

# The Norwegian-American Historical Association

Northfield, Minnesota



*From the NAHA Office to the Association Members*

NUMBER 112

EDITOR, KIM HOLLAND

APRIL 2001

## NAHA HONORS ODD S. LOVOLL

As many of you know, former NAHA Editor Odd S. Lovoll is a busy man. Official retirement began at the first of the year, however Professor Lovoll taught an interim history class in January at St. Olaf College before traveling to Norway in February to teach at the University of Oslo. Lovoll returns to the U.S. this spring, which gives us the opportunity to show him how much we appreciate his many contributions to the field of Norwegian American history.

The NAHA Board of Directors invites you to show your appreciation to Dr. Lovoll for his work of the past 20 years. Written greetings and congratulations may be sent to the NAHA office and we will assemble them for Odd Lovoll and his family. (Think of the NAHA books you've enjoyed most over the last 20 years and remember that Editor Lovoll was instrumental in shaping the authority, readability and appearance of each of those books.) Please send us your written greetings no later than June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2001.

You are also invited to honor Dr. Lovoll through a tax-deductible gift to NAHA. You may simply state "Lovoll Fund" on your check's notation line. We know you will want to join us in thanking Dr. Lovoll by furthering the work and publications he so ably directed.

## NEW KING OLAV V CHAIR

Christopher Thomforde, President of St. Olaf College, and Lawrence O. Hauge, President of NAHA announce the appointment of **Todd W. Nichol** to the **King Olav V Chair in Scandinavian American Studies**. The Chair is jointly funded by the college and by NAHA. One of the major duties of the professor holding the King Olav V Chair is to serve as Editor of the NAHA publication program. Todd Nichol assumed the editor's duties in January of this year and will teach his first history classes for the college in the fall. Nichol is only the fourth editor to serve the Association, joining the esteemed company of Theodore C. Blegen, Kenneth O. Bjork and Odd S. Lovoll.

NAHA members will recognize Nichol's name from his contribution in *Studies* #35 or his translation of the book *Vivacious Daughter* published by NAHA in 1990. In 1990 Nichol joined the NAHA Board of Directors and he has served on the NAHA Board of Publications since 1994. This appointment to the King Olav V Chair is unique in that it is part of a joint appointment. Nichol will remain on the faculty at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, where he teaches church history.

A writer and teacher, Nichol is a graduate of St. Olaf College, Luther Seminary, and Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California. Memberships in the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Studies and the Organization of American Historians give our new Editor well-rounded connections to this special area of scholarship.

St. Olaf College together with the Norwegian-American Historical Association will be hosting an introduction and welcome for Dr. Nichol on May 17, 2001 at 3:00 p.m. in the Viking Theater of Buntrock Commons. A reception will be held at 3:30 p.m. in the Heritage Room. (Please RSVP to Pam Dresow before May 14<sup>th</sup> at [dresow@stolaf.edu](mailto:dresow@stolaf.edu) or (507) 646-6799 if you wish to attend.) This will be our first opportunity to bring together the three parties involved in this joint appointment. Members can look forward to meeting the leaders of Luther Seminary and the new president of St. Olaf College.

The NAHA Board and members welcome Dr. Todd W. Nichol to his new responsibilities within NAHA and thank him for his willingness to take on new challenges in the world of publications and scholarship.

## SPECIAL GIFT TO NAHA

We are privileged to share with you that another role model has remembered NAHA with a sizable gift - in fact it is the largest gift in our 75-year history. Grethe Seim, a longtime member and supporter of NAHA, honored NAHA with a bequest as part of her estate late in 2000. We never had the

opportunity to meet Mrs. Seim or show her the archives, but she knew NAHA through our publications, the newsletters and her correspondence with Lloyd Hustvedt. Mrs. Seim joined NAHA in 1969 and we are proud to have had her steadfast support for over 31 years. While Mrs. Seim shied away from accolades during her life, we think she would be agreeable to being singled out as an inspiration for others who wish to make NAHA part of their estate planning. A gift to NAHA can make a significant difference for the future of this Association.

