. Olaf Avenue, Northfield MN 55057-1098; e-mail is iss@stolaf.edu or call 507.786.3269 / 1.800.639.0058.



Note the following dates:

November - January – pre-application submissions
February 1 – scholarship application postmark deadline
after February 1 – admission, self-paying applications
March – admission and scholarship decisions made
April 15 – program fees paid, if self-paying or sponsored

Sons of Norway and Sons of Norway Foundation each offer a \$1500 scholarship to the ISS for current SON members or children/grandchildren of current members whose membership is in effect at least one year prior to application. Application postmark deadline is **March 1**. Information and application are at www.sofn.com. *MW-N*

HANS FREDRIK GUDE (1825 - 1903)

Hans Fredrik Gude was born in Christiania (Oslo), Norway and died in Berlin, Germany. A romanticist painter, Gude is considered, along with Johan Christian Dahl, to be one of Norway's foremost landscape painters. Among his awards is the Grand Cross of the Order of St. Olav, given in 1894. *Vinterettermiddag* is 17.9" x 14.2" and currently in the *Nasjonalgalleriet* (National Gallery of Norway), Oslo. MW-N



Vinterettermiddag (Winter Afternoon), Hans Fredrik Gude, 1847

BLINKE LILLE STJERNE LILL TWINKLE, TWINKLE LITTLE STAR

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star is a popular nursery rhyme. The lyrics are from an English poem, *The Star*, published in 1806 by British poet Jane Taylor, with her sister, Ann, in their second book of poems for children, *Rhymes for the Nursery*. It is sung to the tune of the French melody *Ah! vous dirai-je, Maman* (oldest known publication 1761). The English lyrics have five stanzas, although only the first is widely known:



<i>Blinke lille stjerne lill</i>	Twinkle, twinkle little star,
<i>Undres hvor du holder til</i>	How I wonder what you are.
<i>Høyt der oppe i det blå</i>	Up above the world so high,
<i>Kikker ned på alle små</i>	Like a diamond in the sky.
<i>Blinke lille stjerne lill</i>	Twinkle, twinkle little star,
<i>Undres hvor du holder til</i>	How I wonder what you are.

Many versions are sung all over the world. To hear children singing this song in many different languages, go to Heidi Håvan Grosch's blog, an excellent resource: www.childrensliteraurenetwork.org/blog/wontok/?p=571. Heidi Håvan Grosch is a journalist/columnist with the *Norwegian American Weekly* [Biweekly– *Rønningen Ramblings*, Monthly – *Barneblad* (for children) and *Norwegian 101* (in Norwegian and English)]. MW-N

BOULDER MAN WINS ALT FOR NORGE

The second season of *Alt For Norge* (All For Norway), an "Amazing Race"-style show taped between April and June, had 12 Americans of Norwegian heritage competing for the opportunity to meet long-lost relatives in Norway.

Matti Rowe, 24, a native of Wausau, Wisconsin who lives in Boulder, won the race when the final show aired on November 6th. Final round competitions involved driving on an icy road, singing the Norwegian



Photo: Alt for Norge/Jan Kenneth Diesen

national anthem at an Oslo theater, making lefse, and being tested on important people and places, as well as Norwegian culture. Full episodes are on YouTube.

Rowe's parents knew their son had won back in June, and made a clandestine trip to Norway then, to take part in taping the final episode, reunite with their son, and meet their long-lost family. "To go 150 years with no contact and have 30 people waiting (in Norway) for me was just amazing," Rowe said on the show, moments after meeting his extended family. He also visited a farmstead owned by his family since the 1500s.

A Tip of the Hat to Bernice Kwan for suggesting this article. MW-N [Image: www.emofaces.com]



THE SHETLAND BUS

Bill Nesse

After the German invasion of Norway in April 1940, many Norwegians elected to escape to England by the relatively simple expedient of sailing there in fishing boats. The Shetland Islands, the nearest British land, are just 200 miles west of Bergen, making them a



convenient destination. Beginning in fall 1940, the British Secret Service asked some of the Norwegian skippers to carry agents to Norway and bring others back to Shetland. By spring 1941, this arrangement was formalized, and the Norwegian Naval Independent Unit (NNIU) was established to organize and carry out these missions. The unit became informally known as the Shetland Bus because Norwegians knew that small boats were regularly making the trip to and from the Shetland Islands, and “to take the Shetland Bus” meant escaping when threat of capture was imminent.

