

The Norwegian-American
Historical Association

Northfield, Minnesota

NEWS



LETTER

From the Secretary's Office to the Association Members

NUMBER 68

Editor, LLOYD HUSTVEDT

SEPTEMBER 1984

Twentieth Triennial Meeting

The NAHA Charter calls for a general meeting of its membership every three years. The Twentieth such meeting will take place at The Woman's Club of Minneapolis, 410 Oak Grove Street, on Friday, September 28, 1984, at 3:30 p.m.

President Lawrence O. Hauge will preside over a meeting that will consist of reports from the Editor, Secretary, and Treasurer. The terms for all the members of the Executive Board expire at this time and a new board must be elected.

Distance understandably makes it prohibitive for many members to attend. Those who cannot come are urged to forward their proxy (see page 2) to the Secretary. We also invite written opinions, suggestions and criticism. In order to conduct a legal meeting, we need the attendance or proxies of at least 100 members.

We hope that many will attend the general meeting. Beyond the need for broad representation on matters that require discussion is the fellowship, the renewal of interest, and the mutual encouragement that emerges when many gather around a common cause. The Officers of the NAHA, who carry out the day-to-day tasks of the NAHA, both need and appreciate the perhaps too infrequent opportunities to contact those who, when all is said and done, sustain the organization through dues and gifts.

A banquet is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. with a preceding social hour, beginning at 6:00 p.m. The banquet is not exclusively for members. In fact, members are encouraged to bring guests. A banquet reservation form is found on page 2.

Lois Rand and Hildegard Strom are arranging the banquet and the program.

SCANDINAVIANS AND OTHER IMMIGRANTS IN URBAN AMERICA

A Research Conference
October 26-27, 1984
St. Olaf College

Sponsored by National Endowment for the Humanities, St. Olaf College and The Norwegian-American Historical Association. For additional information, contact NAHA, Northfield, MN 55057.

BANQUET RESERVATIONS

\$15.00 per plate

My payment for \$ _____ is enclosed for _____ reservations for the Twentieth Triennial Banquet of members and friends of the Norwegian-American Historical Association, 7:00 p.m., Friday, September 28, 1984, Woman's Club of Minneapolis, 410 Oak Grove Street, Minneapolis.

Your banquet tickets will be issued upon arrival. Please return reservation requests to Norwegian-American Historical Association, St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota 55057. You are encouraged to bring guests. Non-members are welcome. A social hour with a cash bar precedes the dinner (6:00-7:00). Please return by September 22.

NORWEGIAN-AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

PROXY TO VOTE

Members who cannot attend the Twentieth Triennial Meeting are requested to send their proxies to the Secretary. If you do not know of any member who will attend the convention, you may wish to appoint a member of the Executive Board as your proxy. Officers who have indicated that they will attend are listed below:

Lawrence O. Hauge (President)
Lloyd Hustvedt (Secretary)
Odd S. Lovoll (Editor)
John Christianson

Reidar Dittmann
Rolf Erickson
Elsie Melby
Rolf Syrdal

I _____ of _____ in the state of _____ appoint _____, with full power of substitution, to be my substitute and proxy, to vote at the meeting of the members of the Norwegian-American Historical Association, to be held at Minneapolis, Minnesota, on September 28, 1984.

Date _____ Signature _____

Return to: Norwegian-American Historical Association, St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota 55057.

The Promise of America

King Olav V formally opened the "Promise of America" exhibit on June 23, 1984, at the Henie-Onstad Museum at Høvikodden (Oslo).

Initially inspired by the publication of Odd S. Lovoll's book, *The Promise of America* (Det løfterike landet), the exhibit was promoted by The University Press (Oslo) and *Aftenposten*, Oslo's leading daily newspaper, with financial help from both Norwegian and American sources.

Rolf Erickson, Lloyd Hustvedt, Derwood Johnson and Odd Lovoll, all members of the NAHA Executive Board, officially represented the NAHA at opening. Marion Nelson represented Vesterheim Museum, and Nina Archabal (Minnesota Historical Society) spoke for the State of Minnesota.

The exhibit pursues the theme of two young emigrants, Sigrid and Ole (sister and brother) who leave Norway around 1980. It explores their reasons for leaving, their trip across the ocean, and their subsequent life in the New World. Ole turns to farming while Sigrid finds work in the city. The basic theme is supplemented by giving attention to prominent personalities in the fields of art, literature, music, theater, engineering, sports, etc.

