



New edition by David Elliker-Vågsberg (*Grieg 2-015 & Sonja (2-038)*, 2022  
All carvings and drawings by David Elliker-Vågsberg unless otherwise noted.

## Unit 9: FIGURE CARVING

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### About the Cultural Skills Program

Sons of Norway's Cultural Skills Program provides a framework for learning about traditional and contemporary Norwegian culture. Each unit consists of three levels of skill-specific activities to guide you as you learn. You can complete the units on your own, through your lodge or through a special class or group. For each level, you'll complete a few activities, email (or mail) them in to Sons of Norway Headquarters, get feedback, and earn a pin in recognition of your accomplishments. As a benefit of membership, the Cultural Skills Program is available only to members of Sons of Norway.

When you complete part 1 of your first unit you'll receive a Cultural Skills pin, a skill bar, and a level 1 bar. You'll receive additional level bars when you complete parts 2 and 3 of that skill, and new skill bars when you complete level 1 of a new skill.

### Going Further with Cultural Skills

Want to take your skills to a new level? Members who have completed multiple units or mentored others in the program can earn special recognition.

- A Master of Cultural Skills is someone who has completed multiple units. Finish all three parts of any three units for the bronze level, all parts of six units for the silver level and all parts of nine units for the gold level.
- A Cultural Skills Mentor instructs or guides others to learn about Norwegian cultural skills. If your instruction has helped other members earn Cultural Skills awards, you can earn a mentor pin.

For more information about the Sons of Norway Cultural Skills Program, call (800) 945-8851 or email [culturalskills@sofn.com](mailto:culturalskills@sofn.com).

### Introduction

We know that figure carving out of wood began at least 5,000 years ago because there are extant carvings from Egypt from that period. With the discovery of the Viking Ship carvings it became clear that by the 700s that the Norwegian Vikings had developed very sophisticated skills at carving. Some of the carvings discovered with the Oseberg Ship from the Tønsberg area in Vestfold og Telemark county show very intricate, highly advanced carving skills. Some of the figures carved from the Oseberg ship included animal heads and other carved creatures attached to the sleds & wagons. One other important existing carvings from this period is the Kivik Horse from the Faroe Islands, dated to ca. 700-800.

The discovery in Gotland, Sweden of the *Mästermyr* Find of Viking Age Tools dated to ca. 1000 was proof that the Viking craftsmen had complex tools made from iron and only lacked at the time the (more modern) v-tool for carving wood.

Some examples of Norwegian figure carvings from 1150-1200 are the Lewis Chessmen carved from walrus ivory and whale teeth. The chess pieces consist of elaborately worked walrus ivory and whale teeth in the forms of seated kings and queens, bishops, knights on their mounts, standing warders and pawns in the shape of obelisks. The chessmen were carved in Norway but later discovered in the "Western Isles" which were part of Norway during that period of time. Of the 93 pieces known to us today, 11 pieces are in Edinburgh at the National Museum of Scotland, and 82 are in the British Museum, London, England.

Later during the building of the stave churches in the years from ca. 1000 to 1300, many carvings were created both outside the churches and inside. Many of the existing stave churches have carved faces on the inside upper beams and carved animals on some of the exterior doorways.

During what the Norwegians call the "*blomstring*" [blossoming] period, ca. 1650-1850, and also known as the "golden period of folk art," many more ornate carvings were created for both homes and churches. This is also the period that many articles used

in everyday life were carved from wood, the most common and available raw material for these items. Examples of these carved objects are *primstaver* (calendar sticks), *mangletrær* (mangle boards, used for ironing, various drinking bowls such as *kjenger* (double-ended drinking bowls with horse or dragon heads on each end), or *ølhøner* (single-ended drinking bowls with a chicken, rooster, or bird head on one end).



Also carved during this period were many elaborate sets of furniture, many in the *akantus stil* (acanthus style) of carving imported from Europe. Small boxes, wooden chests and butter molds are further examples of ordinary wooden items which were carved. For the more wealthy who could afford luxurious items, there were ornately carved wooden *spissleder* (sleighs) and wagons.

The Hedmark Museum in Hamar has a nice collection of *spissleder* (sleighs), *ferdaskriner* (traveling trunks), *bogtrær* (horse collars) and *høvrer* (saddles), all intricately carved and painted. Also in the same museum are a nice group of carved *mangletrær* (mangle boards).

One example of the many churches with figure carvings is Vågå Church. Not only are there many separate figures, but many of the pew ends have relief carvings of the disciples and other pews have the faces of angels. In the altar area are more religious figure carvings combined with acanthus carvings.

As many carvers immigrated to America and Canada, they brought their skills with them. There are numerous examples of figure carvers in America who continued their crafts. With second- or third-generation carvers in both America and Canada such as Harley Refsal from Decorah, Iowa, the folk art form continues today.

For good references to Scandinavian figure carving history, carvings, museums and carvers, see Harley Refsal's new publication called *Scandinavian Figure Carvings, 2015*, published by Fox Chapel Publishing.

Scandinavian figure carvings can be viewed in many of the 169 museums in Norway including the Norsk Folkemuseum on Bygdøy in Oslo, Domkirkeodden – the Hedmark Museum in Hamar – and Maihaugen Open-Air Museum in Lillehammer. In the US there are a number of museum collections with figure carvings: the National Nordic Museum in Seattle, WA, Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum in Decorah, IA, and the American-Swedish Institute in Minneapolis, MN.

Other sources of Norwegian figure carving may be viewed at private sources in Norway as well as pictures posted on the internet of carvers from recent times. Some examples can be found in Fjærland, Norway at the "Bok & Bilde" bokhandel (bookstore) carved by local carver Harald Rutle (1905-1988).

Other carving examples can be found on the internet such as works by Hans Sorken (1920-2008) with some of his carvings in the Norsk Skogmuseum in Elverum and many of Bjarne Walle's (1911-1989) carvings may be viewed by searching for his images.

Two current carving businesses are Treskjerartunet located in Myrkdalen Galleri in Vossestrand and the Henning Factory in Kapp. Both have interesting websites.