### ART ON LOAN FROM VESTERHEIM

You are always welcome to visit the NAHA, however we have new reasons to stop in and look around! Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum has loaned NAHA ten of its paintings. This is a great opportunity for our two Norwegian American organizations to work together, and a chance for our visitors to gain more exposure to Norwegian American artists.

The information contained in the NAHA archives about the featured artists has been pulled into one file for your convenience. One of our student assistants produced a brief brochure that summarizes the information about the artists and the pieces on loan to NAHA.

Chief Curator Darrell Henning located a special painting that we want to draw to your attention. Some years ago Harry and Josefa Andersen of Chicago donated a Ben Blessum painting to Vesterheim in honor of Odd Lovoll. As a special tribute to Odd Lovoll's 20 years as the NAHA editor, we now have this painting on loan. You are invited to see this Blessum painting and the other works by Norwegian American artists when you are in Northfield. Darrell Henning and Janet Blohm Pultz from Vesterheim deserve our thanks for making this small exhibit possible.

### CONTRIBUTIONS OF MARY HOVE

For twenty years Mary Hove has been the editorial assistant to NAHA Editor Odd S. Lovoll. The partnership between editor and assistant is a very important relationship. With the retirement of Odd Lovoll, Mary Hove has also decided to retire.

You should know this is not Mary's first retirement! Mary graduated from the University of Kentucky and received her M.A. at Smith College. For several years Mary taught at Hood College in Frederick, Maryland, and at Mt. Holyoke College in Massachusetts, before working toward and receiving her Ph.D. in English from Johns Hopkins University.

Mary was an Associate Professor at Agnes Scott College in Decatur, Georgia, from 1955-1967. While grading College Board essay questions at Princeton University, Mary met a professor named Haldor Hove who taught English at St. Olaf College. Dr. Haldor Hove married Dr. Mary Rion in 1967 and soon Northfield had two Dr. Hoves in residence.

NAHA has been fortunate to have such a qualified person working on our publications. The editorial assistant position allowed Dr. Hove to travel and see the world in her free time, while keeping her skills sharp by working on the NAHA publications when she was in Northfield. One of Dr. Hove's contributions has been the index you use in the back of NAHA books. Mary organized and cross-referenced each index so the books would not only be enjoyable but useful. This work involves amazing attention to detail. We know Dr. Lovoll has always appreciated Dr. Hove's contributions to each book. We too wish to let her know we are grateful for her dedication. NAHA held a dinner to honor Dr. Hove in late April.

### SCHEDULING REMINDER – SUMMER HOURS

Only three part-time people provide the staff for NAHA. To prevent disappointment on your part, we suggest you call the office in advance to see what our hours will be the day of your planned visit. Generally NAHA hours are 8:00-12:30 and 1:30-4:00 p.m. Monday-Friday. Meetings outside the office and vacation plans can result in a variation to those scheduled hours.

St. Olaf College has chosen to shorten hours on Fridays throughout the summer. From June 1 through August 24, 2001 Rolvaag Library will be closing at noon on Fridays. Since NAHA is housed in the Library we too will have half days on Fridays during the summer. Phone (507) 646-3221 or email us at [naha@stolaf.edu](mailto:naha@stolaf.edu) before you visit.

### NORWEGIAN AMERICAN EVENTS

NAHA Norway member Øyvind T. Gulliksen is presenting a paper at the Bruce Centre, School of American Studies at Keele University in Great Britain, on Saturday May 12, 2001. The title of the conference is "American Mourning." Gulliksen's topic is "Ethnic Mourning: Reading Norwegian-American Tombstones." Gulliksen researched cemeteries in the Decorah, Iowa area for this study. NAHA will receive a copy of this paper after the Conference.

