***Newsletter Service***

**Jan/Feb 2021**

**JANUARY**

**First “Godhouse” dedicated to old Norse gods Unearthed in Norway**

In the village of Ose, Norway, archaeologists from the University Museum of Bergen recently uncovered the remains of an eighth-century “godhouse.” In its day, this structure was dedicated to the worship of the old Norse gods and housed ceremonies such as midsummer or midwinter solstice. This is a particularly special discovery as it is the “first temple of its kind identified in Norway,” according to Smithsonian Magazine. Through digital reconstruction, researchers were able to determine that it resembles similar temples found in southern Sweden and Denmark.

In recent excavations, archaeologists have unearthed animal bones and cooking pits; their theory is that the worshippers prepared the food in offering to Thor, Odin and other Norse gods. These religious displays also doubled as feasts where “you would have a good mood, a lot of eating and a lot of drinking, “ archaeologist Søren Diinhoff explains.

Researchers are still unclear as to what caused the demise of the godhouse, but they hope to uncover the truth as they continue their efforts.

**Article photo for download:** <https://www.dropbox.com/s/73a1n36doxl1n3a/godhouse.jpg?dl=0>

**Dining outdoors this winter? Follow Norway’s lead**

Patio season isn’t just for summer anymore, thanks to the coronavirus pandemic and the ongoing need for social distancing measures. For many North Americans, outdoor dining in cold weather has been a big adjustment—but it’s nothing new for Norwegians, whose passion for *frilufstliv* (outdoor life) translates to an enthusiasm for open-air activities no matter the weather.

Set yourself up for success by incorporating these tried-and-true Norwegian practices:

* **Dress in layers.** Layers trap more air and keep warmth close to your body, while also letting you adjust for changes in weather or activity.
* **Wear lots of wool.** Too scratchy? Merino wool is softer than other varieties and is used in many base layer garments.
* **Keep the wind out.** All that cozy wool can’t do its job with wind whistling through the weave, so make sure you top everything off with a windbreaking layer.
* **Carry a big scarf or shawl.** The bigger the better, and ideally wool or fleece—it can double as a blanket, a head wrap, or whatever you need.
* **Give yourself a buffer.** Sitting directly on a cold surface will drain your body heat in no time. If there’s no cushion, improvise—remember that big scarf we talked about?

Above all, don’t forget to pack your positive attitude and sense of adventure!

**Article photo for download:** [**https://www.dropbox.com/s/mscxwhti5tr519w/outdoors.jpg?dl=0**](https://www.dropbox.com/s/mscxwhti5tr519w/outdoors.jpg?dl=0)

**Colorful Norwegian Phrases**Vivid idioms make language-learning fun and memorable. Try working these into everyday conversation.

**Food-related***Ta for god fisk*
Take for a good fish
Meaning: Accepting someone’s words at face value
 *Å være født bak en brunost*Born behind a brown cheese
**Meaning:** To be a fool

*Å være på bærtur*Be out picking berries
**Meaning:**To have no clue about something / To be way off base
 **Animal expressions** *Bjørnetjeneste*bear service
Meaning: well-intended but awkward help; doing someone a favor with negative consequences; disservice

[*å kjøpe katta i sekken*](https://www.sprakradet.no/svardatabase/sporsmal-og-svar/katta-i-sekken/)
Buy a cat in a bag
Meaning: being taken for a ride; you meant to buy one thing but it turned out to be something else

*Du store alpakka!*You big alpaca!
Meaning: an expression of considerable surprise

**Body parts** *å stå med skjegget i postkassen*Standing with your beard in the mailbox
Meaning: to be in a compromising situation after doing something foolish or cheating

*Å snakke rett fra leveren*Speaking directly from your liver
**Meaning:** speaking plainly without sugar-coating anything

*Å ta beina på nakken*
To put your legs on your neck
**Meaning:** To run away quickly

