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LEGO® by Dianne Swanson



I would hazard a guess that LEGO is one of the most common gifts under the Christmas tree.

In our family we gave Lego as Christmas presents to our kids, 2 girls and a boy, from toddler friendly blocks (DUPLO)

to hospital and city sets to complicated teen-appropriate spacecrafts.

LEGO is a Danish invention.

Early in the 1930s in Billund, Denmark a young carpenter named Ole Kirk Christensen was laid off from his construction job. How

was he to feed his family? He chose to build toys and sell them door to door, shop to shop.

What to call the toys? “Leg godt” means play well in Danish – using these words he created LEGO!

His toy business was slow to grow, but grow it did, as Ole valued high quality in his products. His initial toys were wooden: trucks and buses, planes and yo-yos, etc. In the 1940s a new technology created plastic moulding machines; the technology was embraced by the Christiansen family and plastic toys were added to the Lego stock.

Late in the 1940s, Ole Christiansen’s son, Godfred, attended a convention and took to heart the words of a toy buyer for a big company who said “we need a system” ... He took the idea home and ruminated. The result: building blocks that could, regardless of the project, be interchangeable.

“Lego pieces of all varieties constitute a universal system. Lego bricks from 1958 still interlock with those made in the

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Cont. from page 1 - LEGO

current time, and Lego sets for young children are compatible with those made for teenagers”. (Quoted from Wikipedia)

Lego was initially sold in Denmark but expanded quickly to other countries. In 2021 sales grew to DKK 55.3 billion!

Unbelievable! Visit lego.com to learn more about their move to environmental responsibility and to view their facilities, and their huge selection of products. I think I will buy the Eiffel Tower set for Christmas this year!



LEGOLAND® Billund Resort is Denmark's most famous and popular amusement park for families and children of all ages.

The Christmas Tree Tradition in Norway

by Kari Mitchell

My mother used to decorate our Christmas tree after we kids went to bed on “Lille julaften” (Little Christmas Eve), December 23rd. As we grew older we were invited to help her. My father had bought the tree at the Bragerness market place in my home town of Drammen, and we were following a tradition which was introduced in Norway during the 19th century.

The custom came from Germany (think of “[O, Tannenbaum](#)”, text Ernst Anschütz 1824, melody trad. Illustration: “Christmas in Wandsbeker around 1800”) via Sweden and Denmark. The first known description of a decorated Christmas tree was written down by prison director Richard Petersen of Oslo in a childhood memory from 1822.

It took quite a while for the Christmas tree to become a



Christmas in Wandsbeker around 1800

popular tradition. People were quite skeptical to the idea of taking an evergreen tree into the house and decorating it, at first with paper flowers, cookies and fruit. It was not until public servants and well-to-do farmers started using them that the custom spread

to the middle classes. Already in the 1860s, the Christmas tree had obviously become popular enough to deserve a special song («[Du grønne, glitrende tre, goddag](#)», text Johan Krohn 1866, melody Christopher Weyse. Illustration from Mandal Museum: “Sundt family in Farsund around 1900”).



Sundt family in Farsund around 1900

Teachers arranging Christmas tree celebration, “juletefest”, in classrooms and gymnasiums were instrumental in bringing the tradition to homes all over the country. (See photo next page from Levanger Photo Museum shows juletefest at Røstad School 1910. Photo by Sverre Bjerkan).



Cont. from page 2 - Christmas Tree Tradition

The Christmas tree decorations of my childhood were mainly home made from glossy paper, thin cardboard or pine cones. Some were little baskets hiding candy. Norwegian flags were a must; they had been banned during the WWII occupation. We had this variety of the flag with portraits of the royal children who had come back from war exile in the US. And we had some very delicate coloured glass balls and chains. We did not own a camera, so there are very few photos from our celebrations back in the day.

During our tender years we would have Santa (neighbour Halvorsen) come with the presents, and quite often he had to stomp the snow off his boots before entering. Later, the gifts were placed under the tree before we sat down for Christmas dinner. We would always have visiting family or friends, and there would be a certain impatience building up as dessert was being served.

The preferred tree was and is spruce, but for many years I used



Norwegian flag decorations with portraits of the royal children



This picture from Levanger Photo Museum shows juletreffet at Røstad School 1910. Photo by Sverre Bjerkan.



