



Midnight Sun



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Norwegian Coastal Highway Project



Heather Quale Goranson

My name is Heather Quale Goranson, Honorary Consul to Norway for Saskatchewan.

With Covid-19, it has not been possible to get together over the past year for any of our typical gatherings. I for one miss that and look forward to a time when we are all vaccinated and able to meet in person again.

However, I thought you might appreciate reading about one of the largest infrastructure projects in Norwegian history, the

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new Coastal Highway Project. This project will upgrade the Norwegian portion of the E39 coastal highway. The E39 highway begins in Aalborg, Denmark. Travellers head north to Hirtshals, Denmark where they go by ferry on to Kristiansand, Norway. The highway then follows up the south and west coasts of Norway to end in Klett, just south of Trondheim. The journey takes the traveller through some of the more famous cities in Norway. Stavanger is one of Norway's oldest cities, emerging in the twelfth century. Today it is known as the city that supports the oil and gas industry in Norway. Bergen, known as the Gateway to the Fjords of Norway, is the second largest city in Norway and

was founded in approximately 1070. It has a diversified economy based on fishing, shipbuilding and associated industries. It is famous for its universities and museums. The highway ends near Trondheim. Trondheim is home to Norway's largest university, the Norwegian University of Science and Technology.

While it is a beautiful drive along the coast, past the famous Norwegian fjords, many of these crossings are by ferry, greatly extending the time period for the tour north. It is around 1100 kilometers long and takes approximately 21 hours to traverse including 7 different ferry connections. The new Coastal Highway project will be replacing the ferry crossings with combinations of tunnels and

bridges to make travel much more efficient, truly opening up the western regions of the country. The project has been broken into 7 sub-projects. For example, the Rogfast tunnel will be the world's longest and deepest road tunnel and is planned to open in 2026. Some of the fjord crossings are challenging the current engineering capabilities and are currently being investigated. The project is estimated to require an investment of 47 billion dollars and take approximately 30 years to complete.

For more information, please refer to the map below and the link to a youtube video highlighting the project and the challenges to completing the project.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HCT-FurFVLO>

President's Message

A hearty congratulations to you on making it through the winter. The days are getting longer, the sun feels warmer, and snow is disappearing, all welcome signs of spring. And now, vaccinations are happening, giving us all hope, hope that we will be able to once again enjoy the simple pleasures that we have been missing for over a year now. There is a lot to catch up on.

One of the things I have enjoyed this winter is following the adventures of Sunniva Sorby and Hilda Falun Strom. They are 2 female polar explorers who, with their husky Ettra, are living in a tiny trapper's cabin on Svalbard, Norway. Sunniva is a native of British Columbia. Hilde is a native of Norway. They

are engaging in a conservation project named, "Hearts in the Ice", managing 7 climate change projects for various organizations and companies. Their blog is filled with amazing accounts of how they manage the blizzards, the many encounters with polar bears, the lack of electricity, running water or indoor plumbing. When I have felt cold and isolated this winter, reading their blog puts things in perspective. (Their blog can be found at: <https://twitter.com/heartsintheice>)

They have a lot of wisdom to share. They advocate resource responsibility and suggest people stop checking off bucket lists. Transformational experiences, they say, don't need to happen at the other end of the world but they

can happen in one's back yard. That's good because it looks like we will have lots of opportunity to enjoy our back yards and local parks this summer.

It is too soon to plan, but I live in hope that we can hold a gathering in Wascana Park this summer, even if it is a "bring your own coffee" event. (I have let my dog know that there could be a time when she will be left alone at home for a couple of hours.) We will need to plan an annual meeting this summer. I hope we can do so in person rather than virtually. Time will tell.

Here is wishing you all health and happiness this Easter season. In the coming months, may we all get immunized and continue to stay safe from this virus.

Linda Wacker

Finland Proves the Value of Social Safety Nets



Chad Eggerman

In my role as Honorary Consul of Finland in Saskatchewan and Northwest Territories, I bring as warm as possible greetings from Finland during this very challenging time for all. The pandemic has put additional significant time and monetary pressures on many people over the past year – mainly the most vulnerable in society. Fortunately, for the most vulnerable in Finland, there was a well-developed and effective social safety net in place before the pandemic to ensure that the most vulnerable do not

fall through the cracks during this time.

