

Nordic American Voices
Nordic Heritage Museum

Interview of Osmund Kvithammer
June 15, 2013
Seattle, Washington

Interviewers: Mari-Ann Jackson

Mari-Ann Kind Jackson: [0:01] This is an interview for the Nordic American Voices oral history program at the Nordic Heritage Museum. Today I am interviewing Osmund Kvithammer, originally from Norway. We are at the Nordic Heritage Museum in Seattle, Washington. Today's date is June 15, 2013. Ozzie, I will call you that.

Osmund Kvithammer: [0:25] Okay. Fine.

Mari-Ann: [0:26] Welcome.

Osmund: [0:27] Thank you, Mari-Ann.

Mari-Ann: [0:28] And we are so happy that you had time to meet with us. Would you start by telling us your full name, your place of birth, your date of birth, and share your life story with us.

Osmund: [0:41] I'd be delighted to.

Mari-Ann: [0:42] Good.

Osmund: [0:43] My name is Osmund Kvithammer. A lot of people in America call me Ozzie. I prefer Osmund- for those people that are Scandinavian, I like that name a lot better, but as in America, they shorten things and abbreviate it, and you go by nicknames. I was born on March 29, 1943. This is my seventieth year of existence, and I was born in Oslo during the occupation of the Germans.

[1:18] And... when I started out in the hospital in Oslo, I was adopted. I was under the care of the Salvation Army in Oslo. And they had a very large orphanage at that time for unwed mothers. And my birth mother happened to be from the valleys up by Oslo, and came into town, had me, and I was in the orphanage there for probably a few weeks.

[1:59] My mother and father came in to check on kids. My mother and dad could not have children. Subsequently, they thought I was funny. I laughed a lot, and they came back a second time and a third time, and here I am, the only child. And I have been very fortunate all my life.

[2:30] I certainly started out in Oslo, and we immigrated to the United States in 1949. My life in Oslo was pretty darn good. My father was a baker working for my uncle, *Brekken bakeri* in Oslo, and my mother had a millinery store på Grefsen. We lived på Grefsen and certainly I can't remember it, but

my father was very proud of the fact that he was raising tobacco på Grefsen, and at that time, you could raise tobacco and turn the leaves in and get cigarettes.

[3:11] The other side of that, Dad was very proud that he could darken green peas and make it as close to coffee as he could. I enjoyed those stories because they were a lot of fun. And he would grind green peas and make coffee out of them. During the time when we were getting occupied and I was little, all the women and children left Oslo up to the mountain cabins. My mother and I and my cousins and their children, they all left. We went up to my uncle's cabin outside of Oslo.

[3:58] After the war, my mother and father decided that it would be a better life in the United States. Based on my father's education, which was only a sixth grade education, and my mother had gone to gymnas, and actually had been in the United States before. So, we knew people in Chicago. My mother came from Kristiansund, and when she graduated from high school, she and three other girlfriends went to Chicago.

[4:37] She had an uncle there so they came there, and that was when she was nineteen years old. She shared some interesting stories, going on the boat, going through Ellis Island. Her best friend on the boat was refused and had to be sent back to Denmark because she had a little sore on her back. It was a pretty brutal experience for people that were in steerage. Certainly if you were in first or second class, you didn't go through that, because they didn't stop at Ellis Island.

[5:09] So Mother had already been familiar with Chicago, had relatives. So her relatives signed for us to come over. We tried to come over in 1948, but the quotas were full. So we finally got on the boat, and I can remember this vividly, because... I don't remember which ship exactly, whether it was *Bergensfjord* or *Stavangerfjord*- probably *Stavangerfjord*- all the ribbons from the dock in Oslo, and people were throwing confetti and stuff. As the boat left, the confetti broke apart, and lo and behold, we were on our way.

[5:58] My mother had gone before, so it was my father and I. This was a major trip. I can remember there were four of us in this cabin- all men. It was as rough a sea as anything I could ever imagine. Most of the ship- I thought it was pretty cool, but most of the ship was underwater. As a little kid of six years old, this was just absolutely crazy. There was water down the tablecloths; buckle down the tables, dishes, and stuff was flying all over. It was a pretty exciting trip to New York.