Kari beside her aluminum tree.

fir in our home, as the needles are less stingy and stay on much longer. However, when I realized they were selling farmed trees from Denmark in our local market – at a horrendous price - I changed to this aluminum tree rather than a plastic one. No debris, I have had it for more than 15 years now, and the grandkids like it!



One of the most glorious messes in the world is the mess created in the living room on Christmas day. Don't clean it up too quickly."

Andy Rooney

Happy Holidays!



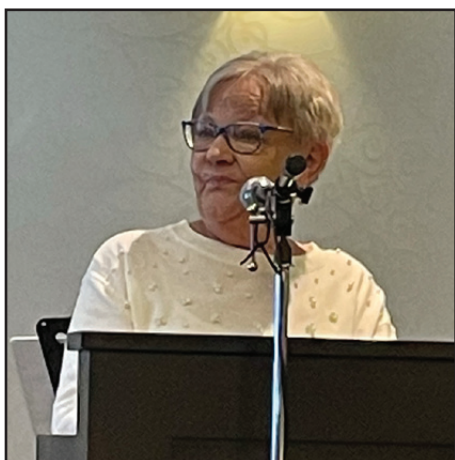
Christmas Traditions and Memories

At the Scandinavian Christmas Potluck event on December 4th some members of the club were on hand to share a little about

their own Scandinavian Christmas traditions and how their family celebrated each year. Thanks to Inge Ryan, Brenda Niskala,

Valerie Picketts and Ingrid Van Dusen for sharing some of their stories with us.

Denmark by Inge Ryan



Inge Ryan

We start Christmas celebrations in the beginning of December with an advent wreath with four candles. We light one candle the fourth Sunday before Christmas, the second candle on the third Sunday before Christmas, and so on, ending up with lighting all

four candles on the last Sunday before Christmas. As kids we also enjoyed advent calendars.

Folklore has been passed down telling us that on December 23, in the evening, people made a rice porridge and put it in the hay loft for the nisser (elves), Santa's helpers. They had been very busy and were tired and hungry. They never finished the porridge and the leftovers were made into a delicious rice pudding by adding whipped cream, sherry, vanilla and slivered almonds, and served for dessert Christmas Eve. The Danes celebrate celebrate Christmas on the evening of the 24th. Our family would have the tree set up and decorated, but waiting for Santa to bring the presents. We would go to church late afternoon/early evening and our father would always have an excuse to leave early. When we got home, Santa

had been to our house and all the presents were under the tree.

We then had dinner, traditionally, roasted goose, duck or pork roast, braised red cabbage and caramelized small potatoes followed by the rice pudding. A whole almond was put in the pudding and whoever got it, won a prize, usually a marzipan pig.

We would then form a circle around the tree, walk or dance around the tree and sing Christmas songs, and finally, it seemed, when you were a kid, we got to open presents.

Christmas Day was usually a day for smorgasbord with various courses that could last most of the afternoon. Boxing Day we would visit with friends and family.

Glædelig jul. Merry Christmas
Inge Ryan

Finland by Brenda Niskala

I've never spent Christmas in Finland. I can tell you about Christmas on a farm near the Finnish community of Rock Point, Saskatchewan.

First Christmas baking: pulla, a coffee bread flavoured with cardamom, often braided; cinnamon buns brushed in pearl sugar and coffee syrup;



Brenda Niskala presents on Finland while her special helper displays some of Brenda's interesting Finnish Christmas decor

piparkakua, munkki or raised doughnuts, and cookies, supplemented by the fine baking at the Laestadian church bake sale.

The house had to be spotless.

On the eve of Christmas, the sauna was lit, and the people became spotless too.

There were debates as we adjusted to Canadian traditions. Should family come to eat on the eve or the day? Should the sauna

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cont. from page 4 - Finland

take place before or after the Christmas Eve service? Should we attend the service or host visitors?

Ham was traditional, the children liked turkey, the chicken was local.

Finland is famous for heavy metal music; we favoured more traditional Christmas music.

We could open one gift on Christmas Eve. The gifts from

Finland over the years included finely engraved spoons, woven table runners, fruit jellies, hazelnut and liquor-filled chocolates, salty licorice, glass cards, glass birds, reindeer antler candle holders, and most recently, tontuu. The remaining gifts were opened in the morning, after Santa arrived.

The meal included pickled herring for appetizer, berry pie for desert, always turnips. Sometimes

golgi or sahti, always coffee and sweets.

