

OUR GENEALOGY VACATION IN NORWAY

By Randy Seaver

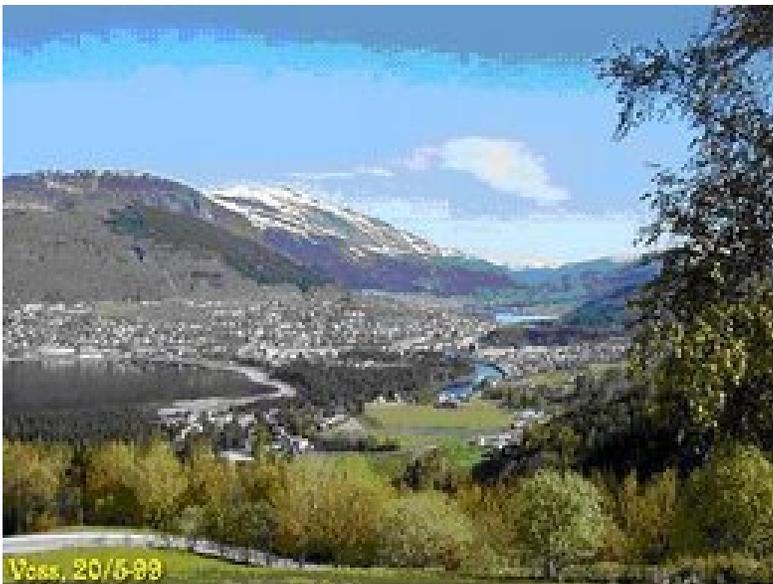
One of our favorite vacations was to Scandinavia. We had hosted two teenage girls from Finland in 1994 for three weeks, and had kept in touch with them over the years. In 1999, we were invited to visit their families in Finland, so we planned our vacation around them. We flew to Stockholm, then to the north of Sweden where Mia's family picked us up, then drove from Tornio to Kuopio to visit Anne's family, then to Helsinki.

After our 10 day Finland family experience, which was just wonderful, we flew to Oslo, and did a little touring.

Linda's brother had done quite a bit of Leland family history and had visited the Liland farm near Voss in Norway back in 1980. To prepare for our vacation, I tried to find Linda's Norwegian ancestral families and had some luck - I used the Voss bygdebok (farm book) and Voss Parish Registers at the FHC to trace her families back into the 1600's before we went.

I used contacts from the Norway genealogy message board to ask questions, get answers, etc. I arranged to meet several folks for dinner in Oslo when we visited there and we had a delightful conversation. One of the fellows took some notes on one of the ancestral families. He went to the Archives the next day and sent me an email at the hotel with the answer, just before we left for Voss.

The Voss scenery is breathtaking. There is a long lake, mountains all around, many rivers and streams, very green in the summer, and very white in the winter (it is a ski resort then). I had corresponded a bit with Svein Ulvund (see his photo site [here](#)) and knew the layout of the area. Here is one of Svein's pictures of summertime Voss:



We arrived after a 6 hour train trip through the mountains, made it to our hotel, and I took off for the bookstore, the library and the Internet cafe in beautiful downtown Voss. I bought a book, got a good map, and checked my email.

One of my message board friends had been to Voss the year before, and recommended that I contact Bjorg Liland, who was related by marriage to the Liland farm families. We called the first night, and Bjorg graciously offered to drive us around the lake the next day. We visited Gjelle farm, Midtun farm, Molster farm and Liland

farm, all ancestral farms. At Liland farm, Bjorg had arranged to talk to the family, compare genealogy notes and have a snack there - it was quite enjoyable, although the Liland ladies didn't speak English, but Bjorg translated.

Molster farm was where Linda's ancestors lived just before they left for Wisconsin in 1855. It is now a "living museum" vintage 1855, with docents in each room, and a small artifacts room. I enjoyed it tremendously, especially the food cooked in the kitchen.

Needless to say, we really appreciated Bjorg's efforts on our behalf and we treated her to a nice dinner at the Park Liland Hotel in downtown Voss (she used to work there). A few days later, she invited us over for dessert at her apartment. After more sightseeing ("Norway in a Nutshell" tour - excellent!), we took the train to Bergen and then flew home. We had a wonderful three weeks in Scandinavia.

This vacation was what "hooked" Linda on genealogy vacations - she wants to do more now! I've found the "other half" of her Norway ancestry, so perhaps we can go visit Sogndal (on the Sogn fjord) some day.