[6:42] Upon getting to New York... I had never seen a black person before. Wow. It was pretty strange. My father looked from the boat, and he said, "I will never drive in this country. There are too many cars." And we didn't know how to tip. I can remember the porter that was helping us with the luggage decided that my father had not given him enough of a tip, so he threw the money at us, at the cab. It was kind of fun.

[7:20] Vivid things that you remember... We stayed in New York, and I saw my first TV show. That was Roy Rogers and Gabby Hayes on about a three-inch screen in the hotel. And about a six-foot... We need to stop here a second, Mari-Ann, okay? Got to stop. My nose is starting to run.

[TAPE BREAK 7:55]

Osmund: [7:56] My father and I, we stayed in New York for just a day or two, and onto the train to

Chicago. Oh my gosh. I spoke no English. My father was limited in education and certainly spoke no English. And I believe there were some Norwegians we met in New York that helped us get on the train. We got to Chicago, and we were met by my mother's acquaintances, and there we were.

[8:28] And I was introduced to these delightful people in [Chicago] that my mother had befriended when she was there the first time. And we stayed there for a short period of time. I can't remember their names, unfortunately, but she had parakeets. She must have had fifteen or twenty parakeets in her kitchen. And her husband was a heck of... just the funniest guy in the world. He took me to my first tavern in Chicago, and I sat there and could speak no English, and everybody was prodding me to talk Norwegian. I had a Coca-Cola while he and the rest of the people were having beer. So that was basically my graduation into Chicago life. [Laughter]

[9:18] We subsequently moved from their house, and my mother was a maid for a doctor in a large house. We lived in a one-room bedroom with a hot plate, and Dad, Mom and I lived there. They were very wealthy people. This was the first time I had ever seen popcorn popped. These kids were pretty cool, I guess, and they had a pool table, and popcorn. We at least got to try that.

[9:57] The one thing I found out in Chicago is... and I learned that the rest of my life, is that it doesn't matter your color, where you come from. If you're different, you're going to be picked on. Certainly I spoke no English, and I had the opportunity of getting beat up pretty badly when I was six years old. And that has stayed with me ever since.

[10:21] My father and mother evidently got in an argument. I never saw them argue, but my father didn't like Chicago, and it certainly didn't remind him of Trondheim or Oslo and that. And he needed a mountain and someplace to ski, so he told my mother, "Either I'm going farther west..." We had met some people on the boat by the name of Hilmos. And my folks corresponded with them and said, "Oh, any jobs there?" And they said, "Yeah, come west. There's work there."

[11:01] And so the decision was either to go west or go back to Norway, and my father decided to go west. And so we wound up in Everett, my father going first and living with the Hilmos for a while, which was typical in those days. You stayed with ethnic people that you knew from the same district. And Mom and I followed later on the train- the Great Northern Train from Chicago to Everett.

[11:35] We wound up in Everett and stayed at an apartment. Looking back, the buildings are still there. They looked pretty dilapidated, looking back in 1949 and 1950 in Everett. We had a great life, and growing up, and then we made a big decision. We were going back to Norway. We hadn't been there since '49, so we went back for a vacation, and I think Mom and Dad were thinking about moving back permanently.

[12:11] They went back, and I had the summer of my life in Kristiansund and Meråker, and in the mountains east of Trondheim up in Vaktarstua and around that area, and [inaudible 12:33 – 12:34]. As a kid, all I did was fish and hike and I had the time of my life. And the decision was we would return to Everett. We came back. My folks bought a little house in Everett.

Mari-Ann: [12:50] What year was it you went back to Norway?

Osmund: [12:52] 1953.

Mari-Ann: [12:54] Okay.

Osmund: [12:56] And things were still pretty tough in Norway. Probably better here. I can remember my father saying, “Jeez, there aren’t any groceries in the grocery stores in Norway.” Compared to what we were used to. So I think all of those things kind of added up to the fact that we came back. My folks subsequently bought a little house in Everett.