One of the five famous carved "heads" from the Oseberg ship



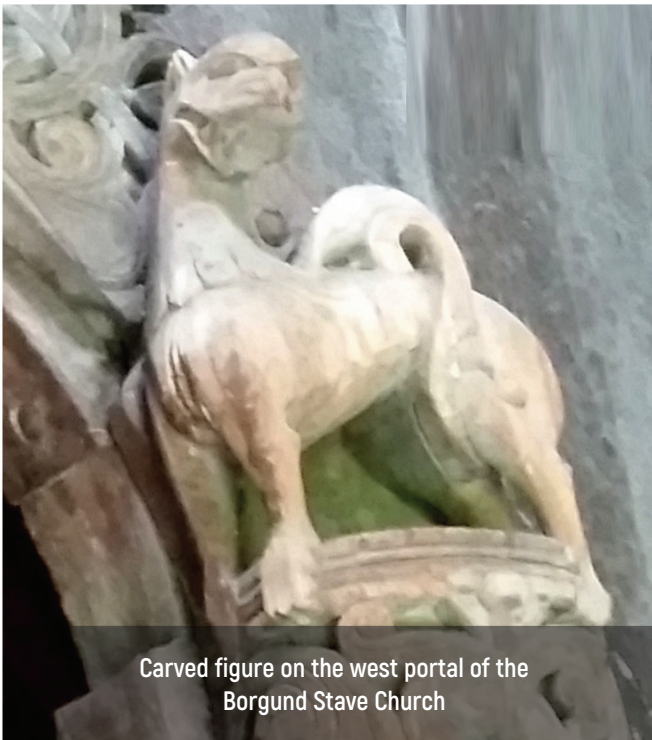
Budeie opp på seter  
(Maiden on the mountain pasture)



Nisse som går på ski  
(Gnome out for a ski)



Nisser som bor i Amerika nå med tradisjonell rød topplue  
(Nisser who now live in America, with red tasseled hats)



Carved figure on the west portal of the Borgund Stave Church



Lewis Chessmen - British Museum

## Overview:

**For Part 1**, you will write a short history, show how a knife is honed; make a strop; carve a face; complete a simple figure carving; complete a Learning Activity.

**For Part 2**, collect some catalogs; write about sharpening knives; create a strop for gouges & v-tools; draw a figure, modify it and carve it; complete a second Learning Activity.

**For Part 3**, make a tool carrier; study & write about the human figure; draw or modify an original pattern and carve it; complete a third Learning Activity

If you have a question regarding any part of this unit, please send an email to [culturalskills@sofn.com](mailto:culturalskills@sofn.com) or call (800) 945-8851.

# Part 1: Norwegian Figure Carving

## Part 1 Activities

### 1: Learn about the history of Norwegian figure carving

See available from Heritage Books, your public library, or for sale by booksellers. Using more than one source, write a short report (300-500 words) on what you learned about Norwegian figure carving. Include such items as the subjects of the carvings, the types of wood used and the finish of the carvings. Do the carvings have paint or have a natural wood look to them? If they are painted, is the paint heavy or light, allowing the wood grain to show through? What types of tools and wood are used in the United States, Canada and Norway for figure carvings?

### 2: Explain, by drawing, how to sharpen carving knives

This is assuming that there is no damaged knife edge to repair to require the use of grinding stones. Draw arrows showing how the knife is guided on the leather or wood stropping surface. This information may be obtained from carving books or hands-on demonstration from a wood carver in your area. Include a clear copy of your sharpening strop drawing.

### 3: Make a wooden or leather strop for sharpening knives

Any flat piece of wood or flat wood covered with thin leather will work. You may find this information in a woodcarving book or from a carver in your area. Take a photo and include it along with your drawing and other requirements.

### 4: Select a first pattern to complete

See the sample patterns on pages 6-8 or choose your own pattern of a Norwegian figure carving. Trace the pattern on a block of wood and include the pattern with your report.

### 5: Complete your first project out of wood and make a photo of the carving to submit with your Pin Application Form – Part 1

You may want to contact a wood carver in your Sons of Norway lodge or local carving club to help in this project. There is one important periodical source for woodcarving clubs: "Chip Chats" is a bi-monthly publication of the National Wood Carvers Association which publishes club listings from time to time. Find archive listings of the magazine on their website: [chipchats.org](http://chipchats.org).

### 6: Second project

Figure carvings at some point involve the creation of a human face, a troll face or nisse face, etc. Learning to carve faces and heads is an essential part of figure carving. For this project, take a square piece of wood (basswood or butternut are the best carving woods) about 1.5 inches square and 6 inches long. Using one corner as the nose and front of the face, draw in a face to carve and complete a practice bust. There are many sources of information which can help this project. Many of Harley Refsal's books contain directions on carving faces. See the reference section at the end of this unit. Photograph your completed face and bust and submit with your Pin Application Form.

### 7: Learning Activities – Level 1

Choose one topic from the list of Learning Activities on page 20 and write a brief description with photos of your activity. Include this with your Pin Application Form - Level 1.

## Submitting your work

**Complete the Pin Application Form included in this section, and submit all of the following items to your lodge Cultural Director:**

- History of Norwegian Figure Carving
- Drawing of sharpening a knife on a leather or wood strop
- Picture of your sharpening strop
- Pattern for your first project
- Photo of your complete face/bust
- Report on your completion of a Learning Activity





Remember you must include photocopies, photographs or scans of your projects and requirements with your completed Pin Application Form. Failure to include the required items will delay the awarding of your well-deserved pin or bar! To help make this unit even better, please take time to fill out the evaluation form provided at the end of this unit.

**To submit your work and receive a Cultural Skills pin:**

Send completed reports to your lodge's Cultural Director (or other lodge officer), who can order pins via the Lodge Leader Supply Store.

If you are a member of Central Lodge, submit your report to your district's Cultural Director.

## Example of two flat strop boards for knives



Strop board covered with very thin, suede or leather.