Santa lives year round in Rovaniemi, Finland. I intend to go there in June, not December. It's very close to the north pole. I will put in a good word for all of you when I meet the good man this summer.

Hauskaa Joulua!

from Brenda Niskala

Norway

by Ingrid Van Dusen



Ingrid Van Dusen

There are many ways Norwegians celebrate Christmas in Norway. However, there are some common traditions that Norwegians in Norway and those abroad practice. As a first generation Canadian, born to Norwegian immigrants I was taught, and continue to practice Christmas traditions passed on by my parents.

Norwegians begin their Christmas season on the fourth Sunday before Christmas Eve

known as Advent. Each Sunday a candle is lit on a wreath until all four candles are lit. A bright star is also hung in the window of your home. It is during this time that cookies are baked, lutefisk prepared and gifts purchased. Norwegians bake seven varieties of cookies, such as berlinerkranser, serinekake and fattigman. It always amazes me how each recipe made with butter, cream and sugar taste so different. Of course, we can't forget lefse which is also prepared for the Christmas meal.

When I tell people my parents were born in Norway, they always ask about Lutefisk and tell me their thoughts about this Norwegian delicacy. I tell them it's an acquired taste. Lutefisk can be purchased commercially but can also be prepared at home. I always knew Christmas was coming when my mother started to bake and my father began the process of soaking dried cod in a large vat. I was horrified when I discovered it was soaked in lye! Soaking and rinsing the fish in fresh water made it edible, or at least my father tried to convince me it was. Bring on the butter!

On Christmas Eve, known as

Julaften, the celebrations begin. Lunch is a meal of rice porridge served with cinnamon, sugar and melted butter. One almond is placed in the serving dish. The lucky individual who finds the almond is awarded a marzipan pig. The leftover porridge is mixed with whipped cream and served with a red sauce for dessert after supper. At five o'clock church bells ring to announce that Christmas has begun. The family, dressed in their best clothes, sit down for a feast of prepared foods. The meal consists of ribbe, which is seasoned pork belly, homemade sausages, meatballs, boiled potatoes, sour cabbage and lingonberry sauce.

After supper, the Julenisse arrives to give presents to the children. After the gifts are opened, children and adults hold hands and dance around the Christmas tree singing songs.

Christmas Day, is a quiet time for families to be together. The next day, December 26, is a day to spend with friends. This was always one of my favourite days, when our home would be filled with Norwegians who had settled in Canada. The dining room table



would be covered in traditional foods to be shared with friends across the generations.

There are many traditions that Norwegian families practice. Like our families there are differences. However, there is one Norwegian tradition that takes place in London, England. Each year, a Norwegian Spruce tree of at least twenty metres in height is felled outside of Oslo. The tree is sent

to Trafalgar Square and decorated as a symbol of gratitude for the British support during World War Two.

Christmas is a season of light and hope in Norway. The season lasts until twelve days after Christmas. It is on this day that the Christmas tree, decorated with straw ornaments, homemade yarn dolls, and Norwegian flags is undecorated for another year.

Hopefully, the bowl of porridge left for the Nisse will ensure you have a prosperous year. Don't waste your time looking for the Nisse because he is a mischievous little fellow who knows all of the best hiding places.

I hope the Christmas season brings all of you joy. Merry Christmas to you or as they say in Norway , God Jul!

Swedish Christmas Traditions In the Hande-Peterson Family

by Valerie Picketts



*Valerie Picketts and son
Gunnar Picketts-Hande*

This article describes the Swedish Christmas traditions followed by Julie Hande (nee Peterson) the mother of Leif Hande, mother-in-law of Valerie Picketts and grandmother of Bjorn and Gunnar Picketts-Hande. Julie's Swedish Christmas traditions were passed down from her Swedish ancestors who emigrated from Sweden to the United States in the 1800s. Both of

Julie's parents were Swedish and she grew up in Nebraska and later became a nurse. While nursing in Calgary she met her husband, Barrie Hande, who was born in Marchwell, Saskatchewan. Barrie was mostly Norwegian, along with some German and Scottish ancestry. At Christmas time Julie enjoyed decorating the house with many decorations and preparing large Christmas meals for their family of three daughters and two sons and other relatives who often visited them in Esterhazy, Saskatchewan.

One Swedish Christmas tradition that Julie followed was to light one candle on a candelabra for each of the four Sundays

leading up to Christmas, until all candles were lit on Christmas day.