[13:24] It’s funny to realize that for four thousand dollars- and they got it on contract with four hundred dollars down, and forty dollars a month. I happen to have the paperwork, and it’s a real kick. And forty dollars a month were the payments for a ten-year contract. And there were times when they couldn’t make those payments.

[13:47] I grew up kind of normally. I went to Garfield and grade school in Everett- Washington Grade School. I graduated from Everett High School. I was always shy. I always had difficulty learning. Certainly English was not my primary language, so I got to know all the very attractive, smart girls in school, because I was tutored most of my life. And I still have problems. Reading is not the best thing that I do. And certainly spelling, I get about a D minus. And writing is kind of difficult for me.

[14:32] I graduated from Everett, and being kind of a typical Everett-ite with not a whole lot of focus... Most of my friends were going to community college, and there I went. I managed the bookstore in the evenings for the college, as well as... somehow blossomed, going from a very shy kid to three years at Everett Community College where I got my AA degree. I became the student body vice president, men’s club vice-president, ski club president. And if I could be in something, I was there. And it was a great three years. I grew, I learned a lot, and got a little bit of confidence.

[15:34] Subsequently, I went to PLU. Now the reason going to PLU is Central Lutheran Church in Everett gave everybody a five hundred-dollar scholarship if you’d go to PLU or one of the other Lutheran schools. It wasn’t based on grades or anything; you just got it. Well, so here I go. And I didn’t have grades worth a darn. And I’m always intimidated going to PLU now because you have all these 4.0, 3.9 students, and they allowed me in on academic probation. And lo and behold, I graduated with a business degree at PLU. And it probably set the course of my life.

[16:33] I graduated in 1966 from PLU, and the Vietnam War was ramping up considerably. I had the great classification of being 4-A. That means they take you as soon as you graduate- from college in that situation. I graduated and subsequently went into the U.S. Army. I would have been drafted, but I signed up. After my wonderful, enlightened time at Fort Polk, Louisiana- which coming from the northwest was... going to Louisiana was a real shock.

[17:20] They asked me if I wanted to go to officer candidate school. I decided that would be the way to go. I subsequently got my commission from Fort Eustis as a Second Lieutenant in the Transportation Corps in the Army. I was fortunate, not being sent to Vietnam. However I was stationed at Fort Benning during that time, for two years. I got out of the military in 1969.

[18:00] I had some growing jobs there. I was in charge of Army Emergency Relief. I was death

notification officer there during some very difficult times, and I also ran the outpatient mental hygiene clinic, so we had a lot of issues that were stateside. I always look back at that, and that was a time that I probably lost my innocence, coming from PLU and going into the Army. It was a vast change.

[18:37] My son Bob was born at that time, and probably the highlight... We were given tickets to the Master's golf tournament in 1966, I believe. No, excuse me- 1969. And lo and behold, I had probably the youngest person there to attend that Master's game, and Bob was there in a stroller, and he was about one month old, and we were going over the fairways. So it was a great, great time. It meant a lot to me.

Mari-Ann: [19:19] So, when did you get married to Bob's mother?

Osmund: [19:23] In... 1966. Yeah. Right before the military. We were all very... I don't know, we were all worried. There were so many people dying in Vietnam, and it seemed like we all rushed into things. I was twenty-one at the time, almost twenty-two. It was... yeah. It was kind of a traumatic time.

[20:04] Bob's mother and I were married approximately nineteen years, and we had another child by the name of Kathy- Kathleen. And I'm fortunate that they live in the immediate vicinity, and I have five grandchildren, and it's a wonderful legacy. They're all very fine people. And they have done better than I have done in regards to their lives and what they have and how you measure that.

[20:37] Upon getting out of the military, I interviewed for some jobs here in the northwest, and my decision was very basic- I did not want to leave the northwest and the Seattle metropolitan area. I did have some potential opportunities, but they would transfer you every two years, and I did not want to do that after coming back from the military and being bounced around during training time.