**Article photo for download:** [**https://www.dropbox.com/s/2qs95ouh0gin1n3/language.jpg?dl=0**](https://www.dropbox.com/s/2qs95ouh0gin1n3/language.jpg?dl=0)

Translation:

**Thorvald Meyer – Oslo filantrop – Motsatt av Scrooge**Grünerløkkas Far. Se på ham. Hatten. Kinnskjegget. Ser han ikke ut som Ebenezer Scrooge? Dette er Thorvald Meyer, som likheten til tross, er gjerrigknarkens rake motsetning. Skjønt denne karen nærmest ble født i en pengebinge, så er det noe som skiller ham fra Dickens' og Barks' søkkrike skruer. Filantropien. Thorvald var mesén for flere kjente kunstnere (Bjørnson, Kielland, Munch, Hamsun OG Vigeland), delfinansierte Nationaltheateret og gav pengegaver til de fattige skuespillerne hver jul.

Når han gikk ut døra, fylte han lommene med mynter. Vel hjemme igjen var han tomhendt, alt var fordelt til de trengende. Thorvald startet det første offentlige badet i Oslo som en gave til byen, gav penger til flere av statuene vi ser idag, initierte skolefrokost, gav bort jord til Pauluskirken og Birkelunden som alltid må forbli en park i følge Meyers klausul. Og utrustet Fram-ekspedisjonen!

Meyer var en finansieringsinstitusjon med tilsynelatende ganske sosialliberale tendenser. Han var også en forretningsmann av rang, som da han kjøpte Grünerløkka billig og utparsellerte den med 40 gangers fortjeneste. Som takk for investeringen fikk han den sjeldne æren av å få en gate oppkalt etter seg mens han levde!

Nøisomhet er Styrke. Det var hans motto. Og handling var hans credo. Han døde 90 år gammel og like før sa han: Det er ingen Sag at et gammelt Menneske gaar bort, naar jeg dør skal det være Fest.

Egentlig tar jeg det tilbake. Han er akkurat som Scrooge. Etter at han møtte The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come.

**Thorvald Meyer – Oslo philanthropist – The Opposite of Scrooge**
Grünerløkka's Father. Look at him. The hat. The mutton chops. Does he not look like Ebenezer Scrooge? This is Thorvald Meyer, who despite the similarity, is the miser’s polar opposite. Although this guy was practically born in the lap of luxury, there is something that separates him from Dickens' and Barks' stinking-rich churls. Philanthropy. Thorvald was the patron of several well-known artists (Bjørnson, Kielland, Munch, Hamsun AND Vigeland), co-financed the National Theater and gave monetary gifts to impoverished actors every Christmas.

When he went out the door, he’d fill his pockets with coins. Then, back at home he was empty-handed; everything was distributed to the needy. Thorvald started the first public bath in Oslo as a gift to the city, gave money toward several of the statues we see today, initiated school breakfasts, gave away land for the Pauluskirken [Paulus Church] and Birkelunden [The Birch Grove—a large urban park] which must always remain a park according to Meyer's clause. And outfitted the [Fridtjof Nansen] Fram expedition!

Meyer was a financial institution with seemingly quite social liberal tendencies. He was also a businessman of rank, as when he bought Grünerløkka cheaply and parceled it out with 40 times the profit. As a thank you for the investment, he got the rare honor of having a street named after him while he was alive!

Thrift is Strength. That was his motto. And action was his credo. He died at the age of 90 and just beforehand, he said: “It is no matter that an old man passes away, when I die there will be a party.”

Actually, I take it back. He's just like Scrooge. After he met The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come.

