

The Norwegian-American  
Historical Association

Northfield, Minnesota

NEWS



LETTER

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

NUMBER 60

Editor, LLOYD HUSTVEDT

OCTOBER, 1980

## Bjork Honored

Attended by 125 persons, the banquet in honor of Kenneth O. Bjork, held at the Woman's Club in Minneapolis on May 30, combined good fun with deep appreciation for Dr. Bjork's contribution as scholar, editor and leader. His official date for retirement as editor was May 15.

Thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Ludvig Roed, managers of the Woman's Club, elegance attended everything concerning the banquet. The dinner, which had poached salmon as its main course, was excellent.

Special greetings were delivered by William C. Nelsen, vice president and dean at St. Olaf College; the Honorable Magnhild Bakke, consul from Norway; Russell W. Fridley, director, Minnesota Historical Society; Dr. Einar Haugen; Dr. Peter A. Munch; Dr. Harold A. Bjork (Kenneth's brother); Dr. Henry Fritz, chairman of the Department of History at St. Olaf College; and Karl F. Rolvaag, former governor of Minnesota.

Roy N. Thorshov, president of the NAHA, read on behalf of the Executive Board the resolution cited below:

### *Resolution*

#### WHEREAS

#### **Dr. Kenneth O. Bjork**

has served the Norwegian-American Historical Association as its distinguished editor for twenty years, and

#### WHEREAS

his high standards of editorship have brought honor and dignity to the Association, and

#### WHEREAS

the scholarly manuscripts he made public in book form marked an outstanding contribution to American ethnic history, be it

#### RESOLVED

that the chair, for which funds are now being raised, be named

#### **The Kenneth O. Bjork Chair In Immigration History**

Dr. Odd S. Lovoll, who succeeded Bjork as editor, presented the honored guest with a copy of *Makers of An American Immigrant Legacy: Essays in Honor of Kenneth O. Bjork*. Copies were also distributed to the members who were present at the dinner. This publication, edited by Lovoll, was later distributed to all the members.

Mark Bjork, Kenneth's son, an accomplished violinist, favored the occasion with several violin solos. The event closed with a response from the retired editor. He reviewed some NAHA history, but in the main looked ahead to the work that yet needed to be done and urged continued support of the NAHA.

It is not possible to record adequately the appreciation, gratitude, and good will that pervaded the evening, but it was there and to a moving degree.

### THREE NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Marion John Nelson and Lawrence O. Hauge have been elected to the Executive Board. Terje I. Leiren marks a new addition to the Board of Publications.

Dr. Marion Nelson hardly needs an elaborate introduction in our circles. Under his guidance as director of the Norwegian-American Museum in Decorah, Iowa, since 1965, that museum has risen to national prominence because of its expansion and high professional standards. He is also a professor in the departments of art and Scandinavian at the University of Minnesota. His presence on the Board will bring about a closer alliance between the NAHA and the Museum.

Lawrence O. Hauge, a prominent Minneapolis businessman, is chairman of the board of three banks, all in Minnesota: the Citizens State Bank of St. Louis Park, Sibley County State Bank (Henderson), and the Farmer's State Bank in Morton.

The offices he has held or now holds reveal a broad interest in educational, cultural and religious affairs. He is a member of the Augsburg College Board of Regents, a member of the Ebenezer Society Foundation Board, and of the Foundation Board of Sons of Norway. He was for a number of years the president of Bergenslaget, and is currently president of the Nordmanns Forbundet chapter in Minneapolis. He was president of Bethany Lutheran church in Minneapolis, and is a strong supporter of Minnekirken in Minneapolis, the church to which his parents belonged. He was one of the co-chairmen who planned the expanded and successful 1980 Minneapolis 17th of May activities. At the moment he is also chairing the Vesterheim Fellows Banquet.

Dr. Terje I. Leiren is an assistant professor of Scandinavian Studies at the University of Washington (Seattle). He is also one of the associate editors of *Scandinavian Studies*. His main interests rest in immigration and Scandinavian history. He is currently studying Marcus Thrane's life in America and will cooperate

with Dr. Lovoll in preparing volume 30 of *Studies* which will in the main consist of articles that treat the Pacific Northwest and Alaska.

### UNDERSTANDING OURSELVES

It is always pleasant to hear from members, especially their reactions to our publications. Only a portion of a kind letter from Marvel Carl Benson, Circle Pines, Minnesota, can be cited here:

"It has been a long time since I have enjoyed a group of writings as much as I did this volume (*Studies* vol. 28). It was a letdown to come to its end and realize there was no more.

"Peter A. Munch in his 'Authority and Freedom' has helped me to understand why there were political and religious differences between my father's and mother's people. Both were descendents of immigrants from . . . Setesdal, yet my father's people were Democrats and conservative Synod Lutherans. My mother's people were Republicans and leaned toward liberal Lutheran groups. My father's people were landed . . . My mother's people had worked for the landed and were not well educated. Until I read Munch's explanation, I had wondered about this seeming paradox: Why liberal in politics and conservative in religion?"

## Editorial

### THE CHAIR FUND

As our readers will recall, 1980 saw the beginning of a fund drive to raise \$100,000, an endowment fund to be utilized to reduce the editor's teaching load. The plan was to extend the drive over a three-year period. The matching funds pledged by Kenneth O. Bjork and Clarence A. Clausen (\$5,000 each) have been met and the fund currently exceeds \$50,000, the projected goal for 1980.