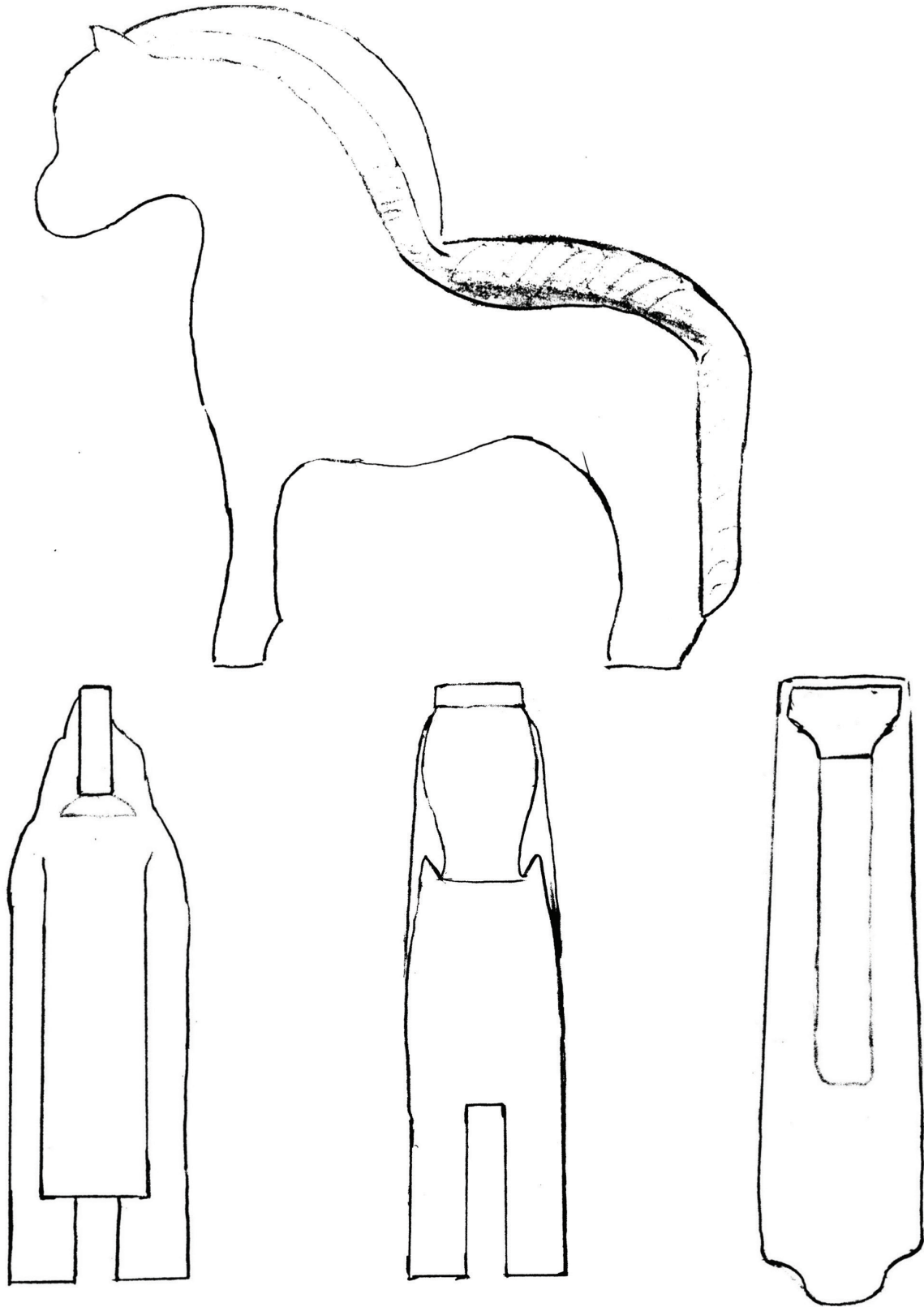
Strop board made from basswood with strop compound rubbed on- note the dark areas from steel leaving the knife.

The advantage to a wood board strop is the fact that the wood is hard enough not to round off the edges when stropping. If the knife is rubbed too hard on a soft leather strop, and the leather curls up around the cutting edge, the strop can actually dull the knife edge. If leather is used, then really thin leather is much better than soft thick leather. (Note that the barbers who use leather strops, use dense, hard-surfaced types of leather which don't round off the cutting edges when stropping.)

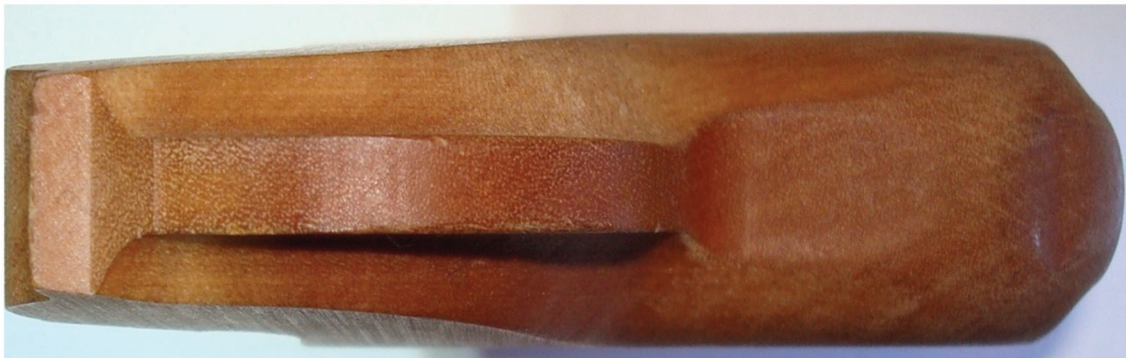
# Part 1: Sample Drawing and Carving Project

## Simple Fjord Horse

Free to copy and use for carving



Top View



## Simple Fjord Horse

Free to copy and use for carving



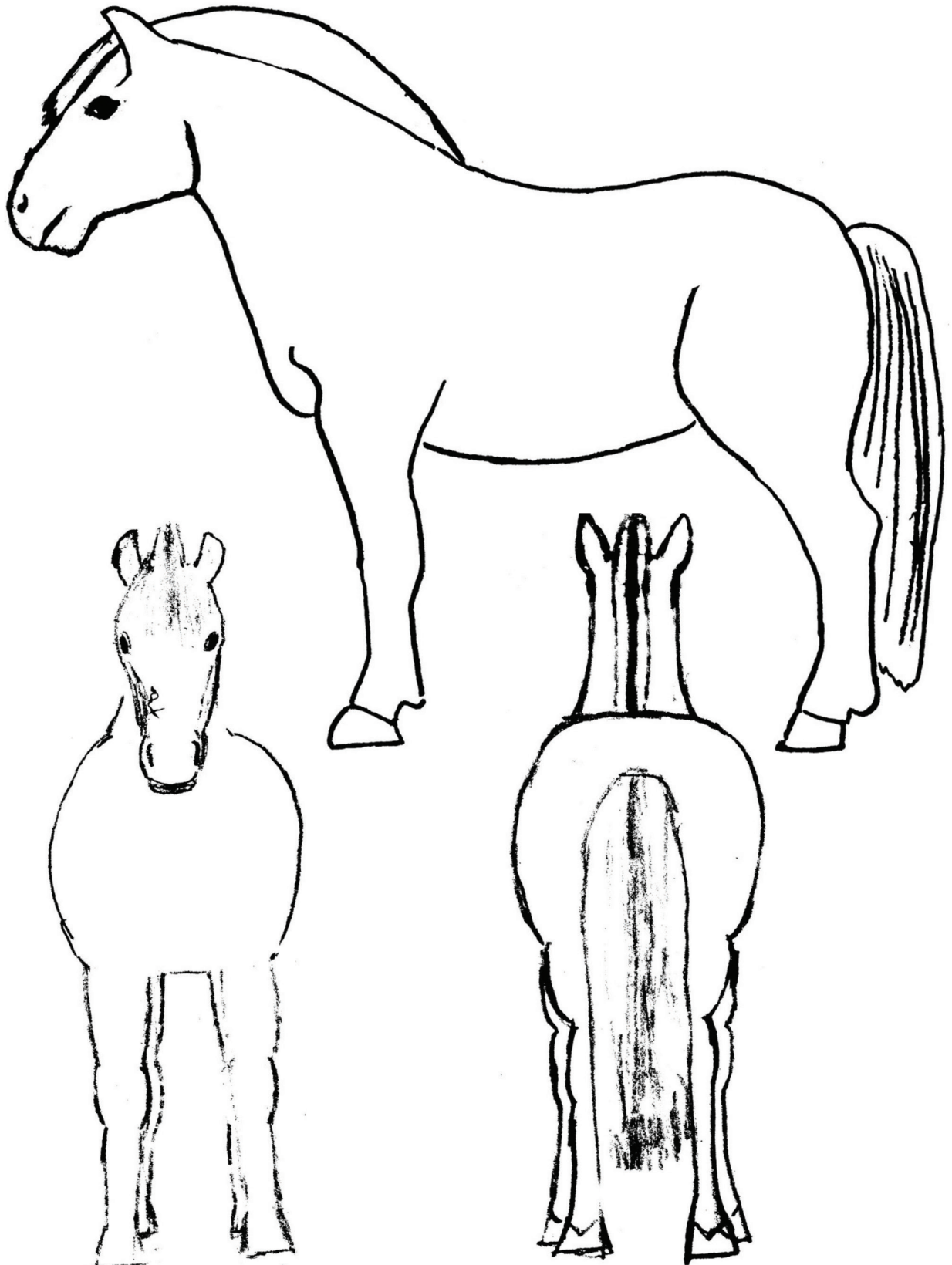
[www.sonsofnorway.com](http://www.sonsofnorway.com)



