

Restauration Lodge #548

May 2008

www.sofn-cedarrapids.org

Volume XXXII Number 5

The May social meeting will be
Tuesday, May 13, 2008

6:00 pm

Our Savior's Lutheran Church
3634 1st Avenue NE
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52403

Our Syttende Mai Dinner will be held on our regular meeting night, May 13 at Our Savior's Lutheran Church. The dinner will again be catered by A Taste Above. Entrees will include pork loin and baked cod. Members are asked to bring Norwegian desserts to share. Tickets are \$20. Please contact Ann Larson (373-1891) for reservations. Tickets must be purchased no later than May 6. Social Hour begins at 6:00 with dinner at 6:30. The program will be a drama, Mrs. Olson's Boarding House, a true immigrant drama written by Carolyn Rushton. Mark your calendars now and plan to attend this special dinner.

President McCormick's Corner

I'll not say anything about the weather this month. It usually changes by the time you get the newsletter. Enjoyed the program by Øyvind Gulliksen last month. Someday, I will go to Decorah and do some geneology searching in the Decorah Posten. May find some of my relatives that lived at Big Canoe in the paper.

Thanks to Cheryl Zapf for continuing to be our secretary until the end of the year. Hopefully, by then we will have a replacement.

We will again have an information booth at the Linn County Fair, but just for 1 day and it will be inside an exhibit building. Anyone who would like to work in the

booth for a couple of hours please let me know.

The next board meeting will be held on May 20th at my house. See you at our 17th May celebration on May 13th.

Gift from June Tow's Estate

Our lodge received a gift from the estate of June Tow to be used for scholarships to Skogfjorden. She died 30 March 2007. June was very proud of her Norwegian heritage, and this generous gift to honor her memory is greatly appreciated. June joined the Lodge in December of 1975 and attended meetings faithfully until her health prevented her from doing so. Our members remember her fondly!

"How will anyone ever know who you are unless you write?"

(Garrison Keillor) The literature about the early Norwegian immigrants is abundant and rich in describing the pioneers – those hardy folks, who came as families or in groups of friends and neighbors, and who tamed the prairies and the frontiers of America to set up farmsteads. But what of those immigrants who came later and alone?

We don't often hear their stories, but they are an important aspect of understanding our cultural heritage, nevertheless. *Mrs. Olson's Boarding House* is a true story about Hans, a 19-year-old who came to America, alone, in 1882 and ended up in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Seven years ago, when I started searching for my roots, all of my family history had been lost except for a farm name in the Hallingdal valley and a rumor that some ancestors came from Vik, Sogn og Fjordane, as well as from Nordland, a vast region of northern Norway. An old family

friend, Travis Cleveland, put me in touch with a genealogist in Hallingdal, Steinar Vissebraten. He had a lot of information to share. But the other branches of my family were still a mystery.

Undaunted, I began reading microfilms of old newspapers looking for obituaries and other information. Then I searched American and Norwegian census records and poured over microfilms of American and Norwegian church records. I also read Norwegian Bygdeboker (aided immensely by having taken the Norwegian language class given by Ann Gesme, by visits to the Norwegian American Genealogical Center and Naeseth Library in Madison, Wisconsin, and by joining five bygdelags.)

As a result of this research, I managed to trace branches of my family tree to the far north region of Troms as well as Hemsedal, Vik, and the region of Solør in south-east Norway. Through telephone and e-mail conversations with relatives in Troms, I learned I had a "cousin" in Santa Barbara, California, whose grandfather, Hans, had left a hand-written account of some of his life experiences, which he titled simply, "My Story." This account lay in the bottom of his daughter's trunk for nearly 60 years without anyone knowing of it until her death at age 98. It was like discovering a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow!

This account, along with the discovery of an old diary written by Hans' daughter, as well as those telephone conversations with relatives living on the island of Senja in Troms, kept percolating in my mind until I decided to merge them into a play. That was how *Mrs. Olson's Boarding House* came to be written. By Carolyn Rushton

Matlyst Monthly
Oatmeal Fruit Soup
Ingredients:
1/3 cup oatmeal
1 quart water
prunes

Mrs. Olson's Boarding House

Cast:

Mrs. Olson	Cynthia Monroe
Hans	Bob Thorkildson
Sophia	Sarah Gunderson
Ingrid	Sandra VanAmburg
Thor	Wally Sundet
Anders	David Christ
Ole	Ding Sather

Mrs. Olson, in *Mrs. Olson's Boarding House*, does her level best to run a good, clean establishment with impeccable Norwegian values. For the most part she succeeds, but it is not an easy task in the midst of the "roaring twenties" with three Norwegian-born, single boarders, Thor, Anders and Ole, who constantly antagonize her with their singing of the more suggestive songs of the era. Love-sick Ole requires constant watching since he can't keep his eyes off the girls – her young daughter, Sophia, and Ingrid, the hired girl from Sweden, whose entire life seems to revolve around peeling potatoes and dreaming of romance.

