

The Norwegian-American Historical Association

Northfield, Minnesota

NEWS LETTER



From the Secretary's Office to the Association Members

NUMBER 104

Editor, LLOYD HUSTVEDT

JANUARY 1999

Farewell, Good Friend

Sanford Fosholt (1915-1998), NAHA benefactor, died on August 14, 1998, while vacationing in Vilkorvo, Ukraine. The funeral took place August 22 at Zion Lutheran Church, Muscatine, Iowa.

Fosholt laid the foundations for our archives endowment with a gift of \$50,000 in 1985, the largest single gift the NAHA had received to that date. Later a bequest of \$60,000 from Odmund L. Hydle was added. The endowment, now called The Fosholt-Hydle Archives Fund, has increased to \$200,000.

Fosholt, raised on a farm in northern Iowa, earned a degree in electrical engineering from Iowa State University in 1938. He joined the Young and Stanley Engineering firm. After 43 years he retired as executive vice president in 1981.

"San" as he was popularly called, left his mark wherever he went. He served the local United Way, Muscatine Planning and Zoning, community commissions and boards, the Muscatine Community School Foundation, and his church, Zion Lutheran. Vesterheim in Decorah and the Genealogical Center in Madison have also enjoyed his leadership and generosity. We salute the memory of Sanford Fosholt and the legacy he left behind, a portion of which is in our trust.

Help Needed

PGCS stands for Publishers Genealogical Coding Service, a coding system created by David Dole that will assure that every obituary will have an identity code revealing the name and location of the publisher and the date of publication. A

number of newspapers already use the code. The *Northfield News*, we have learned, was the first to do so.

David Dole has requested our help to expand the use of this code: Log onto the internet, find www.obituarycoding.com, read the material, and if you find the plan to your liking, complete the e-mail registration form provided. Dole will send you (via U.S. mail) the needed material. Central will be a prepared letter to which you will, after adding your name and address, mail to the editor of your local newspaper, requesting that he or she adopt PGCS. There will be a one-time small fee for the newspaper and the cost of postage for you.

Katherine and David Dole have mounted some 40,000 clipped obituaries on 3x5 cards and have provided printed name headings for each, making for easy alphabetical placement in our Rowberg Biographical File. Together with Orville Bakken and Lee Rokke, no members of the NAHA have volunteered more freely of their time than the Doles. The obituaries they mounted were first clipped from newspapers in North Dakota and northwestern Minnesota by Orville Bakken and his team of readers. The fact that a large number of the obits the Doles processed lacked identification as to source, date, and place, prompted David to devise his code.

Should you be more comfortable conferring with David and Katherine Dole directly, their address is: 8102 Highwood Drive Apt. B-125, Bloomington MN 55438-1406. Otherwise find www.obituarycoding.com and do as your judgment dictates.

Social Security in 1895

Malcolm C. Stephenson gave to the archives recently a contract (copy) drawn up by the justice of the peace in Westby, Wisconsin, in 1895, on behalf of Karen and Christopher Steffenson, who had just turned over their farm to new owners. Agreements of this kind, called *kårbrev*, were standard practice in rural Norway. They defined the responsibilities the heirs to a farm had for the former owners, in most cases their parents. Save for the use of the English language, this agreement reads much like a Norwegian *kårbrev*. Some excerpts follow:

The first necessity is understandably a “. . . house to be kept in repair and suitable to live in summer and winter.” Then a list of specifics: “Sufficient firewood cut and ready for the stove. 20 bushels of wheat, 25 bushels oats, 10 bushels barley, 10 bushels corn, 200 lbs. pork, 100 lbs. meat, 1/2 barrel salt, 8 lbs. fish, 25 lbs. coffee, 25 lbs. lump sugar, 25 lbs. pulverized sugar, 10 lbs. wool, \$20 in money, all of which is to be delivered yearly. 1 suit of clothes every other year and yearly one pair of shoes. 2 pair of shoes and necessary clothes for Karen.”

The new owners were also obligated “. . . to keep, feed, stable and pasture two cows and 20 hens” furnished by the Steffensons. In the event one or both “became feeble and sick they shall have the necessary care and attendance needed by sick persons.”

The name of the justice of the peace was Helge Larson.

