

NEW 500-KRONE BANKNOTE

A new 500-krone banknote was presented at a press conference at Norges Bank on 2 June 1999. The note was put into circulation on 7 June and is the fourth denomination to be issued as part of the Series VII Norwegian banknotes. The obverse, bearing a portrait of the young Sigrid Undset, was designed by Sverre Morken, Chief Graphic Designer. The rosette on the left bears elements inspired by her lace collars, while the background is based on traditional Norwegian weaving patterns and Gudbrandsdal tapestries. The reverse was designed by Arild Yttri, Deputy Graphic Designer. It bears a wreath of wheat spikes and wild roses, inspired by the first book in the Kristin Lavransdatter series, *The Bridal Wreath*. The base pattern on the reverse also draws upon elements from old Gudbrandsdal tapestries.

Sigrid Undset wrote 33 books and several hundred articles. An old manuscript recently discovered in her home, Bjerkebak, in Lillehammer, was published in book form in 1998.

Even in childhood, she dreamt of becoming an author. Her debut novel, *Fru Marta Oulie*, was borne of long hours of work at night at a time when she was working in an office in Christiania. She was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1928 for her opus, *Kristin Lavransdatter*.

In addition to the usual security features of Norwegian banknotes such as the watermark, security thread, cotton paper, intaglio print, micro-lettering and see-through register mark, the new 500-krone note contains a 13 mm wide optically variable stripe containing a motif with a Norse horse and the number 500. As the note is held up to the light at different angles, the various parts of the motif light up in different colours. On the reverse of the note is a vertical stripe consisting of horizontal repetitions of the number 500 in iridescent colour. Both the size and the colour combination of the 500-krone note clearly distinguish it from the other Series VII banknotes.

The banknote shown below is 70% actual size.