Finland started building its social safety net in a serious way in the 1970's and, unlike other countries, has remained steadfast and committed to keeping that social safety net in place. Finland has also tried to innovate with their social safety net and experimented with providing the most vulnerable in Finnish society with a basic living wage, without having to engage in traditional paid labour. So there is a long history of society at large taking responsibility to protect the most vulnerable in Finnish society. This cultural value has served Finland well during the pandemic.

Finland is also well known for their innovative and world-leading education system. In Finland, many children eat lunches (and sometimes breakfasts as well) at schools without a fee. This particular feature has been very useful during the pandemic where food security for the most

vulnerable is an issue. The schools have largely remained open in Finland during the pandemic and so the most vulnerable children have always had access to good and healthy meals.

The elderly in Finland were identified very early in the pandemic as a group which is particularly vulnerable and was, and continues to be, the focus of certain measures to contain the virus. Although these measures have been difficult on the elderly, the Finnish government has put in place supports for the elderly to prevent loneliness, depression and other mental health issues.

Fortunately for Finland, Canada and the rest of the world, vaccinations that are happening now are a very welcome light at the end of the tunnel. If there are lessons to be learned for Canada, the example of Finland tells us not to take the public supports in place for the most vulnerable for granted.

Hope “Springs” Eternal

Andrea Ashton

It's been just a little over twelve months since this pandemic first began and Canadians experienced their “first” lockdown since the Spanish Flu of 1918. One year later we are experiencing that lockdown again, but with a vaccine for all of us in clear sight, we all have reason to be optimistic. On that note, I am reminded of the beauty of spring. Trees blooming, birds singing and building nests,

people emerging from their homes and setting off on foot or bikes, and flowers adding color to the spaces that were just white only moments ago. Thanks to those of you who graciously shared photos of their gardens to remind us of the beauty that awaits us all.

It Must Be Spring

by May Fern

Hush, can you hear it?
The rustling in the grass,

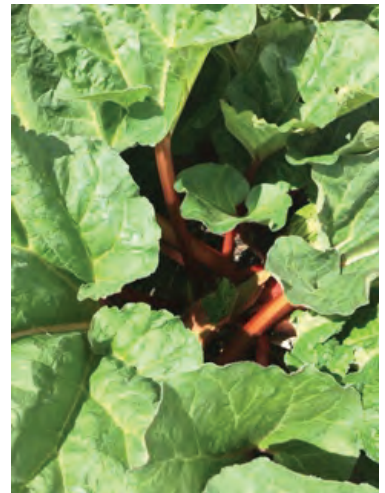
Bringing you the welcome news that
Winter's day is past.
Soft, can you feel it?
The warm caressing breeze,
Telling you the sticky buds
Are bursting on the trees.
Look, can you see them?
The primrose in the lane.
Now you must believe it -
Spring is here again.

🌿 From the Garden of Dianne and Greg Swanson 🌿



*“You can cut all
the flowers but you
cannot keep Spring from
coming.”*

Pablo Neruda



🌿 From the Garden of Ernie and Linda Wacker 🌿



This is a picture from Ernie’s weedless garden. The plant is Showy Stonecrop or Showy Sedum. It could fill the entire space if it isn’t regularly and ruthlessly pruned back.

We think the goddess is Aphrodite. She is a goddess of beauty, love, and desire. She has the power to ignite love and desire among gods, mortals, and even birds and beast. (We have only seen evidence of this among the visiting rabbits.)

🌸 From the Garden of Denise and Kelly Nelson 🌸



*"It is spring again.
The earth is like a
child that knows
poems by heart."*

Rainer Maria Rilke

Easter in Norway

by Kari Mitchell

Norwegians are a funny people... After five months or so of cold, dark snowy winter - comes spring with bare ground, buds on the trees and flowers peeping up between dry leaves of grass, and we scramble to a hytte (cabin) or a hotel in the mountains with skis, sun screen and 'Kvikklunsj' to make sure we get the most out of the last scraps of the cold season!



