

Group shares Viking history

By David Lias

david.lias@plaintalk.net

Skjaldborg means “wall of shields.”

It’s a fitting name for a group of Viking re-enactors who were part of the Midsommar celebration at Dalesburg Lutheran Church July 21.

The group also served as a reminder to their audience of largely Scandinavian heritage that their European ancestors lived at times that were quite barbaric, and had to develop unique weapons and fighting strategy to survive and grow.

Develon Puckett, from Omaha, NE, shed 62 pounds of armor after he, Ryan Carlson, also of Omaha, and a couple of younger students, all dressed in traditional garb, demonstrated the battle techniques developed by Vikings centuries ago.

The armor, helmets, boots and wool leggings and undergarments were no doubt fine for the cooler climates of northern Europe. The warm, humid day provided a bit of a challenge to Skjaldborg members – one they were able to overcome.

“We call what we do ‘edutainment’ because we want to educate you while we entertain you,” Puckett, who works as a paramedic in Lincoln, NE, said. “That’s why we mix in the fights with the educational part. Hopefully at the end of this event, some of the spectators are able to tell me what the time period of the Vikings was, what they wore, how they survived, how they fought and how they thrived.”

In between brief demonstrations of typical Viking battle techniques, Puckett and Carlson, who is a schoolteacher in Omaha, did their best in a fairly brief amount of time to instill in their audience a sense of the Viking lifestyle and history.

“Everything is as authentic as we can make it,” Puckett said. “All of our armor, we’ve made ourselves. Nearly all of the weapons – we have two blacksmiths in our group – have been made by us, too.”



A large audience watches as Develon Puckett and Ryan Carlson of the reenactment group Skjaldborg demonstrate Viking battle techniques at Friday’s Midsommar Festival at Dalesburg Lutheran Church.

(Photo by David Lias)

Members of the group also research as much about the Viking lifestyle as possible so they can pass that knowledge along to their audiences.

“If you’re from Scandinavia – Sweden, Norway, Finland, northern England, Ireland, Denmark, Iceland and northern France, you have Scandinavian heritage, whether you like it or not,” Puckett said. “Our job is to educate you on your past, to the best of our ability. There are smarter people than us roaming around, but I don’t think they swing swords and axes.”

Puckett, dressed in a traditional wool hat and both a woolen over-tunic and

woolen over-tunic that reached down to his knees, complained little after shedding his heavy armor.

“It’s not that hot,” he said. “Wool breathes great, and so does linen, and it dries off incredibly hot. Modern fabrics don’t breathe as well as traditional fabrics. Things are rather pleasant, right now, with the breeze we have right now.”

The Vikings culture reflects the turmoil present in all of Europe centuries ago, he said.

“We try to research the way they fought so we can demonstrate that,” Puckett said. “There are combat groups in Europe, and there are people in the United States who go over to

Europe and learn fighting techniques. We learn some techniques from books that were written in the 1400s and the 1500s, but there are only so many ways to fight.”

Puckett said he first solely interested in learning about medieval swordplay when he saw Skjaldborg in action. He decided to become involved in that group because besides learning about ancient battle techniques, he appreciates Skjaldborg’s goal of teaching while demonstrating.

“That’s very important. I really like educating people,” he said. “So, instead of just swordplay, we’re able to talk to the public, we’re able to tell

people about history. Since it’s our history, and it’s the public’s history, it makes it much more personal.”

A throng of people surrounded the Skjaldborg group in a grassy area near Dalesburg Lutheran Church, and soaked in every word of history being shared Friday afternoon.

Skjaldborg shares information that many, many people of the Midwest can relate to.

“Some of these people can say, ‘Yeah, my grandpa talked about things like that,’ or ‘my great aunt from Sweden said many of the same things,’ and it brings it all home.”

“It’s cool. It’s living history.”

OBITUARIES

Robert Lund

Robert (Bob) Lund, 81, of Vermillion, passed away peacefully at his home Monday, July 1, 2013 after a brief battle with lung cancer.



Lund

Bob was born May 6, 1932 on a farm near Newcastle, NE, to Maurice and Mabel (Birkley) Lund. He was baptized and confirmed at Zion Lutheran Church in Maskell, NE and attended school in Newcastle, NE. He married the love of his life, Marcy (Panko) Lund in 1959 and later that year received his Pharmacy degree from the University of Nebraska.