Julie also acknowledged December 13 as St. Lucia Day, which was a day when a girl would wear white and had candles on her head.

At Christmas time, Julie placed out Swedish decorations, which included a straw horse and Dala horses (brightly painted horses). Another Christmas tradition was to place out two Swedish pewter angel candle holders. Julie also placed mini Swedish flags on the Christmas tree along with mini Norwegian flags to recognize her husband's ethnic background.

Julie was an avid baker and a Swedish tradition that Julie shared with her children at Christmas time is baking gingerbread men and building gingerbread houses. Her baking included "Brown-Eyed Susan" cookies, which is a type of Swedish hallongrotta cookie that's made of shortbread with a dollop of chocolate and an almond on top. Julie also had rosette irons on hand for making Rosettes (a deep-fried battered cookie with icing sugar) at Christmas time.



*Swedish Advent Candelabra which was
hand-made by Erwin Ellinger from Esterhazy*





cont. from p 6 - Swedish Christmas

At Christmas time, Julie also made a Swedish dessert called snow ice cream by mixing fresh clean snow with cream, vanilla, eggs, etc. Another Swedish dessert she made was a type of rice pudding.

Julie followed the tradition of attending the Lutheran church on Christmas eve for a candlelight service and then after the service

she and her family members would open one of their gifts on Christmas eve and the remainder Christmas morning.

For Christmas dinner, Julie cooked turkey and ham but also would cook a meatball dish. Pickled herring was also served to relatives who enjoyed it, such as her father. Another Swedish dish Julie made was pickled cucumbers (fresh sliced cucumbers marinated

in a vinegar dressing). She also would make cranberry sauce and sometimes used high-bush cranberries that she picked in the Souris Valley in southern Saskatchewan.

God Jul! (Merry Christmas!)



Scandinavian Heritage Cooking in Saskatchewan

Contact scoreventsregina@gmail.com to purchase a copy of this cookbook
\$15.00 plus shipping



Swedish Meat Rings

Biscuit dough
1 lb hamburger
2 tbsp chopped onion
1 cup of grated carrot
1 egg beaten
1/4 c. tomatoes or 1 whole
chopped fine
1 tsp salt

Fry beef, onion & carrot until lightly browned. Add tomatoes, salt and egg. Cook a little, then cool. Roll biscuit dough to a sheet 1/2" thick. Spread with meat mixture. Roll and join ends to form a ring. Slash 1/2 way through every 2 inches. Bake at 400 F for 15 to 20 minutes until golden.

Recipe provided by Pearl Baumgartner Page 47 of cookbook



Norwegian Oatmeal Bread

Makes 2 loaves

2 pkg granular yeast
1/2 cup warm water
1 tsp sugar
2 cups boiling water
1 cup rolled oats
1/3 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup molasses
1/3 cup shortening
1 tbsp salt
2 eggs beaten
5 1/2 - 6 cups flour

In small bowl add yeast to water and 1 tsp sugar and let stand. Pour boiling water over rolled oats,

shortening, molasses, brown sugar and salt. When lukewarm, add eggs and about 2 cups flour and beat well. Add yeast mixture. Add enough flour to make a soft dough. Place in a greased bowl, grease top of dough, cover tightly and place in fridge for at least 2 hours or preferably overnight. Turn out on well floured board and shape into two loaves. Place in greased pans and let rise 2 hours. Bake at 375 for 40 - 50 min.

Recipe provided by Mrs. Leona Thompson. (Page 62 of cookbook)



When we recall Christmas past, we usually find that the simplest things – not the great occasions – give off the greatest glow of happiness."

Bob Hope



SCOR 2022 EVENTS

The Scandinavian Club of Regina was fortunate to be able to host a number of events in 2022. In addition to a number of Fishy Friday events, the club was able to host a few other events. June saw our Summer Solstice event with guest speaker Harold

Rhenish reading from his books *Landings: Poems from Iceland* and *The Art of Haying*. In August the annual Corn Roast had a great turnout and in November, ten club members gathered for a lefse making event at New Hope Lutheran Church. The year

wrapped up with the clubs annual potluck Christmas supper. It has been wonderful to see so many of you this year at the clubs events.

Below and on the next page are just a few photos to celebrate the opportunities we have had to get together this fall.