## Part 1: Advanced Sample Drawing and Carving Project

Fjord Horse

Free to copy and use for carving





## Instructions

Email this form to your lodge's Cultural Director (or other lodge officer). If you are a member of Central Lodge, submit your report to your district's Cultural Director.

Reports and pictures can be sent as attachments.

This form can now be filled out and submitted digitally. Just sign in to the "Members Login" section of [www.sonsofnorway.com](http://www.sonsofnorway.com) to find a digital copy of this form that you can fill out, save and email with the rest of your report.

## Pin Application Form - Figure Carving Part 1

### Contact Information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip/Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

### Lodge Affiliation Information:

(Required) Membership #: \_\_\_\_\_ District #: \_\_\_\_\_ Lodge #: \_\_\_\_\_

### I have completed the requirements for Figure Carving, Part 1

#### 1. Attached Are:

- History of Norwegian Figure Carving
- Drawing of sharpening a knife on a leather or wood strop
- Picture of your sharpening strop
- Pattern for your first project
- Photo of your complete face/bust
- Learning Activity

#### 2. Learning activity # \_\_\_\_\_

If your learning activity requires you to write a short summary, include it below. If you need more space, simply attach your summary as a separate document.

#### 3. Evaluation Form

Have you received Cultural Skills Program pin awards previously?  Yes  No

If yes, please list: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature (Cultural Skills Applicant)\*\*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\*\*By signing this form and accepting awards you are giving Sons of Norway Headquarters permission to use your photos in future promotional materials.

#### For Lodge Cultural Skills Administrator OR Designated Lodge Officer Use Only

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Lodge Cultural Skills Admin/Officer)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## Instructions

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## Unit Evaluation Form – Figure Carving Part 1

For each of the four questions below, please check the box that fits your opinion most accurately.

	Agree	Disagree
1. Instructions for this part were easy to follow.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Requirements for this part were reasonable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Learning activities provided a lot of choices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Required activities were interesting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

This part has (check all that apply):

- Helped me gain a better appreciation of Norwegian heritage & culture.
  
- Increased my involvement with other lodge members (such as participation in formal & informal discussions, presentations, formal group activities, etc.).
  
- Increased the interest of my lodge in the Cultural Skills Program because of my participation through special interest groups, presentations, or cultural fairs.
  
- Offered me an opportunity to involve or pass on this skill/interest to family members or other interested individuals.
  
- Helped prepare me to participate in the district and/or International Folk Art Exhibition & Competition.

**Feedback:** To improve the unit, please add comments and suggestions. Your comments are confidential and in no way affect the awarding of your earned pin or bar.



## Overview:

**For Part 1**, you will write a short history, show how a knife is honed; make a strop; carve a face; complete a simple figure carving; complete a Learning Activity.

**For Part 2**, collect some catalogs; write about sharpening knives; create a strop for gouges & v-tools; draw a figure, modify it and carve it; complete a second Learning Activity.

**For Part 3**, make a tool carrier; study & write about the human figure; draw or modify an original pattern and carve it; complete a third Learning Activity

If you have a question regarding any part of this unit, please send an email to [culturalskills@sofn.com](mailto:culturalskills@sofn.com) or call (800) 945-8851.

## Part 2: Norwegian Figure Carving

### Part 2 Activities

#### 1: Collect at least one, preferably two, catalogs which sell woodcarving tools

Write a short report (100-300 words) showing that you understand how to identify tools by size and weight. What are the differences between chip carving knives and other carving knives? How are gouges sized by sweep numbers?

#### 2: In a brief report (100-300 words), explain basic knife sharpening theory about grinding to honing or buffing tools

Include a short description of sharpening angles and how they make it easier or harder to carve wood. (Hint: Refsal knives have a very long grind from the tang to the sharpened edge and as a result they carve through the wood with very little resistance when properly sharpened.)

#### 3: Create a stropping board from a small flat piece of softwood (pine, basswood, or butternut) for gouges and v-tools by carving a convex and concave line down the board that will correspond to the exact shape of your tools, both top and bottom of the tools

Take stropping compound or buffing compound and rub into the board in the areas carved out. You will notice when you sharpen your tools that these areas will darken from the steel being taken off. Take a picture of your board and submit with your final report.

#### 4: Choose a pattern from the supplied patterns or one of your choice

There are many carving patterns available that reflect figures from Norwegian life. An alternative would be to create your own pattern from the many pictures that exist of Scandinavian figure carvings. Many patterns are available in Harley Refsal's books on Scandinavian figure carving.

#### 5: Draw the pattern you selected and modify it

To do that simply, move one of the arms on the pattern to be doing something different from the selected pattern. Or move the head area slightly to the side so that the head is turned. Show a front view and a side view. Add the drawing to your final report.

