

**Collection Name:**

Bygdelagenes Fellesraad papers, 1901-2016

**Collection Number:**

P0465 (Bygdelagenes Fellesraad)

**Extent:**

3.0 cubic feet (7 archives boxes)

**About Bygdelagenes Fellesraad:**

Known as the Council of Bygdelags, they were organized November 17, 1916. Representatives of some bygdelag had first convened November 17, 1906, in Minneapolis. The Bygdelagenes Faellesraad was incorporated March 3, 1926.

**Past presidents include:**

A.A. Veblen (1916-19)  
Rev. Jacob Tanner (1919-20)  
C.L. Opsal (1920-21)  
N.N. Rønning (1921-22)  
Rev. Lars P. Thorkveen (1922-23)  
Gisle Bothne (1923-26)  
N.T. Moen (1926-28)  
Rev. L.M. Gimmestad (1928-30)  
Thomas A. Walby (1930-31, 1932-34)  
Gustav M. Bruce (1934-37, 1939-41)  
H.M. Jacobson (1937-39)  
Bjørgulv Bjørnaraa (1938-39, 1941-42)  
Andrew A. Kindem (1942-44)  
J.P. Vigdahl (1944-46)  
John L. Moe (1946-47)  
E. Klaveness (1947-49)  
Rev. M.E. Helland (1951-52)  
Stephen White (1952-56)  
Olaf Viken (1955-56)  
O.I. Hertsgaard (1956-)

**Past secretaries include:**

Rev. Lars P. Thorkveen (1916-22)  
J.A. Hovik (1922-28)

Eilev O. Bakke (1928-42)  
Ole Hegdahl (1942-55, 1959-62)  
Marcus Tellevik (1955-59)  
Thor Ohme (1962-)

### **History of the Bygdelag:**

Papers of "bygd" societies and their Common Council ("Bygdelagenes Fellesraad"), clippings, constitutions, correspondence, minutes and financial records, pamphlets, pictures, programs, and reports, dealing with conventions, officers, special projects, and the Norse-American Centennial of 1925. The bygdelag, organized around the turn of the century, are societies based on regional origins in Norway. They were active in the Eidsvoll Centennial in 1914 and the Norse-American Centennial in 1925. While activity dropped off after the beginning of World War II, a revival began in the 1980s as a result of renewal of ethnic interest, and with emphasis on family history. Odd S. Lovoll's "A Folk Epic; The Bygdelag in America" (NAHA, 1975), which includes a bibliography of lag publications.

Papers of the various "bygdelag," "social organizations of (Americans) from the same homeland district, usually rural" which began in 1899 with the organization of the Valdres Samband. About fifty other lag with national-wide appeal were formed, as well as many others which were more local. They held annual "stevner" (meetings) and many published periodicals, yearbooks, or monographs which often contained extensive genealogical materials. A decline came after World War II, with a revival in the 1970s particularly through renewed emphasis on genealogical research.

A Council of Bygdelags (Bygdelagenes Faellesraad) coordinates activities of the groups. They were very active in the Eidsvoll centennial celebrations in 1914, and the Norse-American Centennial in 1925. Holdings for the various lag vary, but usually include clippings of newspaper articles about their meetings, correspondence, programs, and copies of their publications, duplicates of library holdings, in the periodical and book collections (monographs and annuals included in the latter). In some cases regional associations are included with the national groups, and in others separate groups which later merged are included under the merged name.

### **Access Rights:**

This collection is open to research.

### **Bibliographic Citation:**

[Indicate the cited item here]. Bygdelagenes Fellesraad Papers (Bygdelagenes Papers). Norwegian-American Historical Association, Northfield, Minnesota.

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
6	5	Bygdelag notes, newsletter editors, photo, 1991
6	6	Klagstad correspondence, 1957-1942
7	1	Bygdelagenes Fellesraad Centennial, 2016

