

The Norwegian-American
Historical Association

Northfield, Minnesota

NEWS



LETTER

From the Secretary's Office to the Association Members

NUMBER 50

Editor, LLOYD HUSTVEDT

AUGUST, 1975

Fiftieth Anniversary

SEPTEMBER 27, 1975

The festivities marking the Fiftieth Anniversary of the NAHA will be combined with the Seventeenth Triennial Meeting of the Association, to be held on September 27, at St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota. The Executive Board will meet in the forenoon and the general meeting will convene at 3:00 p.m. in the Norwegian-American Historical Room (Library 303). The Anniversary Dinner will take place at 6:00 p.m. in the Kings' Room in the College Center.

The main speaker at the dinner will be Rudolph J. Vecoli, professor of history and director of the Immigration Research Center at the University of Minnesota. Among our special guests will be Congressman and Mrs. Albert H. Quie, Consul General and Mrs. B. Augdahl, President and Mrs. Sidney A. Rand, Dr. and Mrs. Nils William Olsson, Miss Jenny Johnson, publisher of *Minneapolis Posten*, and Gladys and Alfred Severson. Mrs. Severson was chosen Minnesota's Mother of the Year. Professor Kenneth O. Bjork, president of the Association, will preside at the dinner.

A steak dinner will be served at a cost of \$7.00 per reservation. All reservations (see page 4) must be returned by September 20.

CHARTER MEMBERS

There has been some confusion about how charter members should be identified. The list prepared for the 25th Anniversary included only those who subscribed to membership in 1925. We have expanded the list to include all who became members during the first year after the founding.

The following are still living who became members in 1925:

Dr. Clarence A. Berdahl
Dr. Einar Haugen
Mrs. Martin Hegland
Professor Gunnar Malmin
Rev. Herman A. Preus
Professor O. W. Qualley

1926:

Thor M. Andersen
B. B. Anundsen
Dr. Clarence A. Clausen

Rudolph L. Dalager
Professor Esther Gulbrandson
Mrs. E. A. Henderson
Gertrude M. Hilleboe
Rev. Casper B. Nervig
Dr. Arthur C. Paulson
Esther Peterson
Dr. J. C. K. Preus
Mrs. Andrew A. Rowberg
Rev. Earl Soiland

Of the 746 persons who became members in 1925 and 1926, twenty are still active members. The others have been lost through death or have canceled their membership. Statistics reveal that, of the original 746 members, 453 terminated their membership within the first four years. We salute our charter members for their sustained support of the Association. One must contemplate how things might have been, had all who

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CHARTER MEMBERS

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subscribed to membership been so dedicated.

In the event any charter member has been overlooked, please notify the secretary.

GIFTS

To date contributions in 1975 from 48 donors total \$2,226.50. The largest single gift of \$1,000 came from the *Bygdelagenes Fællesraad*. Those making contributions of ten or more dollars after the April Newsletter are as follows: Elizabeth Barth, \$100; Gladys Weseth Nelson, Norwegian Society in America, \$50; Sidney A. Rand, Sverre Svendsen, Rolf Syrdal, 10 to \$15.

PUBLICATIONS

A Folk Epic: The Bygdelag in America has been mailed to each member. *The Norwegian-Americans* by Arlow Andersen and *The Norwegian-American Historical Association: 1925-1975*, written by Odd S. Lovoll and Kenneth O. Bjork, will be mailed shortly in one package. *The Norwegian-Americans* is not a NAHA publication. It has been designated a sesquicentennial publication, and the NAHA bought one copy for each member as of July 31, 1975. Failure to receive any of the books mentioned above should be reported to the secretary.

Nina Draxten's biography of Kristofer Janson is now at the publishers and will be our next book.

IMMIGRATION COURSE OFFERED

St. Olaf College and Augsburg College are co-operating on a course entitled *The Norwegian-American Experience*. The course will be given in the evening on both campuses and is open to the public.

The course, which will treat broad areas like "The Old World Background," "Adaptation to the New Land," and "Aspects of Norwegian-American Culture," will include lectures by outstanding immigration scholars. The course coordinators are Dr. Odd S. Lovoll of St. Olaf College and Dr. Carl H. Chrislock of Augsburg. Interested persons may contact either of the coordinators.

ATTENTION ABROAD

Reidar Stavseth, who recently retired as editor of *Adresseavisen* in Trondheim, Norway, traveled recently in this country in order to collect information on Norwegians in America. A series of articles by this distinguished journalist have now appeared in the Trondheim newspaper. His special feature on the NAHA appeared in the June 10, 1975 issue.

WIGELAND HONORED

G. Norman Wigeland, a member of our Executive Board, was awarded the Knight's Cross First Class of the Royal Order of St. Olaf. The presentation was made on May 4, 1975, by Consul General Niels L. Dahl on behalf of King Olav V of Norway.

EXCERPTS FROM REVIEWS

Volume 26 of *Studies*. Reviewed by Myron R. Rubinof, University of Pittsburg, in *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine*, Vol. 58, No. 2.

"Much recent comment has dealt with the 'rediscovery' of ethnic heritage by the residents of the United States. . . The impression is sometimes given that much of the talk about ethnic pride is merely a fad in response to black pride among the American Negroes.