#### 6: Complete the project out of wood

You may want to contact a carver in your area for assistance in this project. This piece should have more detail than the first. It can be painted or have only a sealer coat or be left as raw wood. Important: sign and date the carving on the bottom. Make two sharp color photos – front and side views – to attach with your Pin Application Form.

#### 7: Learning Activities – Level 2

Choose one topic from the list of Learning Activities on page 20 and write a brief description with photos of your activity. Include this with your Pin Application Form - Level 2.

### Submitting your work

**Complete the Pin Application Form included in this section, and submit all of the following items:**

- Report on differences between chip carving and other knives
- Basic knife sharpening theory
- Create a stropping board from softwood
- Choose a carving pattern
- Draw and modify selected pattern
- Complete carving project
- Learning Activity

**Remember you must include photocopies, photographs or scans of your projects and requirements with your completed Pin Application Form. Failure to include the required items will delay the awarding of your well-deserved pin or bar! To help make**





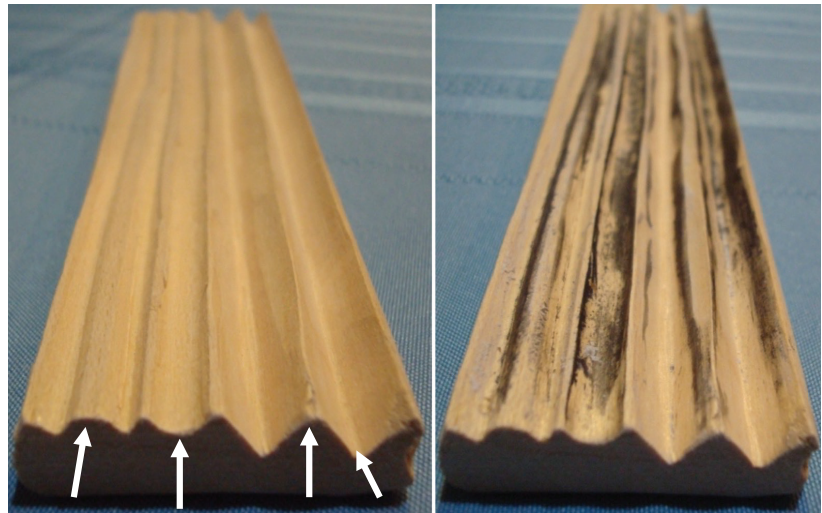
this unit even better, please take time to fill out the evaluation form provided at the end of this unit.

To submit your work and receive a Cultural Skills pin:

Send completed reports to your lodge's Cultural Director (or other lodge officer), who can order pins via the Lodge Leader Supply Store.

If you are a member of Central Lodge, submit your report to your district's Cultural Director.

## Example of a strop board for two tools before and after use



Convex    Concave                  Convex    Concave  
#9 x 6 mm gouge                  #12 x 8 mm v-tool

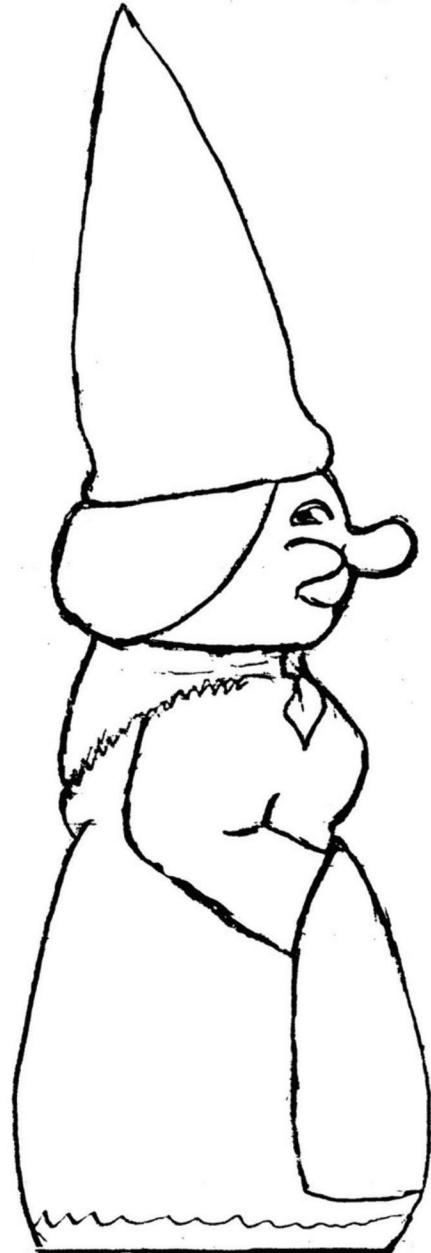
Same strop after applying compound and sharpening tools - note that the white strop compound turns black from the steel of the tool.

## Part 2: Sample Drawing and Carving Project

### Nisse kvinne (Elf woman)

Free to copy and use for carving. Enlarge or reduce to fit your project.

Hint: When ready to carve your project, make a transparency or copy on tracing paper to use while carving so you can draw them in again easily.



## Instructions

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Reports and pictures can be sent as attachments.

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## Pin Application Form - Figure Carving Part 2

### Contact Information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip/Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

### Lodge Affiliation Information:

(Required) Membership #: \_\_\_\_\_ District #: \_\_\_\_\_ Lodge #: \_\_\_\_\_

### I have completed the requirements for Figure Carving, Part 2

#### 1. Attached Are:

- Report on differences between chip carving and other knives
- Basic knife sharpening theory
- Create a stropping board from softwood
- Choose a carving pattern
- Draw and modify selected pattern
- Complete carving project
- Learning Activity

#### 2. Activity # \_\_\_\_\_

If your Learning Activity requires you to write a short summary, include it below. If you need more space, simply attach your summary as a separate document.

#### 3. Evaluation Form

Have you received Cultural Skills Program pin awards previously?  Yes  No

If yes, please list: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature (Cultural Skills Applicant)\*\*

Date

\*\*By signing this form and accepting awards you are giving Sons of Norway Headquarters permission to use your photos in future promotional materials.

For Lodge Cultural Skills Administrator OR Designated Lodge Officer Use Only

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Lodge Cultural Skills Admin/Officer)

Date



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## Unit Evaluation Form – Figure Carving Part 2

For each of the four questions below, please check the box that fits your opinion most accurately.

	Agree	Disagree
1. Instructions for this part were easy to follow.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Requirements for this part were reasonable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Learning activities provided a lot of choices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Required activities were interesting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

This part has (check all that apply):

- Helped me gain a better appreciation of Norwegian heritage & culture.
  
- Increased my involvement with other lodge members (such as participation in formal & informal discussions, presentations, formal group activities, etc.).
  