[21:15] So, here we go. I'm here in Seattle, and take a job with People's Bank- Joshua Green and good old People's Bank. I didn't realize how good that job was until you're older and you get put in similar positions. They were a caring family that took care of their employees. Certainly they've got a great legacy here in the Seattle metropolitan area, with the Joshua Green Foundation, and so on.

[21:48] I worked for them for about nineteen years, and subsequently... I guess I quit, and decided to pursue other interests. I was instrumental in starting a daycare center for one hundred and ten kids- the largest one around for a while. I got out of that, and went back to banking. I had always been in small, independent banking.

[22:18] And one day, about twenty years ago, two great things happened. I married Anne-Lise Berger. And at almost the same time, or a little bit before that, we started Viking Bank, which had a very successful run in the Ballard community for about eighteen years. It was sold about a year and a half ago. Between Viking Bank and being married to Anne-Lise Berger, I had a pretty full and exciting life.

[22:57] For a short time I was also president of North Star Bank- president and CEO for two years. And that was interesting as well. Lise and I bought Scandinavian Specialties ten, twelve years ago, up on 85th and 15th- the little store. In a year or so, we decided it needs to be bigger. It can't be that way.

Both Anne-Lise and I are restless people and want to create things, so we moved into the large store. I'm very proud of the fact that Bjorn Ruud, my stepson- Anne-Lise's son- is the manager and runs the store. With his heritage and the Scandinavian community, we're continuing that tradition.

[23:53] Probably the highlights, I would say is that Lise and I look at the store as a heritage store, and sometimes we don't look at it as a financial gain or as a business venture. It's very important to the community and the west coast. Probably the other things... I got better connected to my heritage with Lise. I look back, and I have gaps in the time that I spent realizing who I am, and the importance of heritage.

[24:40] I look back and realize that if my parents had stayed in Norway, the likelihood of me having a college education would probably be nil, even though my mother really focused in on education, I would probably not have had the opportunities that I have had in this country. And doing the interesting things, and being involved in community- seeing people that I have helped in business become very, very successful.

[25:18] And that's probably the highlight of my life. I'm retired now, but I think the biggest joy that I have is when our grandchildren get together, our children get together, and seeing how their lives are evolving and the fact that they have many more choices than I had growing up. They're all pretty privileged from the standpoint of where I came from. And I look at how well they're doing academically and in all aspects of their lives. Mari-Ann, where are we going from here?

Mari-Ann: [26:06] That's wonderful. I had a question. You did not mention your parents' names.

Osumund: [26:13] Oh.

Mari-Ann: [26:13] And if you could tell a little bit about whether there were grandparents in your life when you were growing up, and what kind of a home you had in Oslo.

Osmund: [26:25] Okay. Well, we... My father Helge Kvithammer was born in Meråker [2/13/1910]. He, as I said, had only had a sixth-grade education. My grandfather worked in Meråker. My father subsequently worked in [inaudible], and that was the center of our family. My great-grandfather lived right by Værnes *flyplass* or airport, in Trondheim. There is a Kvithammer farm which my great-grandparents lived at. They were basically... you could call them sharecroppers. They didn't own anything. They lived in this open, small little house.

[27:26] They had three boys. My grandfather had two brothers- Helge and Arne. The amazing thing about them is they all lived into their mid-nineties. The other amazing thing is my father always said, "These are really happy people." They had nothing, but every time my father visited his great-grandmother, he said they were just the happiest people he had ever seen.

[28:01] My mother came from Kristiansund. My grandfather was a baker there, head of a large bakery in Kristiansund. He was very talented. He made the first automated cooking machine in Norway- created it by hand. He was a stern guy, but all of his seven children... I have seven aunts and uncles- they were all taught to do a trade, and they all went on to a university.

[28:43] Haakon was head of the technical school in Trondheim. My other uncle was an engineer, and was in charge of a section of the hospital in Tromsø. My aunt was a teacher. Certainly one of my

other uncles had a chain of bakery outlets in Oslo- *Brekken bakeri* and [inaudible 29:19]. So they baked in the central baking area and they delivered to the small stores around Oslo. So all of my relatives on my mother's side were highly educated and were always told to learn a trade.

