

LAFT HUS NEWS

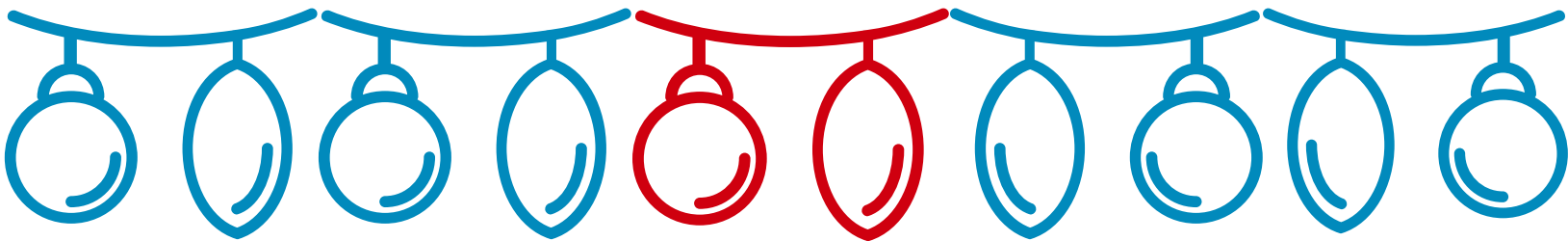
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Editor:
A. Granson



Norwegian Laft Hus Society
4402 – 47 Avenue, Red Deer, Alberta T4N 6T4
403-347-2055 norwegianlafthus@gmail.com
www.norwegianlafthussociety.ca

Don't forget to pay membership fees for 2023. You can do this in person at the Laft Hus, by mailing a cheque to the address above, or by phone (403-347-2055) with your credit card. Keep in mind that we are a non-profit organization and donations are also welcome! The Laft Hus website has a DONATE button that redirects to Canada Helps and is very easy to use!

The members Christmas party is Dec. 11th at the Pioneer Lodge! Please RSVP by Dec. 7th with the \$5 cost and tell us what food you are bringing.



Thank you to the City of Red Deer for a grant in 2023, 2024, and 2025 for the “Expanding Cultural Programming” project.

PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

Arden Neustaedter hosted a beading class that was well attended!

We have two very exciting classes happening this weekend! You can still phone or email us if you would like to attend.

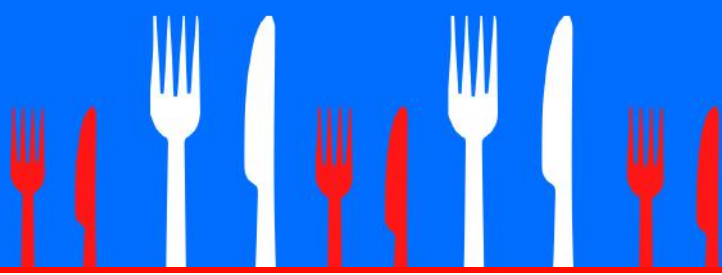


Learn to Make Lutefisk

Dec. 3rd
11am-3pm
\$25



Lutefisk is a fish dish traditionally served in Norway and other parts of Scandinavia around Christmas time.





Christmas Craft

Come knit a beautiful Christmas ball in a variety of patterns. You should be able to knit with double pointed needles. You need to bring the following items:

- 5 3.75 mm dpn
- 3 mm crochet hook
- tapestry needle.

The yarn and fill will be supplied.



Dec. 4th
1pm-5pm
\$45/person

Details have not been finalized, but we will have a class in January on how to knit headbands taught by a lady from Finland!

BAKING DAYS

Thank you to everyone that came out to help with the baking days! Many hands make light work!



New member, Jim Orr, even got flour on his nose!



New member, Brianna Kehler, has helped us a lot!



Gonzalo Franco is always willing to help out!



Edie Madden all dressed up for Halloween!



Syneva Baltimore is the chief ball maker!



Christine Finlayson, Anita Dupen, and Donna Polutnik₃ rolling up a storm!

Betty Wulff Memorial



Pictured here at the Celebration of life for Betty is Stan Wulff with his great-granddaughter. She wanted to wear a Bunad so Julie Macrae had sewn one that just fit her and made her very happy!

Madison and Jamie, the two granddaughters who took care of Betty, also wanted to wear Bunads and they were allowed to use two from the Laft Hus, which made them very happy.