- Increased the interest of my lodge in the Cultural Skills Program because of my participation through special interest groups, presentations, or cultural fairs.
  
- Offered me an opportunity to involve or pass on this skill/interest to family members or other interested individuals.
  
- Helped prepare me to participate in the district and/or International Folk Art Exhibition & Competition.

**Feedback:** To improve the unit, please add comments and suggestions. Your comments are confidential and in no way affect the awarding of your earned pin or bar.



## Overview:

For **Part 1**, you will write a short history, show how a knife is honed; make a strop; carve a face; complete a simple figure carving; complete a Learning Activity.

For **Part 2**, collect some catalogs; write about sharpening knives; create a strop for gouges & v-tools; draw a figure, modify it and carve it; complete a second Learning Activity.

For **Part 3**, make a tool carrier; study & write about the human figure; draw or modify an original pattern and carve it; complete a third Learning Activity

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Another nisse design showing the traditional shape of the nisse hat (rød topp)

For some interesting history, look up the relation between this hat and the resistance during WWII.

## Part 3: Norwegian Figure Carving

### Part 3 Activities

#### 1: Learn to flat grind or hollow grind carving tools

Be sure to follow all safety requirements in using the grinder. You can use an electrical one or a manual mechanical grinder. Note: if no grinder is available or is too difficult to use safely, any combination of flat grinding stones or diamond-coated sharpening stones may be used. Examples are silicon oxide for coarse, Arkansas stones for medium and fine, then stropping with strop compounds for very fine. There are many different types of sharpening stones, many of them synthetic.

#### 2: Make a useful container to safely store and transport carving tools

This can be a box or a tool roll to protect the edges. Some people use water bottle ice cube trays to hold their shorter carving tools.

#### 3: Study proportions of the human figure

What are the differences in proportions for real life carvings compared to carvings of trolls or nisser or other caricature carvings? How do Scandinavian flat- plane figure carvings differ from other human or caricature carvings? Write a short report about your findings (100-300 words) and include with your Part 3 Pin Application Form. (See page 18)

#### 4: Draw an original pattern, or modify the supplied Level 3 Nisse pattern (See page 17), which resembles a Norwegian or Norwegian-American character

Carve this character out of wood. Include a copy of your pattern and a picture of your project with your Pin Application Form.

#### 5: Learning Activities – Level 3

Choose one topic from the list of Learning Activities on page 17 and write a brief description with photos of your activity. Include this with your Pin Application Form - Level 3. (Page 20)

### Submitting your work

**Complete the Pin Application Form included in this section, and submit all of the following items:**

- Learn to flat grind or hollow grind carving tools
- Make a container to store and transport carving tools
- Study proportions of the human figure
- Draw or modify Level 3 nisse pattern
- Learning Activity

**Remember you must include photocopies, photographs or scans of your projects and requirements with your completed Pin Application Form. Failure to include the required items will delay the awarding of your well-deserved pin or bar! To help make this unit even better, please take time to fill out the evaluation form provided at the end of this unit.**

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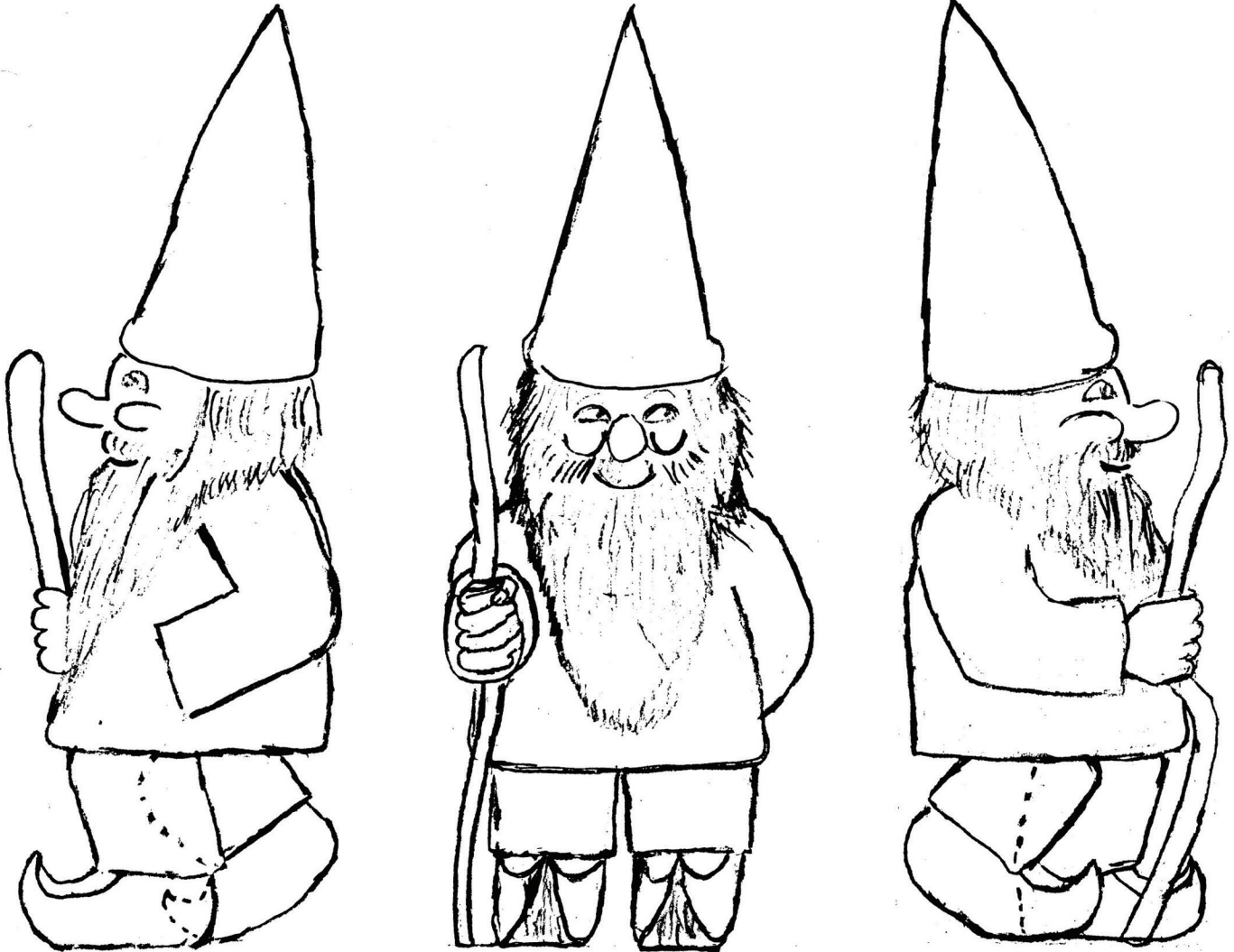


## Part 3: Sample Drawing and Carving Project

### Nisse mann (Elf man)

Free to copy and use for carving. Enlarge or reduce to fit your project.