"Yet some ethnic groups, and a few scholars, had interest in these matters long before they became fashionable. . . The first volume in this series was published in 1926, when the melting pot was still dominant American ideology. . .

"The value of this book is greatly increased by a useful list of recent publications on American ethnic groups—not only Norwegian-Americans. Many of these materials are from esoteric sources."

A Pioneer Churchman: J. W. C. Dietrichson in Wisconsin, 1844-1850. Reviewed by Lawrence B. Davis, State University of New York, in *The Journal of American History*, June, 1975.

"This carefully edited and translated volume of original source material portrays a story of a cultural and religious clash between Europe and the New World through the eyes of a Norwegian Lutheran clergyman who visited America in the 1840s.

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EXCERPTS FROM REVIEWS

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"*The Travel Narrative . . .* reveals a man who combined an ambivalence to tolerance and intolerance, coupled with both perplexity and understanding of the country he visited. In one breath he abhorred the excesses of a black Methodist revival meeting; . . . and in the next he deplored the fact that the blacks do not enjoy equal citizenship in these free states. . . . His view of the Indians, unlike that of early missionaries, allowed that they were not gross idolators since they worshipped one God.

"The editor and translators have ably prepared this valuable source. . . . Explanatory footnotes and an index facilitate the book's use as a part of the record of the relation of religion to immigration, an important aspect of our social and cultural history."

Editorial

One cannot predict what the next fifty years will bring to the NAHA. We know that along the way a new generation will make up its membership and leadership. New scholars with new approaches will write our books. Our fervent hope, of course, is that the Association will prosper and that it will accomplish what the older generation only dreamt of in its most daring moments.

As we approach our fiftieth anniversary, some realities require attention. Demands imposed by inflation make it clear that income from dues alone will not be adequate. Publication costs in 1975 have been twice the income from dues. Reserves built up in the days when money was valuable have come to the rescue. Postal expenses, never a hardship in the past, have now become a major item in our budget. Postage alone for our latest book-mailing cost thirty-seven cents per package.

In order to safeguard the future we dream of, more members are needed to share the burden. Contributions over and above dues have increased remarkably over the past few years, but the base needs to be broadened. We must continue to hope that sizable bequests will come our way so that additional per-

manent funds can be created or that our existing ones will be increased. A higher percentage of life members would also provide greater stability.

There are some small things the members can do which will reduce costs. Prompt payment of dues so that a second notice is not needed is of significant help. Failure to advise us of a new address can mean that we pay double postage on books and sometimes means the loss of a member. Finally, the key to constant growth is permanence of membership.

Since it is an anniversary year, a personal remark, I am sure, will be forgiven. I have now served as secretary for seventeen years. As I look back on these years, the rewards of the office consist of a curious mixture of satisfaction and frustration. During these years many kind and appreciative words from members have crossed my desk. Time has not always permitted a response, but they have been a great source of encouragement. To all of you, many thanks. L.H.

NEWS IN BRIEF

- The proceedings of the Rolvaag Symposium held at St. Olaf College is now available at the St. Olaf College Bookstore. \$2.50.
- Additional copies of the NAHA history is available to members for \$2.00.
- Olaf H. Thormodsgaard, for many years dean of the Law School at the University of North Dakota, died July 29, in Bordeaux, France.
- Excerpts from NAHA publications continue to make their way into other books. A letter by Gro Svendsen will appear on page 239 of the *Better Homes and Gardens Heritage Cook Book*, a 400-page volume detailing the history of American foods. Gro Svendsen will also be included in *The Best of the West*, a two-volume anthology being prepared for publication in 1976 by *Reader's Digest*. Selections from Elise Wærenskjold's letters will appear in *The Dynamic Americans*, a high school history text to be published by Rand McNally Company in 1976.
- Fredheim Folk High School in Rognan, Norway, sponsored a summer seminar on Nowegian-America.

THE NORWEGIAN-AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Proxy to vote

I, _____ appoint _____

with full power of substitution to be my substitute and proxy, for me and in my name and behalf, to vote at the meeting of the members of the Norwegian-American Historical Association, to be held at St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota, on September 27, 1975.

A proxy to vote can be given to the Executive Board as a whole or to any individual who will be present at the meeting. Save for unforeseen developments, the following members of the Executive Board will be present: Oscar A. Anderson, Leonard W. Arentsen, Kenneth O. Bjork, John Christianson, Arthur O. Davidson, Reidar Dittmann, Gunnar Gundersen, Andrew Kindem, Norma Knutson, Rolf Syrdal, and Harry J. Williams. Lloyd Hustvedt will not be present and should not be named as proxy.

DINNER RESERVATIONS

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 1975, 6:00 P.M.

KINGS' ROOM, ST. OLAF COLLEGE CENTER

Please reserve _____ plates for the Anniversary Dinner for _____

_____. My payment of \$ _____ (\$7.00 per plate) is enclosed.

All reservations should be made by September 20. Dinner tickets will be held for pickup at the Kings' Room upon arrival.

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

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St. Olaf College
Northfield, Minnesota 55057

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