Kvikklunsj – a must

The fact is that we may have the longest Easter holiday on the planet. The schools close from Monday through Monday, and since many families take off from home on Friday (before Palm Sunday, mind you!) that gives you ten days! Plus! (Other than Good Friday, Maundy Thursday and Easter Monday are also public holidays here).

The first time Michael came to visit in Oslo, around Easter of 2003, my friend Åse Marie invited us to her mountain hytte in the Valley of Valdres. A hytte without electricity or plumbing.

Michael: *"I had never seen so many people cross country skiing, and people of all ages and*

abilities. The important thing was obviously to be outside and be enjoying the last snow of the year. The locals did not seem threatened when I claimed the area for Saskatchewan."



Michael claiming Valdres for Saskatchewan

Norwegians' favourite reading during Easter, apart from newspapers (which we may cross country ski for a couple of hours to pick up): Crime novels!



Admittedly, not everyone owns a hytte or has money to spend at a hotel, but given the milder



Typical hytte

temperatures and the daylight saving, there will be possibilities closer to home. In the photo below from 1958, my classmate Tone and I are enjoying a ski hike outside of Drammen, our home town.



City Easter can be very enjoyable too! Fewer people around when you go for a walk, especially this year when we don't seek company that much. We can still meet family and friends at the suggested social distance, spring will be springing everywhere around! And we can visit the Botanical Gardens!

And if you belong to the lucky ones living close to the sea - -, but that is another story!

EASTER in the 40's and 50's Growing up in Iceland.

by Guðrún Mjöll Guðbergisdóttir (Úlú).

Easter is a National Holiday in Iceland, it is the longest holiday of all.

It starts with Maundy Thursday (Holy Thursday) - Skírdagur.

Good Friday - Föstudagurinn Langi (The long Friday).

Easter Sunday - Páskadagur.

Easter Monday- Annar í Páskum.

Maundy Thursday -

Skírdagur is a popular day to get confirmed. It is mostly a holiday visiting with family and friends and playing cards and reading.

Good Friday - Föstudagurinn Langi (The long Friday).

According to Icelandic law, all festivities are prohibited on Good Friday. You were literally not allowed to do anything - no card playing or outdoor playing.

As Lutheran is the country's state religion, the radio broadcasted services from the church. All day there were hymns playing. I usually read. As a child this was a very long and boring day!! In those days there was no TV in Iceland.

On Saturday stores were open from 9 am. to noon.

Easter Sunday -
Páskadagur

Early Easter morning you got 1 or 2 Big chocolate Easter eggs. The egg had a little chick sitting on the top. The outside had wrapped chocolate and Easter decoration with marzipan.

The hallow eggs are filled with all kinds of chocolate.

There is an old Icelandic saying - Málsháttur in every egg.

Many are not easy to translate, especially the ones from Viking times.



Samples of sayings:

“Gott atlæti er gjöfum betra “
Good affection is better than gifts.

“Morgunstund gefur gull í mund” The early bird catches the worm.

If you did not go to church you could listen to the service broadcasted on the radio at 11 am.



Almost always there was a leg of lamb or rack (saddle) of lamb for dinner at 1 pm. The lamb was roasted, served with caramelized potatoes, carrots and green peas and very good gravy.

Dessert in my home was homemade Ice Cream or Lemmon Fromage. The afternoon was mostly spent with family coming for a visit. Afternoon coffee, hot chocolate and the table was loaded with Easter baking.

Supper was leftovers of the lamb often served in puffed pastry. After supper more visitors arriving to enjoy evening coffee and more baking.

Easter decoration was not as extravagant as at Christmas. There were flowers in vases, usually daffodils or tulips. Small tree branches were decorated with eggs and little yellow chicks.

Table runners were andstitched with Easter motives. Napkins were yellow. And lots of yellow candles.

Easter Monday - Annar í Páskum.

It was more of a free day and no restriction. Movie theaters had Easter movies The live theater would have a new play. You could be outside and play with your little friends on the street. You were allowed to play cards.

Nowdays families go skiing for the whole holiday.

We wish you all a Happy Easter. Gleðilega Páska.