**Article photo for download:** <https://www.dropbox.com/s/eeddn9fxujehsp4/meyer_thorvald.jpg?dl=0>

Recipe:

**Kransekake (Almond Wreath Cake)**

From *The Norwegian Kitchen*

Cake:

2 1/2 cups (6 dl) finely ground blanched almonds

2 1/2 cups (6 dl) finely gound unblanched almonds

4 1/3 cups (10 dl) sifted confectioner’s sugar (sift first, then measure)

3 egg whites

Icing:

scant 1 cup (2 dl) sifted confectioner’s sugar

1 egg

Wreath cake can be temperamental. Even if we make it in “exactly the same way” each time we bake it, the results may vary from absolute perfection to complete failure. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C). Combine almonds and confectioner’s sugar in a large saucepan. Add the unbeaten egg white and mix to a firm dough. Place the pan over low heat and knead until the dough is so hot that it is almost impossible to handle. Grease the ring pans for a 16-18 ring cake. Spoon the dough into a cookie press or pastry tube with a wide round tip. Press the dough into the rings, pressing the ends together to look as seamless as possible. Bake 12-15 minutes, until dry and firm outside, but still slightly soft inside. Cool slightly, then remove from the pans and cool completely. For the icing, sift the confectioner’s sugar and combine with egg white to make a thick icing. Make a small cone of paper and cut off the tip. Pipe on garlands of icing and stack. Decorate with flags, bonbons or candy.

**Article photo for download:**<https://www.dropbox.com/s/mijd3994sgsdpnx/kransekake_sketch.png?dl=0>

**Keep welcoming new members to our Sons of Norway family in 2021!**

YOU are the reason our newest members love being part of Sons of Norway. Even as COVID restricts face-to-face meetings, please reach out to fellow members with calls, notes or special greetings as the year progresses.

Thank you for being a Sons of Norway member!

**Article photo for download:** [**https://www.dropbox.com/s/pr97lenhwvp2041/maihaugen\_lodge\_1665.jpg?dl=0**](https://www.dropbox.com/s/pr97lenhwvp2041/maihaugen_lodge_1665.jpg?dl=0)

**Protecting your family’s future in the face of uncertainty**

In very uncertain times, life insurance offers you comfort in knowing that your family and love ones are protected from unexpected financial difficulty. Permanent life insurance creates cash value that you can access in times of hardship, so you will always know they have those assets to count on.

Reach out to your Sons of Norway Insurance Professional to make sure your family is protected.

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**Visit the online store for SOFN logo gear**

Go online to [sofn.com/logoshop](https://sofn.com/logoshop) for a selection of Sons of Norway themed items to help you show off your Nordic pride, including T-shirts, socks, bags and other great selections!

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**Foundation scholarships are now open**

The Sons of Norway Foundation is currently accepting scholarship applications for members of all ages. For detailed information about the opportunities available, or to apply online, visit <sofn.com/foundation/scholarships>.

**Article photo for download:** <https://www.dropbox.com/s/wm9zojfz2u5by03/student.jpg?dl=0>

**FEBRUARY**

**Forbidden love kept secret for 9 years**This year marks 53 years since Harald and Sonja were engaged. In recent decades, other royals have married “commoners,” but in the 1950s, this was quite taboo.

Friends introduced them at a party; she was 21, he 22. It would take almost a decade—and the government’s approval—before the determined Harald could propose.
Sonja’s family’s house in Oslo’s Vinderen neighborhood became a refuge for the couple, and her mother agreed to keep quiet about their relationship. In time, word got out and the press began keeping tabs on the Crown Prince’s frequent visits.

The public was worried the monarchy would be in danger, but the heir to the throne was prepared to stake it all for love. He dramatically announced to King Olav that he would never marry another if he could not marry Sonja. Olav V approached the prime minister, who reluctantly approved.

In March 1968 they became engaged, and five months later, Harald and Sonja were married at Oslo Cathedral.

**Article photo for download:** <https://www.dropbox.com/s/l8abxvsit1mnx8l/harald_v_sonja_wedding.png?dl=0>

**The Origins of Sons of Norway**

On January 16, Sons of Norway celebrates its 126th anniversary. The organization was started in 1895 by a group of Norwegian immigrants living in Minneapolis, Minnesota. They gathered together in the midst of a deep economic depression to create an organization for their fellow Norwegian-Americans to support one another and to maintain their ties to “the old country.”