As you are likely aware, our founding mother, Betty Wulff, passed away at the end of October. What you may not know is that in lieu of flowers, Betty requested donations be made to the Laft Hus. We received many kind donations from those who knew Betty.



Aquavit: "The Water of Life"

Why is it that the drink of a country often goes best with the native food? The rich specialties of Norway-all the smoky, salty things, the pungent cheese, the cream-laden salads and even the sweet-tasting crabs and lobster- have their complement in aquavit "the water of life." Tipped quickly out of the glass into the mouth and swallowed, it has been likened to a flaming sword. Jolting but delicious, it makes the brain smile, provides appetite and helps bind miscellaneous flavours together. And drunk as it is with rich, heavy food, it has the further advantage of being an aid to digestion.

Not the least wonderful thing about aquavit is its variety, In Canada and the U.S., when it is served at all, the brand most often used is the Danish Aalborg Taffel Akvavit with its distinctive caraway flavour. But this is only one of the many types of aquavit available in Norway or in Scandinavia. These aquavits range in flavour from the all but tasteless through modulations of caraway and other herbs and spices to mouth-surprising infusions of purslane and bitter wormwood.

Like whiskey, aquavit can have different degrees of maturity. Made from potato or grain spirits, water and flavouring agents, it may be consumed young, but when left to age in oak casks, it will not only begin to glow with the golden tint of light bourbon, but even to taste like it. Although aquavit is normally drunk Arctic-cold, a really old bottle can be offered at room temperature and consumed gently, a few all appreciative sips at a time.

The Norwegian Linie Aquavit has been stored in oak casks and loaded on ships which cross the equator four times, which everone claims enhances the aging process.

The important thing to remember about aquavit is that it is meant to go with food, with the Norwegian smorgasbord in particular, It enhances cold dishes like herring and shrimp, and a few hot ones like eel, boiled cod and pea soup. Above all, it is the perfect accompaniment to Scandinavian cheeses.

Another great beverage of Norway is their beer. One famous one is called "Rignes," and is served, after the aquavit, as a beverage to accompany the meal.

The chilled aquavit is taken first, It leaves a delicious flavour in the mouth and cuts a cool trail all the way down the throat until it reaches the stomach, where it glows warmly. Its taste, often reflecting those of the herbs used to flavour it, is an inducement rather than a deterrent to dining.

It stimulates the taste buds, and sets the mouth to watering. But since hunger and thirst usually go together where so many salty, spicy things are eaten, beer standing next to the emptied aquavit glass - is most welcome at the meal.

It should be emphasized that the aquavit must be served cold. A dramatic touch may be added by freezing the aquavit bottle in a block of ice. Freezing the bottle in ice is easy in our modern freezers. Put the bottle into an ice cream pail, or small can, add water to as high as you wish then put it in the freezer for a few hours. The block of ice with the bottle encased in it can be removed by dipping the can into hot water for moment.

One pleasant aspect of drinking and feasting in Norway is the ritual of the "skoal" - a word from Old Norse, originally meaning "bowl" and now "toast" or "health." During the middle ages, the ritual of the "skoal" involved passing the drinking vessel - usually a large, richly carved wooden bowl, from person to person with a blessing and a warm clasp of the hand. This was simplified during the Renaissance by providing drinking vessels for all guests, and with these, they toasted each other simultaneously.

Learning to "skoal" is easy, and it is well worth learning - it adds considerably charm to dining in the Scandinavian manner and assures that an evening will be a success by bringing the guests into visual and verbal contact with each other right away. All that is required is a drink in the hand and a cooperative partner. The proposer of the toast engages the eye of the person being tasted, and "skoal" is said. A slight bow of the head and a twinkle of the eye - and the aquavit is drained in one gulp. (If the drink is wine, just a sip is taken.) Just before the glass is put back on the table, the eyes meet again and there is another friendly nod.

We have a copy of a recipe from Joanne Lynch, for making your own aquavit, using a bottle of vodka and flavouring it with the necessary various spices to resemble the Norwegian "water of life."

Betty Wulff wrote the above article in
November of 2008 and much of the
information she used was taken from the
Laft Hus library's Time/Life book titled:
"The Cooking of Scandinavia."