Easter in Denmark

by Michael Delaney

The Danes spend winter in “[hygge](#)” coziness, withdrawing into their stylish comfortable houses doing their comfortable things, waiting out the weather. But when the winter ends and the vintergæk (snowdrops) appear, the Easter-related holidays bring the Danes out into the open to start enjoying the better weather.

Among the events drawing them out into the open around Easter time is the traditional opening of [Tivoli](#) — the classic amusement park and pleasure garden operating in Copenhagen since 1843.

Besides Easter Sunday (Påskedag), there are three additional statutory holidays at Easter weekend: Maundy Thursday (Skærtorsdag), Good Friday (Langfredag), and Easter Monday (Anden Påskedag).

The Thursday before Easter kicks off the official days off work. There are no particular surviving non-religious traditions for Thursday and Friday, other than being holidays — and possibly eating cabbage soup on Thursday and barley porridge on Friday.

Another spring-thaw-themed Easter tradition is associated with the Saturday between Good Friday and Easter. We call it “Holy Saturday” (if we call it anything) but in Denmark it’s Skidenlørdag which the English-language Danish sites say means “Dirty Saturday”. Apparently it’s a designated spring-cleaning day. There is a traditional food for this

day: Skidne Æg “Dirty Eggs” or “Smiling Eggs” — not-quite-hard boiled eggs with mustard sauce.

Although Danish churches are packed at Christmas, they tend to have lots of available seating



Skidne Æg

on Easter Sunday. Secularization has been harder on Easter than Christmas. If you’re not going to church, you can sleep in or help with food preparation for the traditional Easter meal: Påskefrokost (“Easter lunch”). As the name suggests, it’s not a sit-down meat-and-potatoes evening banquet, but more of a brunch buffet featuring a variety of food and drink which can go on for hours. Eggs are featured (including Skidne Æg — see above). There’s a fish platter (herring, salmon) and a meat platter. Also cheese and cold cuts. Smørrebrød - one of the more famously Danish food concepts - is well-suited to this kind of presentation.

Beverage-wise, there’s beer and “snaps”. Danish breweries provide special Easter beer (Påskeøl) for the occasion. The other big drink thing is “snaps” - akvavit shots consumed communally with enthusiastic cheers/chants/songs.

Easter Monday (Anden Påskedag) is also a public holiday. This day doesn’t seem to have any traditions of it’s own, but rounds out the extra-long weekend to a fifth day. Nice.

A uniquely Danish artsy-craftsy seasonal tradition associated with the run-up to Easter is the preparation, delivery, and response of the [\[Gækkebreve\]](#) — the “secret snowdrop letter”. Here’s how it works:

1. The paper cut-out doily - Fold and cut a piece of white paper cleverly so that beautiful patterns unfold when opened. Leave some uncut space to write.

2. The poem - It could be clever, or truly poetic. The letter is ultimately a kind of riddle anyway because you don’t simply sign it with your name.

3. The dots-for-letters signature - You sign the letter using a dot to replace each letter of your name. The recipient is supposed to guess the identity of the sender.

4. The snowdrop bundle - The letter is to be delivered with a small bundle or bouquet of snowdrops. Because live/cut flowers might be impractical in many applications, an artistic rendering of the snowdrops is allowed in a pinch.

5. Someone gets a chocolate egg - If the person receiving your letter figures out it was from you, then you owe them a chocolate egg. But if they don’t guess your identity then you are entitled to reveal your identity and collect a chocolate egg from them instead.

Easter in Sweden

by Lynda Delaney

When Easter rolls around in Sweden, it's often the signal for Swedes to head out to their stuga or country cottage. The weather is (hopefully) getting warmer and many Swedes have been waiting for the chance to get out into the countryside, air out the country house for the season, and reconnect with their roots. The Easter break coincides with the school break and when taken with the long weekend, it's a good ten days of holiday for many people.

On Maundy Thursday, Skärtorsdagen in Swedish, children dress up as Easter witches (påskkärringar) clad in discarded clothes, gaily coloured headscarves and red-painted cheeks. They go from house to house in the neighbourhood and present the occupants with paintings and drawings in the hope of getting sweets in return.