## WALDEMAR AGER ASSOCIATION

On May 17<sup>th</sup>, the Waldemar Ager Association in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, is holding a special event celebrating the Norwegian Constitution, "An Evening with Col. Hans and Gunhild Heg," a living history presentation by actors Samuel and Karolyn Solberg acting the parts of Colonel Heg and his wife.

Social hour begins at 5:00 and a Norwegian Smorgasbord at 6:00 p.m. at the Westgate Sportsman's Club. Tickets are \$14 if purchased in advance (by May 12) and \$15 if purchased after the 12<sup>th</sup>. Deadline for purchase is May 14<sup>th</sup>. Tickets are available through Scandinavian Imports at (715) 834-2261. If you live in the Eau Claire area and have received NAHA's latest book, *Colonel Heg and His Boys*, you will want to attend this special evening and learn more about both Colonel Heg and the author, Waldemar Ager.

## CELEBRATE SYTTENDE MAI IN WASHINGTON D.C.

A family picnic and parade is planned by the Norwegian Society of Washington, D.C., Sons of Norway and the Royal Norwegian Embassy on May 17, 2001 at Carderock Park, Montgomery County, Maryland. Opening ceremonies begin at 2:00, parade at 3:00 with children's games to follow. Call Arve Michelsen at (301) 384-6791 for more information. The new Norwegian Ambassador to the United States, Knut Vollebeck, is scheduled to open the festivities. Wear bunads; bring children and lots of flags for waving!

## SPECIAL MUSIC AND DANCE OPPORTUNITY

Place this on your calendar if you are interested in learning more about the music and dance of Norway! The Hardanger Fiddle Association of America is holding its 2001 Workshop at St. Olaf College August 9-12, 2001. Arriving in Northfield for this workshop will be Norwegian National Champion dancers, fiddlers and instructors. This promises to be a lively and colorful experience for everyone. Registration deadline is July 1, 2001. For more information you can check the HFAA website at [www.hfaa.org/workshops/2001\\_annual.shtml](http://www.hfaa.org/workshops/2001_annual.shtml) or contact the Hardanger Fiddle Association of America, P.O. Box 23046, Richfield, MN 55423-0046.

## SELECTION FROM THE ARCHIVES

NAHA has so many wonderful documents in the archives that from time to time we will examine a specific document and let you in on the importance of the item or the things we can learn from the writings. Forrest Brown brought this letter to my attention. The letter is dated March 3, 1938 and is from Theodore C. Blegen to Dr. O.M. Norlie, who had submitted a manuscript to Blegen for consideration.

Discussed in the letter from the NAHA editor is the importance of primary sources and doing thorough research. The two debated the story of Ole Rynning and the Beaver Creek settlement. Blegen stressed that all possible sources must be consulted and new sources are always coming to light. Blegen also stated that in the last few years new research had been done and new sources had been made known. They discussed the 1837 date Rynning arrived in New York and the number of people on the ship "Aegir." Blegen found a list in the archives of the Bergen custom's office that had not been available previously. Contemporary sources such as the New York Customs manifest were also checked to determine the exact number of passengers arriving with Rynning. Family historians as well as scholars know there is always something being uncovered and new sources to check and double check. One definitely gets the impression historians and authors can not take facts too lightly. Readers gain a better understanding of the historian's obligation to be thorough. The editor is always striving for the author's best and most accurate work. Blegen felt Norlie had broken new ground using land records of the Beaver Creek area, but elsewhere was unacquainted with recent research and too ready to cite earlier writers rather than go to the sources.

## 1925 NORSE AMERICAN CENTENNIAL VIDEO AVAILABLE

Copies of the 1925 Norse American Centennial video are still available. Running time for this silent film documentary is 59 minutes. Cost is \$28.95 plus tax and postage. (Minnesota residents must add \$1.89 for sales tax.) Postage is \$3.00 for the first video and \$1.00 for each additional video. To order please send your request to the NAHA office and enclose a check for the proper amount.

