

Karen Kopseng
Tree Dedication 2006
Given by Ella Naves

Karen Victoria Kopseng was born in Bismarck, May 18, 1945. She has a sister Donna, 2 years older, and a brother Lauren, 2 years younger. Her parents Ted and Louise Kopseng were active Sons of Norway members of our lodge.

Karen graduated from Bismarck High School. She was an active youth member at Trinity Lutheran Church singing in the youth choir as well as being a member of the Luther League.



She learned to ice skate and roller skate at a young age. She had piano and flute lessons and played well. She took sewing lessons at the Singer Sewing Center at a very young age. She would buy an eight of a yard of material and sew doll clothes. This was a benefit to her when she too Home Economics in High School. She also liked to cook. She was about ten years old when she decided she wanted to bake a cherry pie. It was edible, and they had it with their evening meal. She still likes to cook.

Karen spent enjoyable weeks at the International Music Camp at Dunseith. One year she specialized in the flute, and the next year in voice. Another year she attended Music Camp at Bemidji, MN. She had solo parts in the church choir. She was in school plays and had a part in "Bye, Bye Birdie". This was valuable experience in facing an audience.

Her uncle, a photographer living in Colorado, encouraged her to enter a contest. There were 85 entries in that Colorado contest, and she was one of the 8 finalists. Her parents thought they were wasting money sending her to these contests and they were very surprised when she won a contest. Her prize was a modeling course at the John Powers School in Denver. There was a trip to Dallas and many more miscellaneous prizes, too.

In Bismarck she was voted Homecoming Queen by her fellow students. After high school graduation she went to Denver to the John Powers modeling school. She also located an excellent voice teacher who taught her to sing in the Italian style.

She entered college in 1963 at the University of North Dakota. She joined a sorority at UND. She was also chosen for the lead role in "Carmen", but playing the lead in Carmen took far too much time from her studies and she had to give it up.

In the summer of 1963, while in Denver, she was urged to enter the annual Miss Broadmore Hotel Contest held in Colorado Springs. At the last minute she decided to enter. She was 5 minutes late, but managed to get in with the other girls. This was strictly a beauty contest, the bathing suit type. There were 50 girls in competition. The judges kept eliminating the girls as they walked around the swimming pool. The girls kept walking and walking and finally Karen walked alone – she was the winner! This contest produced merchandise and pictures in the newspapers. Her name is engraved on a huge silver loving cup in the Broadmore Hotel.

She had finished two years of college when Fred Warring and the Pennsylvanians came to Bismarck. A talent scout searched her out and told her "I heard you sing in the Miss North Dakota pageant". She was hired after that and toured with Fred Warring and the Pennsylvanians, singing 3 solos at each concert. For a year and a half they toured all over America.

She married H. Jeffrey Davis and they had a son Charles Bradford Davis. Charles is also a member of our Sons of Norway lodge.

She did national television commercials when she was between the ages of 21 and 28. She did modeling with Ford Models. There were 16 advertisements. She was on television on the Kraft Music Hall, the Ed Sullivan Show, and did recordings with Ed Ames, Sergio Franchi and Fred Warring.

Her marriage to H. Jeffrey Davis came to an end. She was told by Ford Models to get a photo profile and they advised her the best place to get them was in Milan, Italy. While she was there she met Dino Fabbri and four years later married him. She took oval tablets for two months. They would spend 2

weeks of every month in New York. After being back in Milan she developed a terrible headache, and it wasn't long after that she had a stroke, which she attributes to the overall tables. She was 34 years old. She could not walk or talk, and was confined to a wheel chair. With therapy and persistence she learned to walk. Her mind has improved over the last 25 years.

It is easy to see that Karen has had a glamorous, interesting life. She had the talent and perseverance to win many achievements. She has gained her independence from her illness by the therapy and perseverance.

Since joining Sons of Norway in April of 2003, Karen has signed up 19 members and continues to recruit new members for Sons of Norway. We are glad to have her in our lodge. She attends socials regularly.

We thank you and honor you, Karen.

Karen died October 19, 2006 at the age of 61 of cancer.