Skärtorsdagen in Sweden

The story of Easter witches originates from the first Maundy Thursday when Judas betrayed Jesus. It was believed that on this day, evil was released into the world, including witches. The witches would fly on their broomsticks to Blakulla, an island where the Devil would welcome them to his court. One way to protect yourself from this supposed threat was to burn large fires, believed to scare them away. At darker points in history, these fires were a time to burn at the stake women accused of witchcraft. This tradition has become far more palatable and child-friendly in recent times, and is now similar to the American Halloween tradition of trick or treating.

The main Easter decorations in Sweden are birch twigs which can be found on the streets and in people's houses. The origin of birch twigs was a reminder of Christ's suffering. Today these branches are decorated with



coloured feathers and placed in vases around the house – an exclusive Swedish ritual.

Påskbord, the traditional meal eaten for Easter in Sweden, is similar to the luxuries of a Christmas smörgåsbord. Eggs, potatoes, meatballs, and pickled herring take centre stage, together with traditional dishes such as Jansson's Frestelse (Jansson's Temptation) and, of course, snaps (small shot of a strong alcoholic beverage).

As is common in Scandinavia, celebrations happen on the eve of the main event, so Påskbord is typically eaten on Påskafton (Holy Saturday).



Jansson's Frestelse

Janssons Frestelse (Jansson's Temptation)

Ingredients (6–8 servings)

- 1.2 kg potatoes
- 400 g onions
- 375 g spice-cured sprat filets
- 600 ml heavy whipping cream
- salt, white pepper
- breadcrumbs
- butter

For a full printable recipe see page 10

Easter Traditions in Finland

by Andrea Ashton

Easter in Finland is a secular festival although Good Friday and the Monday following the Easter Sunday (Second Easter Day) are both public holidays. The Saturday between Good Friday and Monday is called Holy Saturday. Finns often take the opportunity to use these holidays to spend the long weekend away relaxing.

Most Christian Finns are members of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church and about 1% of the population are members of the Orthodox Church yet the influence of Orthodox Easter traditions on Finnish ones are significant. For the Orthodox, Easter is the most important festival of the year, however for Lutheran Finns, Christmas is celebrated more enthusiastically.

Christian and Pagan Traditions

On Palm Sunday, palmusunnuntai, the custom of children of Orthodox families is to go from door to door to wishing their neighbours and relatives God's blessing by whisking blessed willow twigs at them. In return, they receive candy and treats.

The custom of children of Lutheran families is to dress up like witches on Holy Saturday when evil spirits and witches (called trulli in Finnish) were believed to create all kinds of mischief. The children go begging for chocolate eggs in the streets with made-up faces and scarves around their heads, carrying bunches of willow twigs decorated with feathers. Large bonfires were



burnt to dispel the evil spirits and this custom is still practised today.

Like North America, Finnish stores sell colourful Easter treats (called Easter-kitsch in Finland), including bunnies, chicks and chocolate Easter eggs.

Finnish families often decorate their houses with willow twigs by placing them in a vase as a sign of spring and having children decorate them. Families will often gather together on Easter Sunday to celebrate, serving the traditional lamb.



Janssons Frestelse (Jansson's Temptation)

Ingredients (6-8 servings)

1.2 kg potatoes
400 g onions
375 g spice-cured sprat filets
600 ml heavy whipping cream
salt, white pepper
breadcrumbs
butter

Preparation

Peel the potatoes and cut them into strips.
Peel and cut the onions into thin slices,



sautéing them gently in a little butter without browning. Grease an ovenproof baking dish and cover the bottom with a layer of potatoes, then add half the onions and half the sprat ('anchovy') filets. Another layer of potatoes, then the rest of the onion and sprats. Finish with a layer of potatoes. Flatten the surface, apply a few turns of pepper fresh from the mill and sprinkle on a little salt. Pour the cream on until it is almost visible through the potatoes. Place a few pats of butter on top and, if desired, sprinkle with some breadcrumbs. Bake in the oven (250 °C/475 °F) for about an hour.

Congratulations Gary and Jesse Carlson

After 29 years Gary and Jesse Carlson have closed their Daybreak Bed and Breakfast. For those of you who you didn't get a chance to read the January 24, 2021 article about their Bed and Breakfast in the Leader Post you can [click here](#) to read the article or search it online.

