

Norway: from the prairies and plains to the fantastic fjords!

November 28, 2015

MAYVILLE, ND - My wife, Debbie, and I are very excited to be tour hosts for the MSU Foundation and Alumni Association's first-ever alumni and friends trip to Norway next summer. We'll be departing July 25 and returning Aug. 4, 2016. We were fortunate to have the opportunity to visit Norway a couple of years ago and are thrilled to be able to share the experience with a full tour group of alumni and friends next summer.



University

News

Gary Hagen

President,
Mayville State

The celebration of Mayville State University's 125th anniversary prompted the Alumni Association to try something new, group travel for alumni and friends. Because many of the pioneers who paved the way for a college at Mayville were Norwegian immigrants, it seems fitting that this is where we'd make our first trip. Since this was the first time the MSU Foundation and Alumni Association have offered such a trip, we weren't really sure what to expect when we announced it. We have been very pleasantly surprised by the overwhelming response. The first tour group of about 40 people filled almost right away.

Our Norwegian adventure will begin in Oslo and end in Bergen. The group will fly into Oslo and have some time to relax and adjust to the time change before beginning to explore Norway's capital city. Time in Oslo will include a tour of Vigeland Park and the Viking Ship Museum. There will also be time for tour participants to explore independently.

We'll travel to Halden, situated on the Norwegian/Swedish border, where we'll learn about Norway's history with Sweden. We'll tour Fredriksten Fortress, built in 1661 as protection from the Swedes. The fortress has been attacked six times, but has never been conquered. The last action took place in 1905, when Norway dissolved its union with Sweden, at which time cannons were deployed and thousands of soldiers mobilized. Fortunately, negotiations resulted in a peaceful solution. Since then, the fortress has been maintained as a monument of military history. At Berg, we'll cross the Svinesund Bridge to Sweden.

Our travels will take us through Sarpsborg, sister city of Grand Forks, N.D. In 2016, Sarpsborg is celebrating its 1000th birthday. We may have an opportunity to take in some of the special celebratory events planned.

On day 6, we'll depart for Hallingdal. In Nesbyen, we'll experience local traditions and history, emigration history and historical farming with a visit to Hallingdal Museum. The museum is one of the oldest open-air museums in Norway and features an emigrant house from Hatton, N.D. In Ål, we'll visit the Torpo Stave Church, the oldest and only original stave church left in Hallingdal, as well as the oldest building in the valley.

Our tour bus will take us across the wild and barren Hardanger Plateau and drive through the Måbødal Canyon. We'll view the Vøring Waterfall, which plunges 600 feet into a narrow rock basin. At the Hardangervidda Nature Centre, we'll learn of the Norwegians' love and respect for nature.

We'll have an opportunity to cross the Hardangerfjord on the newly opened Hardanger Bridge, which has a span 300 feet longer than the Golden Gate. We'll ride the Flåm Line, ranked as one of the top 20 train rides in the world, while enjoying breathtaking views and the thundering sound of waterfalls as we descend 2,800 feet within 13 miles.

While cruising the dramatic Aurlandfjord and Nærøfjord to Gudvangen and then driving through Voss and Os, the tour group will make its way to Bergen, our final Norwegian destination. While in Bergen there will be sightseeing, which includes a visit to Troidhaugen, the home of Norway's internationally-known musician, the

NORWAY cont'd.

late Edvard Grieg. We'll walk through the historic Hanseatic Wharf, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Because of the fantastic response to our Norway trip for alumni and friends, we're gauging interest in the possibility of offering a Second tour group. Tour B would be led by MSU Foundation Executive Director John Klocke and his wife, Jan. This proposed second tour would feature many of the same highlights as Tour A and will converge at selected locations with Tour A participants, including Debbie and me.

Time is of the essence. If you're interested in the possibility of joining John and Jan Klocke and Tour Group B, we need you to go to www.mayvillestate.edu/NorwayTourB by Monday, Nov. 30 and fill out the interest form. We'll be back in touch with you within the next couple of weeks to let you know next steps. The number of people who indicate their interest will dictate whether we'll be able to proceed with this second tour group.

Brekke Tours and Travel of Grand Forks is coordinating all travel arrangements for the Norway trip. If you have questions, you may contact them at 1-800-437-5302 or tours@brekкетours.com, or you may contact our Office of Alumni Affairs at 701-788-4750 or alumni.mail@mayvillestate.edu.

Go to www.mayvillestate.edu to find out more about opportunities available at Mayville State University.