An Early Settler

Robert Flaten, Northfield, Minnesota, provided the archives with two interesting documents: *The First Settlers and Their Families of Schenectady* by Dan'l J. Toll, M.D., 1847, 57 pages, and “Story of the Maalwyck” by Percy Van Epps, 1937, 15 pages. Both accounts treat a Norwegian born Karel Hanson Toll who came to New Netherlands via the West Indies in 1680. He married into a Dutch family and around 1700 became owner of the Maalwyck estate, a large tract of land originally bought from the Mohawk Indians in 1669 and located on the Mohawk River, one mile west of Schenectady, New York. Toll, for a time, owned at least one slave.

A Sad State of Affairs

The Åna District Prison, located in Rogaland, Norway, has shut down most of its cell blocks for the lack of prisoners. Some of the levity and humor that attends this development merits noting:

Just think of the loss of jobs. Skilled rehabilitation officers see their careers ruined. Costly modern cell blocks, paid for by precious tax dollars, are going to waste. If crime does not go up in Norway, things will get worse. Lock up each fall 250 of the most trigger happy hunters, said a woman who lives on the Hardanger plateau. Another recommended that the Norwegian government make it known to all its guilt-ridden citizens that here is an opportunity to get low-cost atonement. One unemployed prison guard is to have said that most of us plan to emigrate to America, ever the land of promise and opportunity.

The Promise Fulfilled Feted

Once again Lois and Lawrence Hauge hosted a book party. This one recognized the publication of *The Promise Fulfilled* and its author, Odd S. Lovoll. The lavish affair which took place in the Hauge home during the evening of December 2, 1998, was attended by sixty some persons. Present were representatives from the University of Minnesota Press, a number of persons who entered into *The Promise Fulfilled* story by way of interview, and officers and members of the NAHA who live in the Twin City area.

Minneapolis Consul General Ulf Christiansen presided over a brief and informal program. In his response Odd Lovoll provided some background for this work, but in the main acknowledged the many who had been helpful. Thank you! Lois and Larry Hauge.

The Promise Fulfilled by Odd S. Lovoll, should have reached all our members well before this time. Should this not be true, notify the secretary's office. This marks the second book to be distributed in 1998.

Printing, shipping and mailing costs for both publications came to \$32,000.00, or \$17.00 per member.

Random News

• Received from Terje Joranger his *Hasle Slehta 1793-1981*. Haslebråta is located in Reinli, Valdres. This history of 74 pages devotes 8 pages to descendants living in America. Paper, photos, 1982.

• Received from Christian Skjervold the records of Nordlands Minde, a Minneapolis division of Nordlandslaget: minutes, financial records, membership rosters, programs, etc.

• Received from Maren Loken LaGuire her *Hans Loken (1835-1913): His Descendants and His Sisters' Lines: Lilleby, Pederson and Berg*. Hard cover, charts, tables, brief biographical sketches, index, 224 pages, 1998. The Loken family left Krødsherred, Norway, in 1867 and settled in Houston county, Minnesota.

• Received from Albert O. Grender his *The Peterson Family: Ancestors and Descendants of Peder and Deoline Bratbakken*. Spiral bound, photos, family tables, minimum of narrative, name index, 354 pages. The couple were cotter folk from Toten, Norway, who left for America in 1853, settling in Iowa county, Wisconsin.

• Received from Fred Braches his *Whonnock Notes: The Trondheim Congregation*, No. 3, 1997. Families from the Trondheim area began to move into Whonnock, British Columbia, in 1887. The account includes the Minutes and other records (1895-1921) of this congregation. The congregation no longer exists and the church building was dismantled in 1958.

• Received from Delores Lind *The Descendants of Olav Tomassen Sandness*, a spiral bound family history of 263 pages, maps, photos, and charts. Jørgen Sandness from Bygland in Sætesdal came to Fisher, Minnesota, in 1880. Parents and siblings came a few years later, settling near Erskine, Minnesota. They changed the spelling of their name to Sannes.

• Received from Phillip Thorson *For the Children's Sake* by Thorwald Thorson (1879-1962). Paper bound, illustrated, 1963, 114 pages. The author was three years old when his parents settled near Forest City, Iowa, in 1882. This well-written account depicts with minute

Let's Do It!

As of November 30, 1998, our membership stood at 1,919: 747 Associate; 241 Sustaining; 141 Patron and 762 Life. We hope to be well on the other side of 2,000 by the time we enter the twenty-first century. With your help, this should not be difficult to accomplish.