The exhibit will later be shown at the Minnesota Historical Society (spring of 1985). Other locations such as Texas, Chicago, and Seattle are also in the picture. Reports have it that to date some 40,000 persons have viewed the exhibit, a figure that exceeds the hoped for projections.

The Norwegian-American Seminar

As an academic follow-up to the exhibit described above, a seminar on Norwegian-American literature and history was sponsored by the Norwegian Chapter of the NAHA. The seminar, which ran from June 26 to 30 at The Henie-Onstad Museum, was arranged by Dorothy Burton Skårdal, University of Oslo, and Kjetil Flatin, Director of The International Summer School at The University of Oslo. Judith Torvik serves as Treasurer for the Chapter.

A total of 31 persons gave half-hour papers. Ten of these were Americans, plus several who currently teach or study in Norway. The remaining papers were given by Norwegians, a number of them young scholars who have recently finished their university studies. Most of the proceedings of the conference will be published. Plans also call for holding a similar conference in 1986.

The increased, if not dramatic surge of interest in Norway in countrymen who found new homes in North America, as reflected in the exhibit and the symposium, is a cheering and encouraging development.

Coming Soon!

The Promise of America, by Odd Lovoll, will be distributed to the members within the next few weeks. It is a most attractive book. It came out first in Norway under the title, *Det løfterike landet* where it was received with enthusiasm, and is now in its second printing.

After a proper waiting period, the members will receive the delightful cartoon creations of *Han Ola og han Per* by P. J. Rosendahl. The volume contains two introductory essays by the two authors, Joan N. Buckley and Einar Haugen.

When it comes to publications, we are nearly ahead of ourselves. Our Editor, Odd Lovoll, informs us that Volume 30 of *Studies* can go to the printers whenever our budget will permit. These are the kinds of problems we like to have.

Thank You!

The NAHA has recently received two major gifts. The first, a grant of \$5,000 came from Lutheran Brotherhood, Minneapolis. Its chairman, Arley R. Bjella, stated that the gift could be applied to any of the existing NAHA permanent funds.

The second, a gift of \$2,000 was by Grethe Seim (Mrs. Nils O. Seim), Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey. Grethe Seim, a member since 1969, has made earlier contributions amounting to \$1,200.

Both gifts were allocated to the O. E. Rolvaag Memorial Fund, a fund where the accrued interest is used for

general operational expenses. Life membership dues enter this fund, but over the past two years undesignated gifts have been added as well. With the help of these gifts, this fund should reach \$80,000 at the end of 1984.

Bygdebøker

An appeal made jointly by the NAHA and The St. Olaf College library, under Odd Lovoll's name, was sent to some 300 communities in Norway, requesting courtesy copies of their regional histories (bygdebøker). The response has exceeded all expectations and has added several hundred volumes of such books to a collection which was already respectable.

These books have in recent years been much sought by those tracing their family histories back to Norway. Often these works provide histories of the farms within the community treated.

The production of regional histories, often in multiple volumes, is an old practice in Norway. In recent years, however, unusual energy and resources have been turned in this direction. Since most of these books are printed in limited editions, the retail price is high. The copies we have received represent dollar figures far beyond what our budget would permit us to buy.

News in Brief

- Vesterheim, The Norwegian-American Museum, Decorah, Iowa, has reached its goal of \$250,000 for The King Olav V Endowment Fund.
- Received from Sigrun Røssbo *Drude Krog Janson: Norwegian-American and Norwegian Author*, A Thesis, department of English, University of Oslo, 1983. Bound typescript reproduction, 114 pages.
- Received from Arne Sunde *Heime men borte*. Thesis, University of Bergen, 1984. Bound, typescript reproduction, 133 pages. The study treats seven Norwegian-American novels.
- Received from Dyre Dyresen his translation of *Mit Levned's løb* (My Life), by Peter L. Hoen who served in the home mission field for the Seventh Day Adventist Church in the Middle West and on the East Coast. Typescript, 66 pages.
- Received from Borghild T. Estness, her *Josie Rykken's Family*, a history of an immigrant family from Hardanger, and their descendants in this country.
- Received from William M. Overn, a book of sermons preached by Anton Gustav Helgeson Overn (1855-1905), a Lutheran Norwegian Synod minister. Translated into English by Dr. Alfred V. Overn, a son.

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