Bob served in the Army during the Korean War from 1953-1955. After graduating from pharmacy school, he worked as a drug rep for the Merck Company before buying a drug store in 1963 in Wayne, NE. In 1971 he sold the store in Wayne and built Lund Drug in Vermillion, which he owned and operated until selling the business in 1987. During this time he started several other businesses in Vermillion including, The Klothes Klostet, The Hallmark Shop and The Campus Supply

Shoppe. After retiring, he worked part time as a pharmacist at Dakota Hospital in Vermillion for about 10 years.

During his time in Wayne and Vermillion, he was active in church and served on many boards and served as Industrial Development and Chamber of Commerce. He enjoyed spending time with family, golfing, and coffee with his friends. He was an avid fan of both Coyote and Nebraska Cornhusker sports.

He is survived by his wife, Marcy, of Vermillion; three daughters, Lori (Kirk) Guymon of Rapid City, Linda (Roy) Wilcox of Yankton, and Lisa (Dale) Van Heek of Crofton, NE; nine grandchildren, Andy Guymon, Lindsey (Chris) Jacobson, Laura Wilcox, Mark (Virginia) Wilcox, Michael Wilcox, Jenna, Nicole, Derek, and Hannah Van Heek. He is also survived by three great-grandsons, Luke, Seth, John Jacobson; a brother, Ray (Julie) Lund of Kansas City, KS; a sister, Doris Ehle of Battle Creek, NE; and a sister-in-law, Donna Lund of Ponca, NE.

Funeral services were 10:30 a.m. Thursday, July 4, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Vermillion with private burial prior to the service in the Lutheran Cemetery in Maskell, NE. Prayer

services will be 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 3, at Trinity Lutheran Church. hansenfuneralhome.com

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Trinity Lutheran Church, Vermillion Food Pantry or the American Cancer Society.

Jane Torkelson

Jane Ellen Jensen Torkelson, 69, of Vermillion, passed away suddenly and peacefully at her home in Vermillion on Wednesday, June 26, 2013.

Jane Ellen Parker was born Oct. 14, 1943 in Des Moines, IA to Clifford and Iona (Sorensen) Parker. Her name was changed to Jane Jensen when adopted by her step-father Edwin Jensen. Jane attended elementary school in Lake Andes, and high school in Weslaco, TX. She returned to South Dakota to attend the University of South Dakota, where she met her husband K. Larry Torkelson, and they were

married in Lake Andes in 1963.

After graduating with a Music Education degree, she taught music while Larry earned advanced music degrees in Michigan and Indiana. They enjoyed raising their two children Tracy and Jeff in a home filled with music, laughter and love. Upon returning to South Dakota, she worked as the music teacher at Elk Point High School and eventually worked as the elementary school music teacher in Vermillion and also received her Master’s degree from USD. She retired in 1999 after many years of teaching music to the children of Elk Point and Vermillion. Colleagues remember her with a smile on her face, as laughter and music surrounded her. She earned the love and respect of the students and colleagues that she touched.

After retiring, she enjoyed traveling to see

family and friends. She was an active member of the Trinity Lutheran Church and enjoyed exercising, visiting and lunching with friends. She will be remembered as a devoted wife, a loving mother, an active grandma and a fun loving friend.

She was preceded in death by her parents, her husband Larry in 2008, and a brother, Joel Parker.

Jane is survived by her son, Jeff (Lisa) Torkelson of Ft. Lauderdale, FL; a daughter, Tracy (Dan Leikvold) of Spearfish; her grandchildren, Taylor and

Braeden Ferguson; a sister, Carolyn (John) McBride of Seattle, WA; friend, Billy Carmean of Austin, TX; a nephew, Brian Kelley; cousins and many loving friends who will miss her smile and contagious laugh.

Memorial services were 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, July 3, at the Trinity Lutheran Church in Vermillion with burial to follow in the Bluffview Cemetery in Vermillion. Visitation began at 6 p.m. Tuesday, July 2 with a prayer service at 7 p.m. all at the church. hansenfuneralhome.com.

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