The enrollment form below can serve two modes of help. If you do the recruiting, give the form to the enrolling member. If you wish that the secretary extend an invitation, then enter the name/s of the person/s you recommend for membership and return the form to the secretary. Unless you request the contrary, your name will be used in our letter of invitation. The mailing label on the back of the form will be your identification.

If each NAHA member would pledge to secure one new member in 1999, we could next December rightly proclaim "The millennium has arrived!"

MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT FORM

Membership levels (choose one):

Associate \$25

Sustaining \$35

Patron \$50

Life \$250 (one payment only)

Institutional Life \$250 (25 years)

Enclosed is my check or money order for \$ _____.

Name _____ Occupation _____

Address _____

Return application to: Lloyd Hustvedt, Secretary NAHA, 1510 St. Olaf Avenue, Northfield MN 55057-1097. A bonus book will be given to each new member.

Random News continued

care and accuracy life on a 160 acre farm in the 1880s and forward. Thorwald Thorson, largely self-educated, taught for a time at Waldorf Academy and later built a career as an architect. The donor Phillip is a son of Thorwald.

- Received from Duane Olson *The Genealogy and Descendancy of the Raudkleiv Family of Kvitseid, Telemark, Norway*, by Hanna Tvedt Sanders. Spiral bound, photos, maps, 295 pages, 1998. Members from this family began to emigrate in the 1880s, settling mainly in Minnesota.

- Received from Clifford H. Nelson, *The Pages of My Life*, a spiral bound autobiography of 91 pages. Nelson, the second of seven children, was born on a farm near Belmond, Iowa, in 1916. He attended Waldorf College in 1933-1935, taught elementary school for three years, then farmed until 1945, studied at St. Olaf College, Luther Seminary, and was ordained in 1949. He married Elnor Olson in 1938.

- Received from Margaret R. Miller *Sømna: Slekt I-IV* (Sømna Family Histories, vols. 1-4), paper bound, 1997, 304 pages, no publisher cited. The work traces the genealogies of those who inhabited the 73 farms located at Sømna, in Helgeland. The four-volume *bygdebok* for Sømna treats the histories of the individual farms. This volume concerns genealogy only and is a revised version. Miller did most of the work on the family histories, an amazing accomplishment which she estimates took over 20,000 hours!

Also, *Personregister Sømna Bygdebok: Gårdog slekt*, 1996, 112 pages (name index);

and *An English Introduction to Sømna's Bygdebok*, 1988, by Margaret Miller.

- Received from Ana Bakken, her Masters thesis, Department of English, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, entitled "*Our Country Gives Us the Vote – America Refuses It*": *Norwegian-American Suffrage Workers in Brooklyn and Minneapolis*, 117 pages, 1998. Opens a field not treated earlier.

- Received from Eva M. M. Pearson *They Did Not Have Horns: The Viking Kings of Norway*, Nortek Press, 1812 Skillman Avenue, St. Paul MN 55113. Paper bound, illustrated, bibliography, index and map, 1998, 218 pages.

- Steve Forty has written *Heg*, a novel built on established sources about the life of Col. Hans Heg. The author acknowledges that some of the episodes are fictitious and that he has not always adhered to chronology. Waubesa Press, P.O. Box 192, Oregon, WI 53575, paperbound, 164 pages, \$12.95.

- Received *A Klondike Christmas* from its editor, Anne Tempelman-Kluit, White cap Books, Vancouver, 1998, 131 pages. The collection includes Carl Lokke's diary entries for Christmas, 1898, found in our publication, *Klondike Saga* (1965).

- Received from Harriet Neperud Anderson a Voie family history of 112 pages, consisting of photos, maps, letters and accounts written by members of the Voie family. Christopher T. Voie left the Voie farm near Arendal in 1849, settling in Scandinavia, Wisconsin. Many from his family came later, settling in the same area. June Johnson added later her *Voie History*, a family tree of 206 pages of which 43 contain a name index.

NORWEGIAN-AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
St. Olaf College
Northfield, Minnesota 55057
Tel: (507) 646-3221
e-mail: naha@stolaf.edu

Address Service Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG. U.S. Postage PAID Northfield, Minn. Permit No. 107
--