[29:41] In fact, the funny thing is one of my uncles had to apprentice in a shoemaking shop in Kristiansund before he could go to college. Conversely, on my father's side, we don't have that history of education. However, we have a history of hard work. My grandmother on the Kvithammer side had her own little café in the house in Meråker. She always worked. My grandfather worked, and they were fairly successful.

[30:18] They bought the first car in 1932 or somewhere around that, that was ever up in Meråker. My dad and my grandfather went to Trondheim and bought the car. They couldn't drive, and so the car salesman went with them back to Meråker, and he stayed there until they learned how to drive, and then he went back to Trondheim. Just kind of an interesting sideline.

[30:55] The great joy, if you talk about legacies from the standpoint of my father's side of the family- they're all very outdoorsy. My love for fishing, hiking, the outdoors really comes from their side of the family. My mother's side of the family are striving intellectuals. My cousins are doctors; their children are doctors or lawyers or engineers. And they probably taught me to be curious. We were always doing things- the standpoint of being curious, seeking additional knowledge.

[31:46] I probably get knowledge by talking to people, because I am fairly outgoing now [laughter]- and asking questions, and how do you do that. I can't seem to read directions and figure it out, so it's better if I'm hands on- get taught that way. Mari-Ann, what else should we talk about?

Mari-Ann: [32:07] You have also been involved in Nordic, Norwegian organizations in the Seattle area. Talk a little bit about that.

Osmund: [32:17] Oh, wow. That's all been kind of fun. That's been an enhancement. You know, I've been, I guess, president, and treasurer, and all... chairs, Norwegian Commercial Club. That's been a lot of fun. We do good things. We've expanded it, improved it. And it builds heritage. I was officer and involved in Sons of Norway.

[32:47] They're a great group of people. It's a little heartbreaking now to see so many of our friends, and... it's time... dying, because they're in their nineties. We've gotten to love them dearly, and they're special people. And how tough a life some of them had, yet they've succeeded and conquered and gotten through that.

[33:18] I've been involved with the museum, and have a great heart for the museum and what they're doing. I can't wait to see the new museum built. And I guess the store, also, is part of that Norwegian heritage in my life.

[TAPE BREAK 33:47]

Mari-Ann: [33:48] Ozzie, let's go back and talk a little bit about your birth mother.

Osmund: [33:54] Wow, Mari-Ann. This gets really emotional for me. As I mentioned earlier, I was

adopted during the war. My mother couldn't have children, and they selected me. And I had never had any desire to seek my birth mother. You always wonder, being adopted, but it wasn't a big thing on my schedule. And, jeez, I have two great parents, you know. They took care of me. I was their priority in life, and it just doesn't get better than that.

[34:37] So, I was home, and Lise and I were painting, and she decided that I should... painting the inside of her house, and she decided, "It's good for you to go to Norway now." I probably got on her nerves a little bit [laughter] with my idea of painting and her idea of painting. So anyway, she said, "I think you should go to Norway." So I wound up in Norway. I stayed at my cousin's house in Oslo. My aunt was there. She was watching my cousin's children, and we were sitting around having a glass of wine, and talking, and I said, "Well, tell me about how I got adopted. Tell me about this."

[35:30] And Kirsten said, "Well, you know, my husband said that was family business." And he came from the Brekken side of the family. "That was none of my business." And I said, "Well, I'd really like to know what the heck happened, and how I wound up where I did, and so on." And she said, "Well, do you want me to check things out?" And I said, "Oh, Kirsten, I think that would be really interesting."

[36:03] So Kirsten being Kirsten, she can get anything. She can move mountains in thirty seconds. "No" is just another answer for "yes." We'll make it happen. So the next day she contacted the Salvation Army in Oslo, and they had always given money to the Salvation Army, so she had an in with the major in charge. And lo and behold, he said, "Well, yeah, we can. You're not supposed to be able to get the paperwork because it's locked. It takes months to get this information."