Congratulations Gary and Jesse on a job well done!



Book Review

The Boys Who Challenged Hitler Knud Pederson and the Churchill Club

Written by Philip Hoose and Knud Pederson

Article by Dianne Swanson

From the first paragraph I was hooked on this WWII memoir set in Denmark. On April 9, 1940 Knud Pederson, 14 years old, witnessed German transport planes drop pamphlets onto Danish soil stating that Denmark was now a protectorate of Germany.

The Danish government did not fight back, rather it co-operated with the Germans to save the country from the horror of a war. 16,000 Germans poured into the country setting up barrack and command centres in hotels, factories and schools. There was no question – Denmark had been invaded.

Knud, 14 years old and in grade 8 and his brother Jens, 16 years of age, and other close friends “were totally ashamed of our government”. This group of teenagers formed a clandestine group called the RAF (they admired the Brits!) whose aim was to annoy and hamper the Germans in their city of Odense. Because of a curfew, the kids sped through the city on bicycles in broad daylight, cutting German telephone lines and re-orienting German directional signs.



Back row (left to right): Eigil, Helge, Jens, Knud. Front row (left to right): unknown, Børge, unknown, Mogens F.

Knud and Jens’ father is transferred to Aarlberg. After some time Knud and Jens gather a group of likeminded teenagers in their new city, Aarlberg. In admiration for the Brits they name this group the Churchill Club.

Aarlberg has an important port and an airport from which the Germans can obtain Swedish ore to produce more weapons. The boys are very aware how useful the port and airport are to the Germans and they plan to focus their attention on these areas. Meanwhile they bike around the city damaging German vehicles and stealing German weapons. The Germans are getting annoyed but the kids are careful and tend

not to attract attention as they bike around.

With stolen grenades the Churchill club ambushes 2 rail cars containing German airplane wings and instructions. (Interestingly the Danish firemen drag their feet to extinguish the blaze. Were the boys’ activities having an effect on the Danish psyche?)

The Germans eventually track down the boys, try them in court and convict them. Knud and his brother each receive 3 year sentences. Some of the other boys were less severely punished but nevertheless went to jail.

“Words of the sabotage cell and the boys’ arrests swept quickly through the city of Aarlberg. Gossip raged in shops, offices and schools...” A new and official resistance movement was born in reaction to the boys’ imprisonment.

Borrow this book from the library and hear how the boys cope with imprisonment and how they eventually join the resistance movement when they exit prison. There are 10 copies in the Saskatchewan library system should you want to reserve a copy.



In Remembrance of our Members



Skuli Franklin Thorsteinson, passed away on Friday, March 12, 2021.

Gudrun (Ulu) Guðbergsdóttir shared the following memories of Skuli and his wife Hulda who were much involved members of the Scandinavian Club.

“Skúli was the Convenor for the sales of passes for Mosaic. He got everyone that was older in the club to spend few hours in the malls. He booked a space in the malls before anyone else even

thought about it. We made the most money and we sold more passes several times than any other pavillion.

Our first Herring Bee was in their garage. I will never forget that as nobody knew how to fillet the herring and clean it and make it except Jón and I and few fellows that knew how to fillet a fish. We did a full Barrel of Icelandic herring. Bought from Pacific Fresh Fish.”

Read Skuli’s official obituary at <https://speersfuneralchapel.com/tribute/details/10514/Skuli-Thorsteinson/obituary.html>



Myrtle Lillian Thorson passed away on December 16, 2020.

Myrtle Thorson was a member of the Scandinavian Club of Regina (where she was the only Irish woman). To read Myrtle Thorson’s obituary go Speers Funeral Chapel online at <https://speersfuneralchapel.com/tribute/details/10285/Myrtle-Thorson/obituary.html>

Coming Events

Due to Covid-19 the club will not be holding any events until restrictions allow them again. Once we have the go-ahead to hold an event we will work quickly to try to bring our members together. We miss seeing you!

The Scandinavian Club of Regina’s newsletter Midnight Sun is published quarterly.

This publication has been created by a committee which includes Linda Wacker, Lynda Delaney, Andrea Ashton. If you have any ideas or stories you would like to share with us please contact ashtona@sasktel.net



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