## ADDITIONS TO THE ARCHIVES

Received from Glenn and Hope Annexstad, "Full Circles and Family Ties: A Family History prepared for the Annexstad Family Reunion," compiled by Karen Annexstad Humphrey. 133 pages, soft cover. The book provides context to what was going on in Norway long ago, as well as in the 1700's and 1800's before relatives left for the United States. Two brothers enticed the rest of the family to the relatively young state of Minnesota in 1871. For the Annexstad family, life was centered around the Norseland Congregation near St. Peter. Excerpts from letters add a great deal of personal interest. Farm life and the power of memories are gathered in this book. Color photos, a family tree and updates of where family members are today make this a treat for non-family members too.

Received, "Spring Prairie Heritage 150 Years." 170 pages, soft cover. The history of this Wisconsin congregation (northeast of Madison) is chronicled from the arrival of the first Norwegian in the area, its founding in 1847 and the era (1851-94) when H.A. Preus was pastor. Photos and portions of letters and church records add interest to this pioneer congregation. In 1856 the salary for the minister was \$350 a year plus firewood. Pastors and their families as well as the activities of the church are included through 1997. Important people of the Norwegian Synod and of Luther College have links with Spring Prairie.

Received, "Norwegian Immigrants to the United States: A Biographical Directory, 1825-1850 Volume Three 1847-1848, by Gerhard B. Naeseth, edited by

Blaine Hedberg. 380 pages, hardcover. This continues the record of immigrants from 1825, combining information from sources such as ships passenger lists, United States and Norwegian government reports, and the collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, NAHA and the Vesterheim Genealogical Center. Two additional volumes will cover immigrants through 1850. A first name index as well as a last residence index (the community in Norway which the immigrants left) is included.

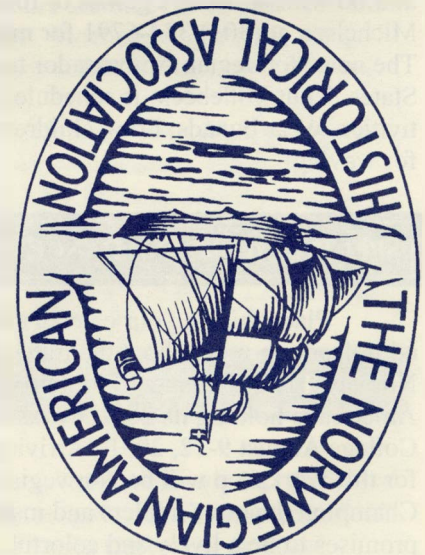
Received from Gudrun Jacobson Ronholm, a transcript of a recording her cousin Engvald Jacobson made in Norwegian about his early life in the United States. 5 single-spaced pages. Born in Valevaag, in 1903, he and his family left Norway in 1906 and eventually worked and purchased land south of Dickinson, North Dakota. Jacobson described cutting the sod into 18-inch lengths so the walls of the house would be even.

Received from Lawrence O. Hauge, Minutes (1975-1990) from the Women's Auxiliary of the Upper Midwest Chapter of the Norwegian American Chamber of Commerce.

Received from Jeanne Sanderson, "Reisen Mot Vest - Emigrasjonshistorie fra Nesodden 1850-1915," by Harald Lorentzen. 88 pages soft cover.

Received from Fabia Bird, a copy of the front page from *The Cincinnati Enquirer* June 25, 1906, where the lead article and photo discuss William Jennings Bryan making friends in Norway while attending the coronation of King Haakon and Queen Maude.

Received from Øyvind Gulliksen, a chapter from *Not English Only: Redefining "American" in American Studies* edited by Orm Øverland and published by V U Press, Amsterdam. Gulliksen's chapter is "The Haugean Immigrant and the Puritan Conversion Story," pages 67-79.



Change Service Requested

www.naha.stolaf.edu

Northfield, Minnesota 55057

St. Olaf College

Norwegian-American Historical Association

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
FARIBAULT,  
MINN.  
PERMIT NO. 21