The NNIU initially consisted of two British officers, some enlisted men, and the Norwegian crewmen of 14 fishing boats, who proudly remained civilians and were paid £4 per week, with a bonus of £10 for each mission. Operations Officer Lt. David Howarth handled day-to-day activities and dealt with the independent crews who had little regard for the military.

Fishing boats such as the *Heland* were chosen for these missions because they were available, and it was thought that they could slip past the German defenses since they were no different than the numerous other fishing boats that still went about the job of fishing to feed the population. The boats



M/K Heland as she appears today

also were built to handle the North Sea and the crews were very familiar with the coastal waters. The major drawback was that fishing boats were slow, typically cruising at only 5 to 7 knots, so they had no chance of escape if detected and some trips could require many days, particularly for northern destinations.

The boats were powered by one cylinder diesel engines that made a distinctive tonk-tonk-tonk noise as they ran. Spare parts were not available in England, but the engines were made on the island of Bømlo, south of Bergen. When parts were needed, a message was sent to the resistance. Workers at the factory would smuggle the parts out, and they were sent back to Shetland on the next run. Bømlo therefore became a frequent destination for the Shetland Bus. It was close, had myriad safe landing sites, and provided relatively easy access to the mainland. While these engines are no longer manufactured, Wartsila Norway, the successor to Wichmann Diesel, is still in business on Bømlo.

It was decided to restrict the missions to the fall, winter, and spring months, when darkness of the long nights would provide cover for the trip from the Shetland Islands to the coast of Norway. Approaching the coast in daylight was hazardous because the Germans patrolled the North sea with aircraft. While the boats were fitted with machine guns hidden in oil drums on deck, they had little chance of withstanding an aerial attack. Operating in the winter months did, however, present tremendous problems because fierce storms regularly sweep the North Sea.

By the time summer 1941 came to an end, the boats had been prepared and the crews were trained. An operations base was established at Lunna, on the east coast of Shetland – it was isolated, for security and secrecy, and



Lunna today. The farmhouse was the operations center.

had a suitable harbor. The first mission left Lunna on the evening of August 30th with an agent who was to be landed north of Bergen. The boat was the *Aksel*, skippered by August Nærøy. It should have returned no later than the morning of September 3rd, but that day and the next passed with no sign of her. The people at Lunna were greatly concerned that the *Aksel* had been captured, or sunk, or that some other calamity had prevented her return and that the agents and resistance operations around Bergen would



The M/K Aksel conducted the first mission from Lunna.

be compromised. Many lives were at stake. Finally *Aksel* returned to Lunna on the morning of the 6th. It turns out that the passage to Norway was delayed a few hours by bad weather, so the delivery of the agent had to be postponed by a day. When that was accomplished, the crew met with a local contact, and they settled down to enjoy the hospitality of the local people, and in particular, local girls, for two more days before deciding that they really ought to return to Lunna. The return trip was uneventful and the mission was a complete success.

With the early success of the *Aksel*, other missions followed in brisk succession, but the risks were only too real. The first boat to be lost was the *Vita*, which was captured when the Germans traced a party of refugees that she was to pick up. Fortunately, the crew was just arrested and spent the rest of the war as POWs. Other later crews were not so lucky and could expect to be shot if captured.