Betty's Norwegian 'Hartshorn' Cookies

2 cups - sugar
2 cups - butter (can use margarine but butter seems better)
3 cups - flour
1 cup - flaked coconut
1 teaspoon - baking ammonia (called "Hornsalt" in Norway) I bought this at Nutters in Red Deer but bought the first two bottles in a grocery store in Norway.

Mix all together and let it rest for at least 10 minutes.
Roll into small balls whatever size you like, mine were a bit bigger than walnuts. They spread out a lot so allow space between them on the cookie sheets.
Bake 325 degrees for about 15 to 20 minutes.
Like all cookies, they cool and crisp up fast.
You may burn or wreck or a few, like a lot of cookies, until you get the temperature and time down pat.
Good Luck! Nov. 23rd, 2016 - from Betty Wulff, Red Deer.

Christine Finlayson made some of these cookies for Betty's Celebration of Life as well as for the Craft and Bake Sale to honor Betty.

Mock Aquavit

2 teaspoons - caraway seeds
1 teaspoon - fennel seeds
2 - star anise
1 tablespoon - coriander seeds
1 - whole clove
1 - one inch (2.5 cm) cinnamon stick (optional)
2 teaspoons - cumin seeds (optional)
1 - one quart (1 litre) bottle potato vodka



Add the spices to the vodka bottle and cover tightly. Let stand for 2 or 3 weeks, depending on how strong you want the aquavit to be. Shake the bottle every once in a while.

When the aquavit has reached the desired intensity of flavour, strain and discard the solids. Return the finished aquavit to the bottle.

Craft and Bake Sale

A very big TUSEN TAKK (a thousand thanks) to everyone who helped with the baking days and everything else that helped to make this sale possible! This year's Craft and Bake Sale was another great success.



Member Highlight



The Granson Family

Hello! You may have seen and met me around the Laft Hus this summer and fall. My name is Alida Granson and I was born in Red Deer in 2000. I grew up on a farm outside of Bluffton, AB with my parents and my older brother. My older brother and his wife live in southern Manitoba now!

I was always interested in cultures and travelling and when I graduated high school, I did not know what I wanted to do until I saw that the Augustana campus of the University of Alberta had a degree in Modern Languages. The Modern Languages degree required me to pick two languages to study and I chose German and Norwegian. Dr. Ingrid Urberg was my primary professor for the Norwegian part of my degree. I chose these languages and cultures because they were in my ancestry. My father, Leonard (Len) Granson, grew up in Coaldale, AB with his two older brothers. His parents were German/Ukrainian immigrants that travelled through Europe to get away from World War II and finally settled in Alberta. My mother, Diane Granson (nee Dwyer), grew up near Pincher Creek, AB with her 4 older siblings. Her grandparents were immigrants from Norway that came to the northern United States. Her mother's maiden name was Haugen. Her grandparents moved to southern Alberta. While there is not much information on where her relatives came from, we are fairly certain they came from the Lillehammer area.

Last year I was able to spend a semester in a town called Bø in the Telemark region of Norway. I took classes in Norwegian literature and Norwegian culture and language. While I was there, I also got the chance to visit different Norwegian cities. For the reading week break, I went to northern Norway. I was able to see the Sami parliament in Karasjok and stayed with a nice couple in Kautokeino. I learned so much about Sami culture! I also had the opportunity to go to Stavanger and hike up Preikestolen (Pulpit Rock).



The group that I got to hike with up Preikestolen. There are people from Canada, Poland, and some native Norwegians that I met at school!

Norwegian culture has been interesting to me ever since I found that I have Norwegian ancestry. I am very fortunate to have had all of these experiences and to have an opportunity to work in my desired field. I look forward to continuing to keep the Laft Hus going!

-Alida Granson: Public Programming Coordinator



Me on top of Preikestolen



This is a sign from Kautokeino that has Norwegian and Sami language on it. Sami is one of three of the official written languages in Norway! There are different dialects of Sami as well. This sign is in Northern Sami.



L to R: Leonard, Diane, Alida, Matthew, and Tara Granson

Butikk



This cute dress and pinafore is now for sale in the Butikk!

We also have these new beautiful Viking necklaces, as well as a good selection of new books. There is Viking Myth books, Norwegian family history books, and many more!



There are MANY other nice items for Christmas gifts. Please support the Laft Hus and get your Christmas shopping done here! We also have gift certificates.

VELKOMMEN (welcome) to our newest advertiser: Sons of Norway

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