

# The Norwegian-American Historical Association

Northfield, Minnesota

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



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Editor, LLOYD HUSTVEDT

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## A Sequel to *The Promise of America*

*The Promise Fulfilled? A Contemporary History of the Norwegian-American People* is planned as a joint publication by the University of Oslo Press (Norwegian version) and the University of Minnesota Press (English version). According to plan, research and writing will begin in the summer of 1995 and be completed in the fall of 1997. This ambitious project deserves a more elaborate explanation than permitted in this Newsletter.

Odd S. Lovoll will be assisted by Terje Joranger, a young immigration scholar from Norway, for the first year. He will hold a position at St. Olaf College entitled Research Associate. The project is being funded by both individuals and foundations, Lutheran Brotherhood being among the most generous.

According to Lovoll, the major challenge will be to identify and gain access to the large and to a considerable extent "invisible" Norwegian-American population. The initial effort will be devoted to locating, identifying and surveying representative samples, both on the individual and group level.

More than most historical studies this one will rely heavily on interviews and questionnaires. The project calls for extensive field work where local contacts and assistance will be essential. Lovoll has issued a general appeal for help. That goes beyond sharing personal information. Much needed are persons willing to help gather information, particularly information that involves local organizations, both secular and religious. Lovoll can be reached through the NAHA. His telephone number

is 507/646-3235.

Save for mutual interest this project does not involve the NAHA. Lovoll, who has been given a two-year leave from teaching at St. Olaf College, will continue his duties as NAHA editor. Whether the NAHA should elect to use this publication as a stand-in for one of its publications remains to be determined. It is more likely that the NAHA will carry the book for sale.

## Future Publications

It took a while, but the wait will prove to be a worthy one. *Norwegian-Yankee: Knute Nelson and the Failure of American Politics, 1860-1923*, a book of 360 pages, will have April 10, 1995, as its publication date.

As explained in earlier newsletters, Millard L. Gieske, a University of Minnesota (Morris) political science professor, began work on this book in the summer of 1988. At the time of his death from leukemia in January, 1991, he had prepared a first draft of 600 pages.

Editor Lovoll, who had invited Gieske to undertake the project, now found another scholar, Steven J. Keillor, to carry on the work. The revisions, briefly stated, have entailed rewriting, additional research, shortening of portions of the manuscript, and the writing of some final chapters. Keillor, who resides in Askov, Minnesota, began work in the summer of 1992. Keillor is the author of *Hjalmar Petersen of Minnesota: The Politics of Provincial Independence* (1987). The book, which will retail for \$25, will be distributed to the NAHA members around May 1.

If things move according to plan, *Studies*, volume 34, should have an early November (1995) publication date.

## Wants Family Histories

Faith Ann Sevilä who is responsible for the Norwegian-American collection at the Royal University Library, Drammensveien 42, N-0255 Oslo, Norway, has informed us that the library she serves is interested in receiving copies of the family histories prepared in this country. Members who have family histories or are in the process of writing one are encouraged to honor this appeal. Family histories can be sent surface mail and at book rate as long as no personal correspondence is enclosed. A first class letter with separate postage can be attached.

## Board Member Brian Rude

Brian Rude lives in Coon Valley, Wisconsin, with his wife Karen and their two sons, Erik and Nels. He holds a BA degree from Luther College with majors in history and political science and a MA from the University of Wisconsin (Madison) in Public Administration and Public Policy.

Rude was elected to the Wisconsin Assembly in 1982 and ran successfully for the Senate in 1984, was re-elected in 1988 and 1992 and chosen senate president in 1993.

Historical interests preceded his entry on our board. He serves on the Board of Curators, State Historical Society of Wisconsin; on the Board of Advisors, National Trust for Historic Preservation; and is a Life member of Vesterheim. He is a man with both energy and ideas. Excitement can be created with only one of these qualities, but a combination of both is needed for results.