Fishy Friday



October 7 was Fishy Friday but we were also able to help celebrate Gary and Jessie Carlson's wedding anniversary



Lefse Event

by Andrea Ashton

On November 29th, ten club members gathered at New Hope Lutheran Church to make some lefse. This was not only a great group of people to spend an evening with, it was also a great learning experience as well. While my own lefse was a dismal failure, I gained plenty of experience from this group of accomplished lefse makers.

And a special thanks to Ingrid Van Dusen who managed to salvage my lefse, ensuring that I didn't return home empty handed.

Thanks to Mavis de Bruin and Darlene Zirk for leading this group and Darlene Harrison for securing this perfect location.



Christmas Potluck



The Christmas Potluck was held on December 4 from 2 pm to 5 pm at the Speers Family Centre. Forty members attended the event and enjoyed the variety of foods

that were there and mixed and mingled with others.

The entertainment that was supplied for the event was called “The Dreher’s”. The lead vocalist

was Gary Freitag, the banjo player was Jim Mutschler and the drummer and accordion player were Dave and Dale Dreher.





A Fortunate Man

by Andrea Ashton

Now streaming on Netflix, *A Fortunate Man* is a Danish movie that takes place in the 1890's and is based on the novel by Henrik Pontoppidan called *Lykke-Per* (Lucky Per).

The film follows the life of Peter Andreas Sidenius, the son of a rigid country preacher living in the peninsula of Jutland. Bitter and alienated from his father, Peter spurns his family's strict religious way of life and leaves to study engineering in the city of Copenhagen.

In Copenhagen, Peter, or Per as he comes to be known, connects with the Salomon family, a wealthy Jewish banking family in Copenhagen. The son, Ivan Salomon, befriends Peter, convinced that his ambitious friend's new and inventive ideas will be ground-breaking. He dubs Peter "A Fortunate Man" and the phrase sticks. He introduces Per to his family and together they work to convince the powers that be in Copenhagen, that the future of energy lies in harnessing power of wind and water.

Peter takes an interest in Jakobe, the oldest of the Saloman daughters who is set to marry another older and wealthy Jewish man, until she falls in love with Peter.

To further his engineering

project in Denmark he requires ministerial support, but when that fails the Saloman family pays to send Peter to Austria to further his engineering studies and get support from other professionals for his plans for canals, windmills, and water energy.

Before he leaves for Austria, Peter's brother Eberhardt relays that their father is gravely ill and asks Peter to return for the funeral. Peter, knowing his family will never accept his relationship with Jakobe because she is Jewish, refuses to go.

Peter leaves for Vienna, but the separation is particularly difficult for Jakobe so she secretly travels to visit him in Austria, after which she becomes pregnant. After he returns to Copenhagen, Peter learns his mother has passed away and he then returns to his home in the Jutland to attend her funeral.

This is when Peter's life really begins to self destruct. When he returns to Copenhagen, he calls off his marriage to Jakobe, never knowing she is pregnant with his child. With the backing of the Saloman family gone, so is any hope of bringing his ambitious project to fruition. With this failure behind him, he returns to Jutland, no better off than when he left.

With her engagement to Peter



off, Jakobe gives up all hope of a future marriage and devotes her life to helping the poor and orphaned children of Copenhagen.

Esben Smed who plays Peter Andreas turns in a great performance of a man who is clearly ahead of his time in his ideas but he seems unable to escape his austere upbringing. The anger and resentment he carries from his childhood stunts his ability to develop any meaningful relationships.

Jakobe, played by Katrine Greis-Rosenthal, tries hard to break through to Peter but in the end is unable to help him escape his past.

This film is worth watching, but it is also difficult to watch as Peter, an intelligent man who holds so much potential for success, seems to railroad himself at every turn. Time and time again we see how his ambition, stubbornness, and inability to compromise wreaks havoc in his life.



Marie Stockton



We are sad to announce the passing of Marie Stockton on Sunday, September 25, 2022, at the age of 84 years. She passed away peacefully with her family by her side.

Marie is survived by sons Paul (Ursula Meier) of Ingleside, ON and Brian (Tobi Lampard) of Regina, SK; grandsons Keaton and Emmett Stockton; sister Olga Routley of Prince Albert, SK;

In Memoriam

sister-in-law Marna Stockton of Regina SK; sister-in-law Kathleen McKay of Whitehorse, YK; brother-in-law Ralph Black of Rolling Hills, CA; and many nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her loving husband Wayne; parents Jens and Signe Kilden (nee Mo); sister Gladys Black; brothers-in-law Fred Routley and Don McKay.

