

# The Norwegian-American Historical Association

Northfield, Minnesota

# NEWS LETTER



*From the Secretary's Office to the Association Members*

NUMBER 100

Editor, LLOYD HUSTVEDT

DECEMBER 1997

## Makes One Proud to Be a Member

Portions of Editor Odd S. Lovoll's report to the Executive Committee which met on November 1, 1997, merits sharing with the membership at large. He began his report by citing our mission statement found in our Articles of Incorporation:

"To engage in all activities necessary, useful, or expedient for the collection and dissemination of information about the people in the United States of Norwegian birth and descent and to preserve the same in appropriate forms as historic records." To that end we just published our ninetieth volume, David Mauk, *The Colony that Rose from the Sea*.

. . . We consequently have reason to be pleased with the Association's accomplishments over the past seventy-two years. . . .

It has been claimed that Vesterheim Museum and the Norwegian-American Historical Association are the most durable and significant organizations representing the Norwegian ethnic group at present and into the future. This may very well be the case. But these two premier Norwegian-American institutions can only fulfill their individual missions if they while being mindful of changing social and historical circumstances are true to their own tradition, conduct their business at a high professional level and speak to an interested membership.

At its founding in 1925 the NAHA accepted the awesome responsibility of being the custodian of the history of the Norwegian-American people. The future of their past, to paraphrase the title of an earlier publication, is thus in our hands. The benefits of our work will surely survive those of us who now carry the responsibility for it.

. . . We might be reminded of John J. Appel's assessment of why the Association has succeeded while other similar groups have failed. He attributes its success to a clear division of labor and the ability of persons in business, the professions, and academic historians to work together for a common goal. In speaking of three incorporators of the Association, Ole E. Rølvaag, famed author, Birger Osland, successful businessman in Chicago and Knut Gjerset, teacher of history at Luther college, Appel concluded: "The ability of novelist, investment banker, and college professor to work together in support of a Norwegian-American Historical Association accounts for the steady progress of that society." . . . prominent historian Rudolph Vecoli stated enviously to me about the Italian-American Historical Society and the lack of interest it generated among Italians in the business world: "We Italians don't have any Larry Hauges among us. How do you Norwegians do it?"

We must not of course neglect to mention a faithful membership as another major asset. Some ethnic historical groups are basically . . . limited to an academic membership with a resulting small number of active participants. Our members represent individuals from *all* walks of life. The Association must never retreat into academic or other exclusiveness. . . .

Historian John Higham poses as a general rule that "the linchpin of the ethnic historical society as an American institution is mutual support between professional scholars and those far more numerous of the group who cherish its past." We will do well to keep this rule in mind.

## Haugen Scholarship Activated at \$70,000

The below constitutes the "Prologue" found in the Einar and Eva Lund Haugen Memorial Scholarship brochure. The eight-page brochure (available to NAHA members upon request) also contains a memorial statement, the regulations that govern the scholarship and a list of the contributors who made the scholarship possible.

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Shortly after Einar Haugen died in June, 1994, several former Haugen students and colleagues urged the creation of a scholarship that would remember both Haugens, Einar and Eva.

A plan took shape. Lloyd Hustvedt and Ruth Hanold Crane, Norwegian-American Historical Association (NAHA) secretaries, agreed to administer the fund drive. The NAHA Board of Directors promised to manage the endowment with the understanding that an independent committee would determine the awards.

First came a testing of the waters. A general fund-raising campaign would be launched if twenty persons pledged \$1,000 each to create a respectable seed fund. Eighteen had pledged to do so when the deadline arrived. By virtue of their commitment, they automatically became members of the Founders Committee. The appeals that followed were made in the name of this committee.

Haugen students, colleagues, friends, and Scandinavian studies scholars wherever found were invited to support the campaign. For example, three letters of appeal went out to members of the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study. Norwegian-American organizations were asked to contribute on a unit level. When an organization was willing to release its membership list, individual members were solicited.

Our current fund level of \$70,000 falls short of our initial goal of \$100,000. When activated, January 1, 1998, the Haugen Fund will remain open to additional contributions. In fact, the *Scholarship Regulations* assign future Awards Committees the task of building the Haugen fund to new and higher levels and in so doing progressively increasing the size of the annual award.

Several contributors deserve mention: The Ella and Kaare Nygaard Foundation for a grant of \$10,000; the late Eva Haugen and her daughters Anne and Camilla for their combined gifts amounting to \$5,000, and Susan Bryant Kimball, for leading the field with an individual gift of \$2,500. As for institutional support, none can compare with the Norwegian-American Historical Association. Contributions made by the NAHA on an organizational level and those received from that organization's members approximate \$10,000. Ruth Hanold Crane, with an already heavy workload, processed thousands of letters and cared for the accounts as the responses came in. Finally, a grateful nod to all who lent a hand.