7	2	Bygdelagenes Fellesraad Centennial, 2014-2016
7	3	Bygdelagenes Fellesraad Centennial 1999
7	4	Bygdelagene Meetings Annual Record, 1925-1934
7	5	Fellesraad Correspondence, 1943-1951
7	6	Correspondence Relating to R.J. Meland, 1939-1952
7	7	Correspondence, 1943-1955
7	8	Fellesraad Newsletters, 1978-1989
7	9	Fellesraad Records, News Clippings, 1946-1986
7	10	Bjørgulv Bjørnaraa biography, 1942
8	1	Correspondence relating to Ole J. Braaten, 1952-1999
8	2	Fellesraad Financial Statements, 1960s
8	3	Bygdelag Meeting Calendar, Centennial Programs, Articles, 1983-1999
8	4	Newspaper clippings, Fargo-Moorhead, 1907-1935 Includes: newspaper clippings about Bygdelagenes Fellesraad from Telelaget, Minneapolis Tidende, and possibly other unknown sources, written in Norwegian, circa 22 March 1907-1935.
8	5	Correspondence, 1925-1943
8	6	Articles and records, circa 1925-1953
8	7	Pamphlets, songbooks, history books, 1915-1949 Includes: "English Translations of Popular Norwegian Songs and Ballads, Prepared by the Council of Norwegian Bygdelags in America," 1964; "Kom! Bygdelagenes Felles-Stevne: Duluth, August 19-20-21 1938," newspaper clipping, August 1938; "Stevne-Sange for Det Norsk-Amerikanske Bygdelagsfolk" ("Stevne-Song[s] for The Norwegian-American Bygdelag People"), circa May 1949; "Stevne-Sange for Det Norsk-Amerikanske Bygdelagsfolk," 1948; "Bygdelag's Grand Convention," meeting program, August 1938; three copies of "The Bygdelag Movement," pamphlet, written in English and Norwegian by G.M. Bruce, 1937; "Stevne-Sange for Det Norsk-Amerikanske Bygdelags-Folk," undated; stevne/meeting program for Tronderlag, Hallinglag, Valdrislag, Sognalag, and Gudbrandsdalslag Conventions, 1930; "Songs for Community Singing," Sons of Norway, includes "Norwegian Camp: August 16-29 (list of names and addresses) and "Velkommen til Skogfjorden," undated; "Organ for bygdelagene: et tilbud" ("Organ for the Bygdelags: A Proposition?)," 1 June 1915; "Conference Songs and Choruses," Grove City, 1964; "Bygdelagenes Norgesfærd and Lutheran World Convention Tour," brochure advertising a world convention tour from Minneapolis and St. Paul to Norway, 1929.
8	8	Correspondence and records, 1950-1963
9	1	Correspondence and records, circa 1964-1966
9	2	Correspondence and records, circa 1967-1970
9	3	Norske Storfest, 1930

		Includes: Norske Storfest Program, 10-11 June 1930
9	4	Aarbok, 1929 Includes: four copies of "Bygdelagenes Fellesraad Incorporated: Aarbok og Julehilsen" ("The Bygdelagenes Fellesraad Incorporated: Yearbook and Christmas Greetings")
9	5	News clippings, 1936-1951: Includes: Decorah Posten ("The Decorah Post"), Skandinaven (also called "Duluth Skandinav"), Nordisk Tidende ("The Nordic Times"), Stavanger Aftenblad ("Stavanger Evening Paper" or just "Evening Stavanger"), Minneapolis Tribune, Fergus Falls Ugeblad ("Weekly"), Visergutten, Nordmanden, "N.J.," "N. S.K.," Minnesota Posten, and other unlabeled sources.
9	6	News clippings, 1909-1977 Includes: Minneapolis Post, Skandinaven (also called "Duluth Skandinav"), Decorah-Posten ("The Decorah Post"), Morgenposten ("The Morning Post"), Aftenposten ("The Evening Post"), Bergens Tidende ("The Bergen Times"), Minnesota Posten ("The Minnesota Post"), Hallingdølen, Duluth News Tribune, The Sunday Fargo Forum, Minneapolis Daglig Tidende ("The Minneapolis Daily Times"), and other unlabeled sources.
9	7	News clippings, 1911-1927 Includes: clippings from Minneapolis Daglig Tidende ("The Minneapolis Daily Times," also called "Minneapolis Tidende," or "The Minneapolis Times"), Skandinaven, Decorah Posten ("The Decorah Post"), The Minneapolis Journal, and unlabeled sources (see below).
67	1	Correspondence, 1932-1937
67	2	Reports and Releases, 1916-1941
67	3	Correspondence, Reports, 1937-1938
67	4	Correspondence, 1938-1947
67	5	Meeting Synopses and Invitations, 1982-2004
67	6	Correspondence, Articles, 1938-1939
67	7	Correspondence, 1949
67	8	"Norse Celebration of Canada" Flyers and Articles
68	1	Fellesraad meeting minutes, 1974, 2000
70	2	News clippings, 1901-1935, undated
88	5	Financial records, 1926-1934
92	1-22	Records, 1989-2018
92	23	Newspapers, circa 1960