Marie's parents were homesteaders from Norway, and she grew up on the farm in Porcupine Plain, SK, before moving to Regina, SK, at the age of 5. She graduated as a nurse with the class of 1960 at the Regina General Hospital. Shortly after that, she met and married Wayne, and they were happily married for 59 years.

Marie and family enjoyed

decades of summers at Kenosee Lake with a lovely cottage that remains in the family.

She was proud of her Norwegian heritage and was involved with the Scandinavian Club of Regina. For many years she helped the club organize the Scandinavian Pavilion at Mosaic. Marie was also involved with the United Empire Loyalists through her husband Wayne.

Wayne and Marie enjoyed much travelling together, visiting the Caribbean as well as numerous trips and cruises to Europe, South America and the Pacific. They visited a total of 46 countries, including family trips to Norway to visit relatives and to see the Norwegian homestead

[Click here](#) to read the full obituary of Marie Stockton



Joseph Lorenz



On Monday, May 16, 2022, our dad passed away peacefully, surrounded by his family. He was just shy of his 95th birthday. He was predeceased by his first wife Jeanette in 1993. Joe is survived by his wife Dolores; daughters Linda (Kevin) Kuntz of Regina,

Karen (Doug) Haughey of Calgary and Sherry (Jim) Kropp of Calgary; grandchildren Shaela (AJ) and Bryden (Amanda) of Regina, Jason (Lyndsay), Tyler (Denise) and Craig (Sarah) of Calgary, and Taylor and Jordan of Calgary; his precious great-grandchildren; brothers Harold (Rose) and Raymond (Sharon); as well as Dolores's family and numerous nieces and nephews.

Dad was born in Germany, came to Canada as a young child and spent most of his life in Regina. He had a passion for helping people whether it was at Joe's Grocery and Confectionery, selling cars or at U-DO-IT Plumbing and Heating. Joe and

Jeanette enjoyed eleven years as owners of Joe's Confectionery in the Rosemont neighbourhood. After leaving the grocery business, Joe, with his helping nature, made him well sought out by the home handyman at U-DO-IT. In later years Joe and Dolores spent much time travelling as well as dancing at the Regina Senior Citizens' Centre. He enjoyed his time watching his grandchildren grow and most recently his great-grandchildren. Dad was a kind-hearted person and will be in our hearts and minds forever.

[Click here](#) to read the full obituary of Joseph Lorenz



Helen THOMPSON



Helen passed away peacefully on Monday, August 3, 2020 with family by her side. She was predeceased by her loving husband Arvid. Helen is survived by her son Terry (Sandra); daughter Rayna (Brad Gellner);

granddaughter Jill Gellner (Shae Therrien); grandson Craig Gellner and great-grandsons Max and Clark Therrien. Helen was born in the family home at Lockwood, SK on March 30, 1925, the middle child of twelve, to Sarah and Adam Joa. Upon finishing school she embarked on a career with the telephone office and was proud to be the operator who placed the Premier's call welcoming Newfoundland into Canada. In 1950 Helen and Arvid embarked on 56 wonderful years of marriage. Together they enjoyed many activities such as holidays at the lake, square dancing, golf, curling (Helen was

the proud recipient of an 8-ender), bridge and supporting her beloved Saskatchewan Roughriders. Helen and Arvid were charter members of the Scandinavian Club of Regina and celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary with a trip to Norway. Upon retirement they travelled to a variety of locations and enjoyed learning the history of the countries they visited. Helen was a devoted "Mama" and doted on her two grandchildren, delighting in making special birthday cakes and Halloween costumes when they were young. [Click here](#) for the full obituary.

Please note that sometimes we are unaware of members who pass away so their appearance in the

newsletter may not be as timely as we would like. When we do become aware we will post the

information in our newsletter,



Special Thanks to Speers Funeral and Cremation Services

The Scandinavian Club of Regina would like to express our sincere thanks to Speers Funeral and Cremation Services for their generosity in letting us use their Family Centre for our Summer Solstice in June and

our Christmas Potluck event in December. The facility is lovely, well equipped, convenient, and well designed. We thank them for sharing this space with our club.

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

The editors of this publication are comprised of a committee. If you have any ideas or stories you would like to share with us please contact us at scoreventsregina@gmail.com



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