Hint: When ready to carve your project, make a transparency or copy on tracing paper to use while carving so you can draw the image in again easily.





## Instructions

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## Pin Application Form - Figure Carving Part 3

### Contact Information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip/Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

### Lodge Affiliation Information:

(Required) Membership #: \_\_\_\_\_ District #: \_\_\_\_\_ Lodge #: \_\_\_\_\_

### I have completed the requirements for Figure Carving, Part 3

#### 1. Attached Are:

- Learn to flat grind or hollow grind carving tools
- Make a container to store and transport carving tools
- Study proportions of the human figure
- Draw or modify Level 3 nisse pattern
- Learning Activity

#### 2. Learning activity # \_\_\_\_\_

If your Learning Activity requires you to write a short summary, include it below. If you need more space, simply attach your summary as a separate document.

#### 3. Evaluation Form

Have you received Cultural Skills Program pin awards previously?  Yes  No

If yes, please list: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature [Cultural Skills Applicant]\*\*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\*\*By signing this form and accepting awards you are giving Sons of Norway Headquarters permission to use your photos in future promotional materials.

For Lodge Cultural Skills Administrator OR Designated Lodge Officer Use Only

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Lodge Cultural Skills Admin/Officer)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



[www.sonsofnorway.com](http://www.sonsofnorway.com)

## Instructions

Email this form to your lodge's Cultural Director (or other lodge officer). If you are a member of Central Lodge, submit your report to your district's Cultural Director.

Reports and pictures can be sent as attachments.

This form can now be filled out and submitted digitally. Just sign in to the "Members Login" section of [www.sonsofnorway.com](http://www.sonsofnorway.com) to find a digital copy of this form that you can fill out, save and email with the rest of your report.

## Unit Evaluation Form – Figure Carving Part 3

For each of the four questions below, please check the box that fits your opinion most accurately.

	Agree	Disagree
1. Instructions for this part were easy to follow.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Requirements for this part were reasonable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Learning Activities provided a lot of choices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Required activities were interesting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

This part has (check all that apply):

- Helped me gain a better appreciation of Norwegian heritage & culture.
  
- Increased my involvement with other lodge members (such as participation in formal & informal discussions, presentations, formal group activities, etc.).
  
- Increased the interest of my lodge in the Cultural Skills Program because of my participation through special interest groups, presentations, or cultural fairs.
  
- Offered me an opportunity to involve or pass on this skill/interest to family members or other interested individuals.
  
- Helped prepare me to participate in the district and/or International Folk Art Exhibition & Competition.

**Feedback:** To improve the unit, please add comments and suggestions. Your comments are confidential and in no way affect the awarding of your earned pin or bar.



## Learning Activities – Figure Carving

1. Visit a carving show or carving club in your area and find examples of figure carvings, preferably Norwegian style. Take photos or obtain pictures and write a 250 word report on your observations.
2. Arrange and organize a carving exhibit in your lodge. Any styles of carving may be shown, but include some Norwegian style carvings if available. Write a short report describing your exhibit and include a photo.
3. Read at least three books from the resources on pages 21-22 and then write a 500 word report on traditional Norwegian figure carvings.
4. Visit a tool store in your area and list all available tools associated with wood carving. Give a brief description of them and their uses.
5. Visit a lumberyard in your area and list all the species of wood available that would be suitable for carving. Purchase five different kinds of wood (or use your own wood if available at home) and carve the same figure (like a simple fjord horse - see the pattern on page 7) out of each one of the five different kinds of wood. Write a brief report about the differences in carving each wood and include a photo of your work.
6. Take a drawing class on the human form and write a brief report (300 words) about your experiences.
7. Take a carving class from a person who teaches figure carving in the Scandinavian tradition.
8. Form a carving group in your lodge or join a local woodcarving group. Briefly describe your experiences and supply photos of some finished figure carvings from the group.
9. Design your own carving project.
10. Carve a Norwegian or Norwegian-American character using your own pattern or one from a book or carver. Submit a copy of your pattern and photos of your work.
11. Visit a museum that contains figure carvings in the Scandinavian style. In Harley Refsal's new book: *Scandinavian Figure Carvings from the Viking Era to Döderhultarn, Trygg and Modern Carvers*, Refsal lists all the museums which contain these types of carvings. Write a short article (300 words) about your visit and include photos.
12. Write a short report on Norwegian style figure carving for your lodge's newsletter. Include the report along with any photos that might have been included in the article.
13. Start a carving blog. Write about your progress completing the Figure Carving Cultural Skills unit and/or include completed carving work you have done. Write at least three entries and submit a link to your blog with the Pin Application Form.
14. Review a figure carving book or woodcarving magazine that includes Norwegian or Norwegian/American figure carvings and instructions. Write a short report (300 words) including a critique on how well the author was able to clearly teach how to carve the figure or figures.



## RESOURCES - UNIT 9 - Figure Carving

Please note that many books listed here are out of print but many can be found in libraries or from used book sellers. Some Norwegian books can be found from an *antikvariat bokhandel* in Norway or by contacting the two *bokbyer* [book towns], Fjærland and Tvedestrand. Online references change frequently, so only general resources are listed.