Lloyd Hustvedt

### NOTE!

Our 90th publication, *The Colony that Rose from the Sea: Norwegian Maritime Migration and Community in Brooklyn, 1850-1910* by David C. Mauk, is currently being distributed to our members. If you have not received this book when you read this, notify the secretary. Also, if you have failed to report a change of address, please do so. Books are not forwarded even if the post office knows of your new address. They are returned to the sender, doubling the postage costs.

### Seminar 2000

Plans for a NAHA sponsored conference in the year 2000 that will celebrate the 175th anniversary of the beginning of Norwegian migration (Sloopers, 1825) are underway. Details remain to be determined. John Christianson, retired history professor from Luther College, holds primary executive responsibility for arranging the program. The NAHA has accepted an invitation from the Minnesota Historical Society that we use their excellent conference facilities. The NAHA wishes to coordinate this event with those sponsored by other organizations, so as to enhance cooperation on the one hand and avoid competition on the other.

## Sixth Norway Seminar

NAHA Norway sponsored its sixth Norwegian Seminar in Trondheim this past June (23-26). "Norwegian Americans in a Multicultural America" was the guiding theme of the conference that offered thirty papers and lectures by nearly as many participants, providing the most ambitious program to date.

Some of the topical sub-divisions of the theme indicate the scope of the program: The Spiritual Dimension of Ethnic Identity; Language, Gender and Identity; The Literary Dimension; The Effects of Migration on the Local Communities; Migration of Professionals and Cultural Heritage; Ethnicity, Identity and Transatlantic Connections.

Eleven of the participants were American. Included were NAHA board members John Christianson, Todd Nichol and Solveig Zempel. Professor Werner Sollors, English Literature and Afro-American Studies, Harvard University, was the keynote speaker.

Conference expenses came to \$22,000. How does NAHA Norway do it? Six Norwegian state and municipal institutions contributed \$12,000. The United States Information Service provided \$2,500.

The primary purpose of these conferences is to stimulate research in Norway in the field of Norwegian-American studies and to keep and develop contacts between Norwegian and American scholars in this field.

The editor recalls a time when Ingrid Semmingsen was Norway's only scholarly voice in the field and Arne Kildahl, equally alone, labored hard to recruit Norwegian members for the NAHA. Developments over the past years have the touch of a miracle about them.

Current officers of NAHA-Norway are Chair Ingeborg Kongslie, Vice Chair Knut Djupedal, Secretary Dina Tølforsby, and Treasurer Judith Torvik. They are supported by two board members, David Mauk and Sigrid Brevik Wangness; and by three deputy board members, Harry Cleven, Leif Magne Lervik and Robert Mikkelsen. They deserve our congratulations and gratitude.

## Random News

- Received from Russell W. Fridley, former NAHA board member and former director of the Minnesota Historical Society, a gift of \$1,000.

- Received from John Follesdal his *A Bibliography of Some Books and Materials [Norwegian-American genealogy] at the Library of Congress, Washington D.C.* 78 pages.

- Received from Alfred Christiansen Norwegian American Centennial material; and a program, menu and photo of a banquet, September 15, 1917, in honor of Dr. Fridtjof Nansen in Brooklyn, New York.

- Received from Ann Stauffer Miller her *John A. and Gertie Carlson: Dakota Pioneers*, a 146-page paperbound family history, essentially a family album containing photos, newspaper clippings and personal statements from family members. Lacks a cohesive narrative. The founders, John and Gertie, born in Minnesota, homesteaded in Stutsman County, North Dakota. Family charts cover eight generations.

- Received from Orger Heen his "My Story: Norway to USA," a five-page narrative telling of his emigration from Romsdalen to the United States in 1929. After a variety of jobs he built a successful career with IBM in Endicott, New York. This crisp, fast-moving story also tells of family tension and deceit.

- Received from Maxine J. Ness *Tvedten* by Wyona Denger *et al.* a spiralbound family history of 225 pages. Thorgeir and Martha Tvedten together with five children emigrated from Skånevik parish, Hordaland, in 1882. Incidental narrative, photos, charts and clippings.

- Received from Warren H. Lysne his *Ancestry of Ole O. Lysne*, hard cover, 41 pages, 1996. Lysne, a collection of farms, is located in Lærdal, Sogn. Eight children from Nedre (lower) Lysne began to emigrate in the early 1880s, many settling in Minnesota. The work consists mainly of genealogical tables. Contains an introduction, a bibliography, an index and a few maps and photos.