[36:48] And Kirsten said, "Well, you know Osmund is only going to be in Norway for a couple more weeks, and we need to get this information. And he said, "Well, I'll see what I can do." And I left Oslo and went up to Trondheim to visit the relatives. Before I left, Kirsten said, "Well, give me a call in a few days, and let's see what we've got going."

[37:18] So I called her about three, four days later, and she said, "Well, we have an appointment to meet your birth mother." She said, "I got the paperwork, and I discovered that your birth mother was in a nursing home in Bærum. The nursing home was only two blocks away from where Anne-Lise went to high school. And I'm coming out of my skin. I'm so nervous, I didn't quite know what to do. And so when I was finished with my visit in Trondheim I went back to Oslo and we had a little discussion with my aunt.

[38:12] I said, "What are we going to do? We're going to go see this lady? I'm so nervous, I can't hardly... I don't know what to tell her, what... anything." She said, "Well, I'll be the lead. I told her there is a relative trying to get some family history, and we're visiting on that pretext." Okay, so we get to the nursing home. It was just wonderful. She had her own room. And Kirsten said, "Well, I want to introduce you to your son."

[38:52] [Pause] Okay. [Pause] And she said, "I never had any son." Da da da, and the normal thing. And then Kirsten said, "Well, here is the paperwork, and this is your son." And she finally acknowledged me, and we had a wonderful hug, and I thanked her. I thanked her for the beautiful life that I had, because it would have been very difficult if I had been raised by her. And she subsequently got married and it was just kind of a disaster.

[39:39] So we hugged, I thanked her, and she died within six months of her ninetieth year. So I think the meeting worked out really well. And I was at peace with that, and I mentioned it to my father. I said, “Dad, I saw my birth mother.” And he said, “Well, your mother was always worried about that because she was insecure that you would love your birth mother more than your mother.”

[40:22] So, anyway. Interesting, hard, emotionally difficult, and it put me totally at ease and at peace. So it turned out pretty good. And I have subsequently had connections with my cousin, who I have never met, but we’ve written a couple of letters and got some family history. And my aunt was very cordial and invited us- Anne-Lise and I- to her home before she died. I got some additional family history, and I always got a Christmas letter from her, and she was delightful. So it was a good outcome at the end of somebody’s life. And it put her to ease and worked out pretty good.

Mari-Ann: [41:22] Yeah. That’s wonderful. Did you know anything about your father?

Osmund: [41:27] We kind of suppose that it was somebody on the farm way up there, but we don’t know. And that’s okay.

Mari-Ann: [41:34] Yeah. Yeah.

Osmund: [41:37] But I came out the winner. If she would have kept me, I would have never gone to school. Education is really the key to freedom and choices.

Mari-Ann: [41:48] Yeah.

Osmund: [41:49] She cleaned Forebu, I believe. Was Fornebu the one in town?

Mari-Ann: [41:57] Mm hm.

Osmund: [41:58] She cleaned there for thirty or forty years.

Mari-Ann: [42:03] Is that right?

Osmund: [42:04] Yeah. And had no education.

Mari-Ann: [42:05] Yeah.

Osmund: [42:06] She had a very, very difficult life. I think she was happy that she got to see that I was okay.

Mari-Ann: [42:13] Yeah.

Osmund: [42:14] And a good life.

Mari-Ann: [42:15] Yeah. Exactly. Wow. You gave her a gift before she passed away. Yeah.

Osmund: [42:19] And my aunt subsequently visited her a few times, and we sent flowers to her

grave and that type of thing.

Mari-Ann: [42:27] Wonderful. Good.

Osmund: [42:28] Yeah. It was... yeah. Pretty... that was a pretty difficult trip to Norway. Probably the most difficult I've ever had.

Mari-Ann: [42:36] Yes. I can imagine.

Osmund: [42:38] Yeah.

Mari-Ann: [42:40] So with your family here, what have you done to promote... I know you are involved in all of these organizations and have done a beautiful job on the store, which is so important to all of us. And also you work with the museum. But within your family, what have you done to help them appreciate and know the Norwegian culture?