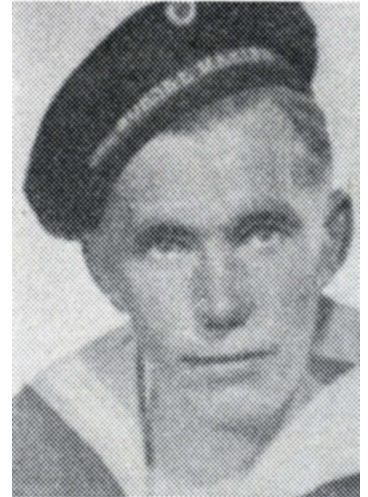
The first casualty of the operation came in late September 1941 when the *Siglaos* made a trip to Bømlo to deliver an agent. The crew of the *Siglaos* included Nils Jensen Nesse, who came from Bømlo [*He may be a relative of mine. BN*]. They docked at Øklandsvåg, and Nesse went to Bremnes to contact the person to whom the agent was to be delivered. The operation was delayed, however, because a dance was in progress in Øklandsvåg and too many people were out and about to safely unload and transport the radio, weapons, and other equipment belonging to the agent. The *Siglaos* was therefore not able to get away in time to clear the coast before dawn as planned and had to stay put for the next day.

During that day arrangements were made to take a group of refugees back to Shetland. With refugees loaded that evening, *Siglaos* got away just before midnight, but the weather was bad and by dawn she was only 50 miles off the coast. A German patrol plane spotted them and attacked. Fortunately, after the third pass, the plane broke off the attack, perhaps because it had been hit by return fire from the crew. Damage to the boat was widespread but she was able to continue back to Shetland. Nesse, who had been at the helm during the attack, was the only casualty

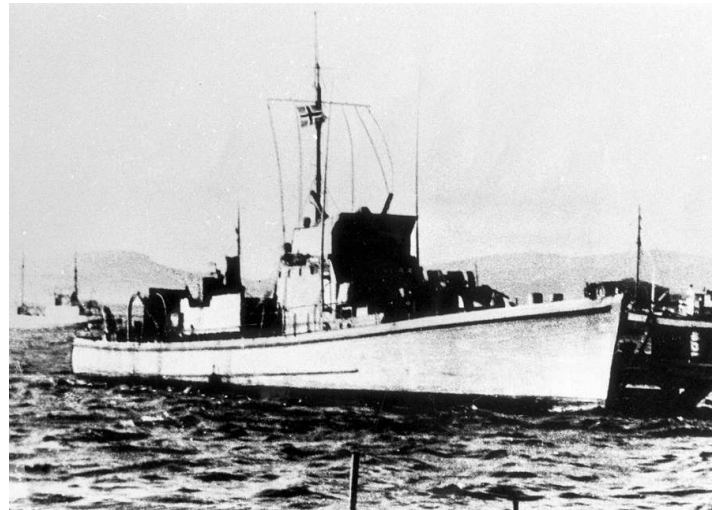
and he died after being struck in the leg and head. He was buried at Lunna, but after the war his body was moved back to Bremnes and is now buried in a churchyard there.

The Shetland Bus continued using fishing boats through spring 1943 to complete a total of 84 missions. During this time ten boats were lost. German action claimed five, one was scuttled, the fate of one is unknown (the *Feiøy*), and three were claimed by the fierce weather, including the *Aksel*, which sank with all hands on December 8, 1942. The casualty toll was grim – out of about 100 men who sailed regularly, 43 lost their lives. Despite the obvious risks, no crew ever hesitated to accept a mission.

Relief came in September 1943 when the U.S. Navy delivered three submarine chasers to the group. The *Hitra*,



Nils Jensen Nesse died aboard the Siglaos



The Vigra in Skalloway harbor

Vigra, and *Hessa* were seaworthy, powerful, well armed, and had a top speed of 22 knots. These new boats completed an additional 114 missions to Norway before the war ended, without suffering any casualties. The lack of casualties partly reflects the capabilities of the new boats, but also the hard lessons learned during the previous two years.

By the end of the war, the Shetland Bus had succeeded in transporting 192 agents and 383 tons of weapons and supplies into Norway, and 73 agents and 373 refugees out of Norway. This activity was critical to maintaining the Norwegian resistance and keeping large numbers of German troops tied up in Norway and unable to participate in the battles raging elsewhere in Europe and

Africa.