One thing that the founding members focused on at their first meetings back in 1895 was what to call their new organization. After briefly considering “Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson,” after the Norwegian nationalist author, it came down to a vote between “Sønner av Norge” (Sons of Norway) and “Brødre av Norge” (Brothers of Norway). By a vote of 14 to 2, the name we use today won.

The name was inspired by a line from a famous song by Eskild Pedersen: *Sønner av Norge, det eldgamle rike, Synger til harpens den festlige klang.* This translates to: Sons of Norway, the ancient kingdom, Sing to the harps with festive sound.

**Norway funds worldwide rainforest mapping**

In an effort to help curb global deforestation, the Norwegian government is funding a groundbreaking initiative to map the world’s tropical forests in tree-by-tree detail, using high-definition satellite imagery. The resulting map, which spans 64 countries and will be updated monthly, is freely available worldwide.

In the past, high-resolution images were unavailable for many forested areas, or were very expensive to obtain if they were. “So, we’ve decided to foot the bill for the whole world, basically,” Norway’s Minister of Climate and Environment, Sveinung Rotevatn, told BBC News.

The $44 million project was funded by the Norwegian government’s International Climate and Forests Initiative (NICFI). It will help small organizations and local communities to detect and address illegal deforestation more quickly and effectively, and will assist them in holding the responsible parties accountable. The map will also be valuable to scientists and researchers throughout the world, and will help businesses to conduct their due diligence when dealing in areas with deforestation concerns.

**Article photo for download:**

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/udjzonry552dzpc/rainforest.jpg?dl=0>

# Det er lettere å huske hvor du spiste en sjokoladekake enn en agurk

### Jo mer fett og sukker maten inneholder, jo lettere husker du den.

Blir du glad når du går forbi en kafé hvor det dufter deilig av kanelboller og kaker?

Husker du veldig godt hvor nettopp denne kaféen er hen, når du kommer tilbake til den samme gata?

Det er det god grunn til, ifølge nederlandske forskere.

## Tomater og karameller

Forskerne ba 500 mennesker om å gå rundt i et rom der det var åtte forskjellige matstasjoner.

På stasjonene har de plassert ulike typer mat: eple, melon, peanøtter, sjokoladekake, potetgull, agurk, tomat og karameller.

Deltakerne fikk ikke beskjed om at de skulle huske hvor de forskjellige matvarene lå.

De skulle bare se, smake og lukte på maten.

## Fikk et kartEtterpå fikk de et kart. Så ble de bedt om å markere hvor på kartet de fant de forskjellige matvarene.

Forsøket viste noe spennende. Alle deltakerne var nemlig mye flinkere til å huske hvor kakene, peanøttene og den maten med mest kalorier lå. Tomatene og agurkene glemte de lettere.

## Viktig for oss å huske hvor kaloriene er

Vi mennesker og dyr har et indre kart i hjernen som hjelper oss å finne fram til steder og ting.

En av de viktigste tingene vi må huske, er hvor vi kan finne mat. Enten det er i skapet på kjøkkenet, ute på byen eller ute på savannen. Forskerne tror at evnen til å finne mat som inneholder mye kalorier, er noe vi har fått med oss fra våre tidlige forfedre.

For de første menneskene var det svært viktig å huske hvor de kunne finne mat som ga dem mye energi. Da ble det lettere å overleve i naturen.

**It's easier to remember where you’ve eaten chocolate cake than cucumber**

The more fat and sugar your food contains, the easier you will remember it.

Do you become happy when you walk past a café where it smells deliciously like cinnamon buns and cakes? Do you easily remember where this café is located, when you return to the same street?

There is a good reason for this, according to Dutch researchers.

**Tomatoes and caramels**

Researchers asked 500 people to walk around a room where there were eight different food stations.