New matching funds amounting to \$10,000 are now in the picture and must be met. Namely each gift from the membership at large will, in fact, be doubled. These matching funds have been provided by Kenneth O.

Bjork (\$1,500), Clarence A. Clausen (\$1,500), Elsie Melby, a member of the Executive Board (\$1,000), the Bygdelagenes Fellesrad (\$1,000) and \$5,000 by a person who wishes to remain anonymous.

A letter urging contributions for 1981 will be circulated among the membership. The 17 percent of the members who have already contributed or who have pledged will be asked to ignore this appeal. As successful as the drive has been, we have a ways to go. But we have two years before us, or as the saying goes, "We have the time, if you have the money."

Contributions made after February, 1980, are listed elsewhere. Contributions made before that time were reported in an earlier *Newsletter*. To those who have given, thank you! To those who have yet to do so, please!

L.H.

#### GIFT IN MEMORY OF ARTHUR O. DAVIDSON

Lutheran Brotherhood, Minneapolis, gave a luncheon on April 14 honoring the memory of Arthur O. Davidson. Present were a number of Davidson's Midwest friends. Dreng Bjornaraa reviewed Davidson's remarkable career and his contribution to many causes. Arley Bjella, chairman of the board at Lutheran Brotherhood, presented Corinne (Mrs. Arthur) Davidson with a memorial gift of \$2,000, which she in turn presented to the NAHA. The gift was allocated to the Chair Fund.

#### FUTURE PUBLICATIONS

The next two books to be distributed to the members are Reiersen's *Pathfinder* and *Ethnicity Challenged* by Carl H. Chrislock.

## Lovoll, Our Third Editor

Dr. Odd S. Lovoll was officially named editor of the NAHA on May 15, succeeding Dr. Kenneth O. Bjork who held that position for twenty years.

Born in Norway, Lovoll attended high school in Seattle, the Volda Gymnas, and the Universities of Oslo and Bergen. After teaching nine years in secondary schools in Norway, he became an instructor of Norwegian at the University of North Dakota, where he also received a M.A. degree in American history. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota in 1973, specializing in immigration history. He joined the St. Olaf College faculty in 1971 and now holds the rank of associate professor, teaching in two departments, Norwegian and history.

Dr. Lovoll is no stranger to members of the NAHA. He is the author of three articles in *Studies* and of *A Folk Epic: The Bygdelag in America*, and he shared authorship with Dr. Bjork in writing the history of the NAHA, a fiftieth anniversary publication. He edited *Cultural Pluralism*

versus *Assimilation: The Views of Waldemar Ager*, and *Makers of An American Immigrant Legacy: Essays in Honor of Kenneth O. Bjork*. His literary contribution extends beyond that of NAHA publications, with articles in both American and Norwegian journals.

He has recently accepted an assignment from the University Press in Oslo; namely, to write a book-length work which for the time being is entitled *The Norwegian Immigrant in America*. According to plan, Columbia University Press (New York) will publish the English version.

The task of editor is both difficult and demanding. As has been true in the past, no salary or honorarium accompanies the position. It is fitting therefore that those of us who hold other offices, and who sustain the NAHA through membership, give all the support and encouragement we can.

Dr. Lovoll's wife's name is Else, and they have two children, Audrey and Ronald.

## News in Brief

- The archives received recently from the Landsverk Foundation copies of the originals of Alf Monge's solutions of 67 runic inscriptions. Monge holds that these inscriptions contain cryptograms. The collection, carefully organized into six parts, approximates 600 pages. The first part is a guide to the tools and procedures Monge believed were used to create runic cryptograms.

- Paul Hjelm-Hansen of Trondheim, Norway, donated a copy of *Om Nordamerika* (1874), written by his grandfather, Paul Hjelm-Hansen, a newspaperman who scouted the Red River Valley in 1869, which in turn stimulated heavy Norwegian migration to that area. He died May 5, 1881, and is buried at Aspelund, a country church cemetery, located five miles northeast of Wanamingo, Minnesota.

- Lloyd Jorgenson, Columbia, Missouri, presented the archives with the papers of his father, O. M. Jorgenson, a minister in the Norwegian Baptist Conference. Along with the papers was an extensive run of *Missionaeren*, the official journal of the Conference.

- Plans are underway to establish Norsk Museum in Norway, Illinois,

located 10 miles northeast of Ottawa. The former Norway Lutheran church building will serve as the museum, but 12 other buildings: stores, houses, an old school, and a Temperance Association house, make up the museum complex. Except for the last mentioned, the buildings date back to 1848.

### STATUS OF CHAIR FUND

The Chair Fund had a balance of \$12,125 when the fund campaign began in earnest, September 1, 1979. This amount had accrued over several years, after the Executive Board ruled that all undesignated gifts should be allocated to this purpose. As of February 18, 1980, (date of last reporting) the fund had reached \$42,350. As of September 30, 1980, the amount was \$57,444. This figure includes cash gifts, pledges, and matching pledges; it, therefore, does not reflect a cash balance.

The March *Newsletter* listed contributors from September 1, 1979, to February 18, 1980. The insert lists the gifts and pledges received since that date up to September 30, 1980.

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