Perhaps the most famous of the men serving in the Shetland Bus is Leif Andreas Larsen from Bergen. When the Soviet Union

invaded Finland in November 1939, he joined the Norwegian volunteers to fight with the Finns. He then fought against the Germans when they invaded Norway in 1940. After Norway surrendered, he escaped to England on a fishing boat and joined the Shetland Bus. His exploits are the stuff of legend and he became the most highly decorated allied naval officer of World



Leif Andreas Larsen aka Shetland Larsen

War II, receiving honors from both Norway and Great Britain. He was second in command on the *Nordsjøen* on a minelaying mission when it was wrecked, stranding the crew in Norway. In order to escape, he and the crew "requisitioned" the *Arthur*, "liberated" diesel fuel, and then sailed her back to Lunna. He later commanded the *Arthur* on an unsuccessful attempt to torpedo the German warship *Tirpitz* in Trondheim fjord in October 1942. He had to scuttle *Arthur* after the two "chariot" manned torpedoes being towed broke free and sank just before reaching the point where they were to be deployed. He and his crew escaped to Sweden, but British agent A. B. Evans was captured and later shot. Larsen also was skipper of the *Bergholm*, which was attacked and sunk by German planes on March 23, 1943. He and the crew of seven, most of whom were injured, one fatally, took to the lifeboat and rowed 75 miles back to Norway in four days. They hid out for several weeks, avoiding German search parties, until being rescued by a British motor torpedo boat. In total he made 52 trips to Norway in fishing boats and sub chasers, and was commander of the *Vigra*.

After the war, the crews went back to their peacetime lives. David Howarth married a Shetland girl and opened a shipyard in Scalloway. He died in 1991 at the age of 78. He wrote two dozen books on history, including *The Shetland Bus* and *We Die Alone*, which chronicle the extraordinary activities of the men of the Shetland Bus. Leif Larsen played a major role in organizing the naval branch of the Norwegian home guard. He played himself in the movie *Shetlandsgjengen* (aka *Suicide Mission* in the USA). He was 84 years old when he died in 1990. His statue stands on *Bryggen* in Bergen.

A few of the boats that operated in the Shetland Bus

are still in service, nearly 70 years later. The M/K *Heland* returned to fishing and is now owned by the Sunnmøre Museum in Ålesund. The M/K *Hitra* served in coast guard duty but was decommissioned in 1959. She made her way



The KNM Hitra as she appears today

to Sweden where she was accidentally sunk and abandoned. In 1981 she was rescued and sent back to Norway where she was completely refurbished. *Hitra* is now a museum ship, but remains part of the Norwegian navy and tours the west coast in the summer.



Shetland Bus memorial, Scalloway

Memorials



Shetland Bus monument, Ålesund

and museum displays honoring the Shetland Bus can now be found in Ålesund, Telavåg, Bergen, and Scalloway, among other places.

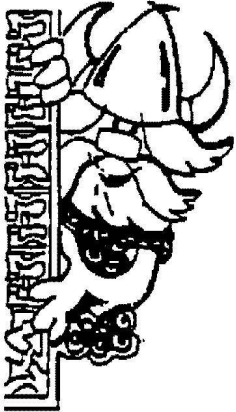
Sources: Howarth, D., *The Shetland Bus*, The Lyons Press, shetlopedia.com/The_Shetland_Bus, shetlandbus.com, Wikipedia, www.warsailors.com/shetlandbus/index.html

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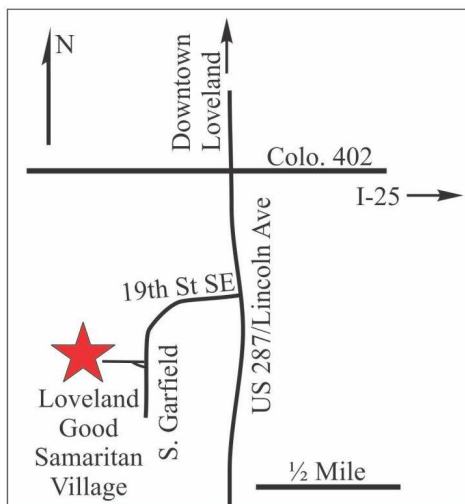


DESEMBER 2011

STEIN FJELL LODGE meets on the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Good Samaritan Society – Loveland Village's West Dining Hall, 2101 S. Garfield Avenue, Loveland, Colorado. Board meetings are held on the third Thursday of every other month at the home of a member. YOU ARE WELCOME TO JOIN US!



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