### Scandinavian figure carving

- Amrud, Johan. 1992. *Ornamental Woodcarving*. Heart Prairie Press.
- Amrud, Johan. 1998. *Treskjæring*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 5. opplag.
- Brøgger, A.W. & Shetelig, Haakon. 1951. *The Viking Ships*. Dreyers Forlag.
- Duncan, Bob. 2012. 2012 Woodcarver of the Year - Harley Refsal. *Woodcarving Illustrated* 60 (Fall): 26-29.
- Bugge, Gunnar & Norberg-Schulz, Christian. 1969. *Stav og Laft i Norge*. Norske Arkitekters Landsforbund.
- Ekern, Gerald. 2001. *Caricature Wood Carving with Gold Medalist Gerald Ekern*. Gerald Ekern.  
(This book is one of the best figure carving books. Good face carving instructions. Available from Vesterheim Store.)\*\*\*
- Enlow, Harold L. 1975. *Carving Figure Caricatures in the Ozark Style*. Dover Publications.
- Enlow, Harold L. 1979. *How to Carve Folk Figures and a Cigar Store Indian*. Dover Publications.
- Gilbertson, Donald E. & Richards, James F. 1975. *A Treasury of Norwegian Folk Art in America*. Tin Chicken Antiques.
- Henning, Darrell D. et al. 1978. *Norwegian-American Wood Carving of the Upper Midwest*. Vesterheim, Norwegian-American Museum.
- Holan, Jerri. 1990. *Norwegian Wood: A Tradition of Building*. Rizzoli International Publications.
- Hull, Joel. 2000. *Troll Girl*. *Woodcarving Illustrated* 12. (Fall): 60-61.
- Krause, Lyle. 1998. *Carve Your Own Gnome*. *Woodcarving Illustrated* 5 (Christmas): 54-62.
- Lincoln, Louise, editor. 1978. *The Art of Norway 1750-1914*. Minneapolis Institute of Arts.
- Refsal, Harley. 1991. *Scandinavian-Style Figure Carving Patterns*. Harley Refsal.
- Refsal, Harley. 1992. *Woodcarving in the Scandinavian Style*. New York: Sterling Publishing Co.\*\*\*
- Refsal, Harley. 1995. *Carving Trolls and Other Scandinavian-Style Characters*. Dog Hill Press.
- Refsal, Harley. 1999. *Caricature Carver Andy Anderson. A Broad-Shouldered Inspiration*. *Wood Carving Illustrated* 7 (Spring): 64-69.
- Refsal, Harley. 2000. *The Story of Trolls*. *Woodcarving Illustrated* 10 (Spring): 30-31.
- Refsal, Harley. 2003. *The Trygg Family: Prolific Figure Carvers*. *Woodcarving Illustrated* 24 (Fall): 61-65.
- Refsal, Harley. 2004. *Art & Technique of Scandinavian Style Woodcarving*. Fox Chapel Publishing Co.
- Refsal, Harley. 2004. *Carve a Scandinavian-Style Troll*. *Woodcarving Illustrated* 27 (Summer): 33-39.
- Refsal, Harley. 2005. *Figure Carving. Vesterheim, got wood?* 3, No.2: 27-31.
- Refsal, Harley. 2004. *Paint a Scandinavian-Style Troll*. *Woodcarving Illustrated* 28 (Summer): 30-34.
- Refsal, Harley. 2011. *Carving a Scandinavian-Style Troll Queen*. *Woodcarving Illustrated* 54 (Spring): 25-31.
- Refsal, Harley. 2011. *Whittling Little Folk*. Fox Chapel Publishing Co.
- Refsal, Harley. 2015. *Carving Flat-Plane Style Caricatures. Step-by-Step Instructions & Patterns for 50 Projects*. Fox Chapel Publishing Co.
- Refsal, Harley. 2015. *Meet Døderhultarn*. *Woodcarving Illustrated* 72 (Fall): 52-55.
- Refsal, Harley. 2015. *Scandinavian Figure Carvings*. Fox Chapel Publishing Co.
- Rhadigan, Floyd. 2014. *Sven the Happy Barkeep*. *Woodcarving Illustrated* 68 (Fall): 78-80.
- Schroeder, Roger. 1999. *The Hobo*. *Woodcarving Illustrated* 9 (Holiday): 86-88. (Trygg carving of a hobo).
- Steen, Albert & Schjønby, Sissel. 1994. *Røtter, en bok om tre*. Den norske Bokklubben.
- Stewart, Janice Smith. 1972. *The Folk Arts of Norway, Chapter 3, Carving*. Dover Publications.
- Tangerman, E.J. 1964. *Design and Figure Carving*. Dover Publications.

\*\*\* Self-published by author but may be available from Amazon or other online book sellers

## Carving faces

- Bridgman, George B. 1974. *Heads, Features and Faces*. Dover Publications.
- Enlow, Harold L. 1978. *How to Carve Faces in Driftwood*. Western Printing Company.
- Enlow, Harold L. 1979. *How to Carve Folk Figures and a Cigar-Store Indian*. Dover Publications.
- Enlow, Harold. 2003. *Hillbilly Head, Carve a Caricature in the Spirit of the Ozarks*. Woodcarving Illustrated (Summer): 25-30.
- Enlow, Harold L. 1980. *Learn to Carve Faces and Expressions*. Western Printing Company.
- Enlow, Harold. 2013. *Carving a Wood Spirit*. Woodcarving Illustrated 64 (Fall): 25-29.
- Geisler-Moroder, Martin. 2006. *Carving the Head in the Classic European Tradition*. Fox Chapel Publishing Co.
- Hinds, Tom. 2008. *5-Minute Wizard*. Woodcarving Illustrated 43 (Summer): 78-80.
- Hull, Joel. 2001. *Making Faces*. Woodcarving Illustrated 15 (Summer): 32-38.
- Norbury, Ian. 2004. *Carving Classic Female Faces in Wood*. Fox Chapel Publishing Co.
- Oegema, Jan. 2005. *Quick and Easy Nose*. Woodcarving Illustrated 33 (Holiday): 96.
- Phares, Jeff. 2009. *Carving the Human Face: Second Edition, Revised & Expanded*. Fox Chapel Publishing Co.
- Schroeder, Roger. 2003. *All About Study Casts*. Woodcarving Illustrated 25 (Holiday): 54-55.

## Sharpening carving tools

- Pye, Chris. 2006. *Tuning Your Tools*. Woodcarving Illustrated 37 (Holiday): 49-53.
- Irish, Lora S. 2006. *Custom Honing Board*. Woodcarving Illustrated 35 (Summer): 24-25.  
(Best article about making a custom honing or stropping board for your own carving tools.)

## Related websites

- <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/search?keyword=lewis&keyword=chessmen> – Lewis Chessmen in the British Museum
- <https://www.chipchats.org> – Magazine of the National Wood Carvers Association
- <http://www.pinewoodforge.com/> – Nordic figure carving, tools, Harley Refsal cutouts & sharpening information
- <http://woodcarvingillustrated.com/> – Woodcarving Illustrated Magazine - many figure carving articles
- <http://www.henning.no/> – Henning family carving business
- <http://www.treskjerartunet.no/> – Family carving business in the Voss area of Norway
- <http://www.norskfolkemuseum.no/> – Norway's largest folk art museum on Bygdøy, Oslo
- <https://digitaltmuseum.no/> – Access to pictures of many of the carvings and other folk art of Norway. At the time of publication there were over a million articles listed including 169 museums in Norway. Most of their pictures are also copyright-free for use by the public. Detailed information about each object is in Norwegian but the website instructions are in English. You must search for the items using the Norwegian word for the carving. (Figure carving would be *figur treskjæring*.)
- <http://www.hobonickels.org/trygg03.htm> – Online article about the Trygg family carvers by Roger Schroeder.