- Received from James E. and Ruth Josi Hazard their *Josi/Hazard Nexus*. The family backgrounds are a European mix, but the Josi family ties in with the Goplerud family in Valdres. Hard cover, photos, maps, charts, narrative material and index, 1997.

- Received from Jeanne Kolstad Angel *The Christiansen and Engebretsen Families from Fet, Norway* by Roger L. Anderson. Hard cover, two

## Sorry!

Our preceding *Newsletter* should have carried the sequence number 99. We now have two issues numbered 98. The issue at hand is correctly numbered 100.

volumes, 1301 pages, narrative, photos, maps and charts.

- Received from Alden Bestul his *Bakke Nigardsøy Family: 1691-1997*. Paperbound, photos, maps, charts and name index, 98 pages. Anders Bakke and Bertine Negarø from Outer Nordfjord emigrated in 1886 and 1892 and married in 1893. Anders had earlier taken a homestead in Miner County, South Dakota.

- Received from Forrest Brown, our archivist, a reprinted edition of *A Pioneer History of Becker County, Minnesota* by Alvin H. Wilcox, hard cover, 757 pages, 1907.

- Received from Sanford K. Fosholt two loose-leaf notebooks containing letters to Syver J. Fosholt, most of them from his son Gabriel, dated from 1905 until Syver's death in 1927. The books have the title *Fosholt Migration to California*.

- Received from Sherry K. Einarson her *The Jelle Family History: America 1849-1994*. Spiral bound, photos and charts, 117 pages. The Jelles left Aurdal, Valdres, in 1849 and settled in Dane County, Wisconsin.

- Received from Alice Bredeson Zweifel her *Bredesen/Bredeson/Stræte Genealogy from Prehistoric Times to 1996*. Three volumes bound as one: 376, 302 and 202 pages. Photos, maps, charts, and intermittent narrative. The book, which costs \$70, can be ordered from the author: 924 Katherine Drive, Sun Prairie WI 53590-2468.

- Received from Osvald Gilje (Norway) *Møllerslekten i Norge* by Nils Møllerup. Hard cover, photos, sketches and charts, 300 pages. Johan Nicolai Møllerup, born in Denmark, came to Norway as a military captain in 1673. He rose later to become the commander of Kongsvinger fortress. Members of this family are found in America as well as Norway.

- The Brampton Church, relocated at the Hamar Emigrant Museum, was dedicated July 5, 1997. Professor Orm Øverland, University of Bergen, gave the main address.

Brampton, a United Lutheran church located in Sargent County, North Dakota, was organized in 1908. The church was built in 1913 and its membership may never have exceeded 50.

- Received from Hippocrene Books, 171 Madison Avenue, New York, NY, *Best of Scandinavian Cooking, Danish, Norwegian and Swedish* by Shirley Sarvis and Barbara Scott O'Neil. Of the 100 recipes given, 28 are attributed to Norway. Prepared by a food editor and a school teacher who toured the Scandinavian countries and savored their dishes. 142 pages, paperback, \$9.95.

- Received from Fithian Press, Santa Barbara, California, *Lovisa — Angel from Norway*, by Louise R. Afeltra, paperback, 95 pages. Afeltra, a granddaughter, provides a tender and appreciative account of her grandmother Lovisa (1855-1929), who came to New Orleans with her father, Edward Wold, a cabinetmaker at age five. They moved later to St. Louis. She married Casper Hegborn, a blacksmith, at age 15. They moved from St. Louis to Moline, Illinois, then to Chicago and later Bangor, Michigan. Save for several unsuccessful attempts at farming, the account tells of an urban pioneer experience. Lovisa was the youngest of eight children and she herself had eight.

- Bert Nelson informs us that he has established a web page that would prove useful to those searching their Mormon pioneer heritage. His resources include handcart company rosters, voyage narratives and emigrant ship descriptions. The main page is <http://www.vii.com/~nelsonb/pioneer.htm> [~nelsonb/scand.htm](http://www.vii.com/~nelsonb/scand.htm).

- Received from Virginia Nichols Walmer her *From Voss to Vinland*, a hard cover family history of 265 pages, containing photos, maps, documents, letters, and narrative accounts. Knud Andersen Gjernes (1825-1896) came to Chicago in the early 1850s. He bought government land in Douglas County, Kansas, in 1856. Married Anna Eide (1831-1919) in 1857. They had five children.

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