A new boarder, Hans, comes to live with them and he provides a new focus as they all grill him on his past. He is more to Mrs. Olson's liking, since he seems more serious, has recently lost his wife and all his grown children have left Minneapolis to seek their fortunes elsewhere. Hans is not without blemish, but he wins her over with his life story, his good manners and his fervent religious beliefs.

Hans is based on a real person, but the rest of the characters are figments of the imagination. We hope you will come and enjoy an evening of music and drama and meet the residents of *Mrs. Olson's Boarding House*.

2 tbsp. Sugar
up to 1/3 cup berry juice concentrate
Cook half the allotted water with the oatmeal for 5 minutes over medium heat. Simmer the prunes and sugar in the remaining water for five minutes. Combine and cool before serving.

Newsletter Deadline: May 27, 2008

From the Cultural Director

Interest Survey - Members have been surveyed to learn of their special interests. Now we need to find out who will actively participate if a class is offered. Classes and/or study groups listed below will be organized depending on the interest level shown, availability of place to meet, instructors, etc.

Wood Carving Class - Joe Reed has volunteered to teach chip carving in the fall. Several people indicated an interest in learning this folk art; however, a place is needed to hold classes in the fall. Contact Mary Durspek marym53@mchsi.com if you are interested.

Language and Culture Class - Class will begin in the fall – but sign up now.

Book Club - Ten members signed up for this. We plan to meet once a month on Wednesday afternoons. The initial organizational meeting will be held this summer to decide on reading lists, etc.

Genealogy - A day-long “Genealogy Event” is anticipated. The event would be on a Saturday. Contact the Cultural Director if you are interested in participating in this or another sort of genealogy group.

Cooking and Baking Norwegian Goodies Classes will be offered on weekday afternoons or evenings, or on Saturdays. Please specify the food item and a time and place will be set up for the class.

Rosemaling - For top quality instruction in rosemaling, you are encouraged to study in Decorah with the Masters! The Vesterheim class schedule for 2008 is available from your Cultural Director. Most of the classes are conducted in summer and early fall, with a few exceptions. Now is the time to register for classes as some of them are already filled for this season.

NORWEGIAN FIDDLE MUSIC AND DANCE

Anyone interested in Norwegian Fiddle Music and Dance may attend the annual workshop at Folklore Village in Dodgeville, WI July 17-20. For more information check the web site: <http://www.hfaa.org/> .



Tom Næsse and guest speaker Øyvind Gulliksen, who spoke on the Decorah Posten newspaper. Tom and wife Ingrid have transferred into our lodge recently.



Barbara and Alan Erickson, new lodge members and now Co- Membership Secretaries. (Pardon the faulty picture- need a new camera!)

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

May 13 Syttende Mai Celebration
May 20 Board Meeting

Elected Officers:

President-Lois McCormick	377-2890
Vice President-Dean Gesme	362-6910
Counselor-Dean Gesme	362-6910
Secretary -Cheryl Zapf	363-5326
Treasurer-Ding Sather	393-7310
Assistant Treasurer-Dean Gesme	362-6910
Membership Secretary-Alan and Barbara Erickson	377-1707
Cultural director-Ann Gesme	362-6910
Social directors- Ardy Erickson	365-4926
Ann Larson	373-1891

Sons of Norway representative:

David Tesdahl	319-286-9447
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Lodge web site:

www.sofn-cedarrapids.org	
web master- Robert Thorkildson	319-721-9902

Appointed Officers:

Auditors:	
Verl Lekwa	319-728-2847
Ruth Christ	319-351-7717
Bob Thorkildson	319-721-9902
Foundation-Wally Sundet	393-6971
Greeters-Sharon Mow	366-3202
Ruth Berger	365-4979
Historian-Paula Schulte	396-1076
Language Facilitator:	
Ann Gesme	362-6910
Librarian-Sarah Eness Gunderson	319-330-3153
Marshalls-Lloyd Holecek	377-4438
David Johansen	319-338-0414
Musicians-Carolyn Rushton	319-351-8604
Newsletter Editors-Bill/Mary Durspek	377-4480
Newsletter Mailer- Lois McCormick	377-2890
Publicity-Sandra Van Amburg	223-5331
Scholarship-Ruth Christ	319-351-7717
Sports/Recreation/Youth-Verl Lekwa	319-728-2847
Sunshine-Cheryl Zapf	363-5326
Trustee	
Paula Schulte	396-1076

Sons of Norway
Restauration Lodge #548
2119 Lincolnshire Dr SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52403-1606