At the stations, they placed different types of food: apple, melon, peanuts, chocolate cake, potato chips, cucumber, tomato and caramels. The participants were not told to remember where the different foods were. They just had to see, taste and smell the food.

**Received a map**

Afterwards they received a map. Then they were asked to mark on the map where they’d found the different foods. The experiment showed something exciting. All the participants were much better at remembering where the cakes, peanuts and the food with the most calories were. The tomatoes and cucumbers they forgot more easily.

**Important for us to remember where the calories are**

We humans and animals have an inner map in our brains that helps us find places and things.

One of the most important things to remember is where to find food. Whether it's in the kitchen cupboard, out on the town or out on the savannah. Researchers believe that the ability to find foods that are high in calories is something we inherited from our early ancestors. For the first humans, it was very important to remember where they could find food that gave them a lot of energy. Then it became easier to survive in nature.

Source:[**https://ung.forskning.no/hjernen/det-er-lettere-a-huske-hvor-du-spiste-en-sjokoladekake-enn-en-agurk/1759925**](https://ung.forskning.no/hjernen/det-er-lettere-a-huske-hvor-du-spiste-en-sjokoladekake-enn-en-agurk/1759925)

**Article photo for download:** <https://www.dropbox.com/s/5ipko2i76echcfc/chocolate-cake.jpg?dl=0>

**Norwegian Gold**

These rich Norwegian Gold cupcakes (or cake!) with chocolate sour cream ganache frosting are perfect for special occasions. Makes 20 cupcakes or one 10-inch cake.

**Ingredients**

**For the cake**

1 2/3 cups (190 grams) sifted all-purpose flour

1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter

5 large eggs

1 1/2 cups (300 grams) sugar

1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder

1/4 teaspoon fine sea salt

1/4 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1/4 teaspoon pure almond extract

**For the chocolate sour cream ganache frosting**

10 ounces of your favorite semi-sweet chocolate or chocolate chips

1 cup sour cream

Pinch of fine sea salt

**Instructions**

**For the cake or cupcakes**

Preheat the oven to 325° F for cake or 375° F for cupcakes. Grease the bottom of a 10-inch tube or bundt pan, or line two cupcake pans with a total of 20 paper liners. Have all ingredients at room temperature. Beat flour and butter together for five minutes. Add eggs one at a time, beating after each addition. Add sugar, baking powder, salt and vanilla and almond extracts. Beat for two minutes more. For a cake, bake for about one hour, checking after fifty minutes. For cupcakes, bake for 20-25 minutes. Cool in pan for 10 minutes and then completely on a rack before frosting.

**For the frosting**

When ready to frost cake or cupcakes, heat chocolate in a double-boiler until just melted. Stir until smooth, then stir in sour cream and salt. Spread onto completely cooled cake or cupcakes and top with sprinkles or other decorations if you like. Frosting will set over time.

Recipe by Carolyn Gratzer Cope, featured on UmamiGirl.com

**2021 Member Recruitment Challenge**

Please watch for news about the 2021 recruitment campaign and invite family and friends to join us in exploring Nordic heritage and culture. The limited edition 2021 Recruiter Pin will feature a compass image. It will be available while supplies last, sent directly to members after they have recruited at least one new member and provided their member number on the new member enrollment form.

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**Peace of Mind in Volatile Times**

In times like these, it may feel like nothing is certain, and that volatility is just a way of life for your finances. Give yourself the peace of mind of a fixed rate of return and rest easy knowing that a portion of your assets are protected. Reach out to your Sons of Norway Insurance Professional to see if putting some of your assets in a fixed annuity is right for you and your family.

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**Reminder: Foundation scholarship applications due March 15!**

Applications are due March 15 for domestic scholarships through the Sons of Norway Foundation. These opportunities are available to members of all ages. For detailed information, or to apply online, visit <sofn.com/foundation/scholarships>.

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