Osmund: [43:05] Well, number one, they're not supposed to miss the seventeenth of May. I put a great deal of pressure on them. If they can at all make it, they will be there. Not as consistent sometimes as I'd like, but then I can be a demanding grandfather and father sometimes, and I have the right to do that. The other side of... how do we make the next generation appreciate where they came from- where I came from in our traditions, certainly.

[43:39] Christmastime, we have baking day the Sunday after Thanksgiving. At my daughter's place I think last Christmas we made seven or eight *krumsekake* and different things. You know, to get every grandchild there, and my adult children, and Bjorn comes- Bjorn and his girlfriend Claire- everybody is baking and having a good time, and we're eating and baking, and on occasion we'll have a drink, also. [Laughter] That's part of the heritage. Certainly Christmas traditions, and presents. We try to make them certainly ethnic, tying in with what we do.

[44:36] The other side is that I have promised each of the grandchildren, when they are sixteen, that I would take them to Norway for three or four weeks. So the first one was Nick Kvithammer, or Nicholas, who is graduating from high school in a week. And we had a great trip, just he and I- him with his goofy grandfather- and we did anything. It's their responsibility to plan, or go wherever they want, or do whatever they feel like.

[45:13] So now we're planning the second adventure of that type with his brother Cole Kvithammer. We will be going to Norway next year for three weeks or so, and we will plan that. And the one great thing about it is they not only connect with their cousins, they also connect with me. And our relationship totally changed when we were one-on-one. We don't get much one-on-one time with our grandchildren and our children, and it's a precious time.

[45:54] For me to have the children for three weeks or four weeks, and we're traveling, and Grandpa never knows where he's going. He even gets lost in his hometown in Oslo sometimes, because it's changed. So they laugh at me, and we have a good time, and we bond heavily. Cole is the next one, and then we've got my grandson Luke, who is nine, and I'd better keep breathing, because we're going to take him when he's sixteen, and my granddaughter is six, and either Anne-Lise will take her or I will take her, whatever.

[46:33] But all of those things are just really positive things to keep the culture going, and an understanding of who we are. And we are our history. So that's kind of what I do, and what we as a family do to kind of celebrate our heritage. All of them have Norwegian flags, and they are required to hang that on the seventeenth of May. They have *krumkake* irons. They have lefse... We don't do lefse, but we should. But we do *krumsekake* and all kinds of baking things. So that's tradition, from the standpoint of carrying that on.

Mari-Ann: [47:20] That is so wonderful. And to be able to have the time with your grandchildren alone in your home country- how special, and what a beautiful gift to them.

Osmund: [47:33] Mm hm. Yeah. Nick, especially, it's the first time we've been one-on-one for any length of time, and we got a lot closer. We are now jabbing each other, and we're buddies. It's really kind of a cool relationship.

Mari-Ann: [47:52] That's beautiful.

Osmund: [47:53] I'm especially excited to go to his graduation coming up now.

Mari-Ann: [47:55] Yeah. That's wonderful. And your grandsons live in Canada, so it isn't like you see them every week.

Osmund: [48:02] No. Every other month or so we see them for a little bit of an extended time. And they do get a lot of heritage, because their grandparents on the other side are Danish, and they're first generation Danish, and they have smorgasbords and so on, so they are immersed in Danish culture in Vancouver, Canada.

Mari-Ann: [48:27] Beautiful. That's great. Good.

Osmund: [48:31] Yeah.

Mari-Ann: [48:32] Well, I want to thank you for this, unless you have something else you would like to share with us.

Osmund: [48:36] No. You know, this is a little intimidating for me. And you know, I'm just thankful. I have a great life. I have been blessed by a lot of positive people- you being one of them, Mari-Ann. And I couldn't ask for anything more. It's not about money or stuff. It's about the relationships you make along the way.

Mari-Ann: [49:01] Amen.

Osmund: [49:02] And I'll leave it with that. Thank you.

Mari-Ann: [49:04] Thank you very much.

END OF RECORDING.

Transcription by Alison Goetz.