## Your Attention, Please!

When we mailed our January statements for dues, we enclosed an appeal for contributions over and above that of dues. We failed, however, to explain a new policy. Contributors of \$20 or more will receive an extra book when our next publication is distributed. Patron members are automatically included by virtue of the gift element found in their dues. Qualified members will receive a copy of the form entered below. In case of no response we will send

a publication that predates that person's membership in the NAHA. The form:

Your patron membership or your gift of \$20 or more qualifies you for a bonus book. It will be mailed together with our next publication. Please check your preference from the titles entered below. They are listed in the order they were published.

*The Changing West and Other Essays*, by Laurence M. Larson, 1937. 180 pp.

*Saga in Steel and Concrete: Norwegian Engineers in America*, by Kenneth O. Bjork, 1947. 504 pp.

*Theodore C. Blegen: A Memoir*, by John T. Flanagan, 1977. 181 pp.

*Land of the Free: Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson's America Letters, 1880-1881*, by Eva and Einar Haugen, 1978. 330 pp.

*Guide to Manuscripts Collection of the NAHA*, by Lloyd Hustvedt, 1979. 158 pp.

*Georg Sverdrup: Educator, Theologian, Churchman*, by James Hamre, 1986. 169 pp.

*Norwegian Americans and the Politics of Dissent, 1880-1924*, by Lowell J. Soike, 1991. 275 pp.

*Nordics in America: The Future of Their Past*, edited by Odd S. Lovoll, 1993. 228 pp.

*Material Culture and People's Art Among the Norwegians in America*, edited by Marion J. Nelson, 1994. 228 pp.

The following *Norwegian-American Studies*; volumes  27 (1977)  28 (1979)  29 (1983)

## Einar Ingvald Haugen 1906-1994

Einar Ingvald Haugen, the undisputed dean of Norwegian-American studies, died on June 20, 1994, 88 years old. A memorial service was held at Memorial Church, Harvard University, on July 27. The secretary of the NAHA, speaking for both the Association and St. Olaf College, gave one of three tributes presented at this service.

Haugen began his brilliant career at the University of Wisconsin in 1931 and built a strong Scandinavian studies department there. He was appointed the Victor S. Thomas Chair in Scandinavian and Linguistics at Harvard University in 1964. He retired

from teaching in 1975. He led the field when it came to providing a scholarly and intellectual dimension for the Norwegian-American immigrant experience. This he did on a broad front that included biography, history, literature and linguistics. He turned his attention to his own back yard and attained international recognition by doing so. His *The Norwegian Language in America* proved to be a landmark study. In this two-volume work he illustrates and explains the social and linguistic forces at work when an immigrant language (Norwegian) functions alongside the language of a dominant culture (English).

Haugen has worked closely with the NAHA down through time. He became a member of our Board of Publications in 1936, and has worked with all of our editors, Blegen, Bjork and Lovoll. He is the author of eleven articles in *Studies* and of *Immigrant Idealist: A Literary Biography of Waldemar Ager* (1989) and together with his wife Eva Lund Haugen translated and edited *Land of the Free: Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson's America Letters, 1880-1881* (1978).

Einar Haugen loved to be among people and he identified readily with persons of all trades and professions. During the reception that followed the memorial service this writer talked for a time with Eva Lund Haugen. One of her remarks managed to say it all: "The only thing wrong with this reception is that Einar isn't here."

## Random News

- Received from Kenneth Holberg Ducat his *One Ducat Family*, a spiralbound family history, maps, charts, and photos, 213 pages, 1994. The history includes this family's Scottish and Norwegian backgrounds.

- Received from Robert N. Saveland his *Sæveland Sesquicentennial*, a revised and updated genealogy of the Saveland family. Captain Tennis Zacharias Saveland came to America with his family in 1844 and later sailed on the Great Lakes. Typescript reproduction, 50 unbound pages, 1994.

- Received from Roar L. Irgens his translation and expansion of *Slekten Irgens* by Ludv. Kr. Langberg. The Irgens family (originally Jürgens) may have first lived in Holland and later in Holstein. Some members of this prominent family settled in Røros, Norway, around

1650. Members who settled in the United States are included. Paperbound typescript reproduction, 119 pages.

- Received from Helen Steers, *God's Hands Reaching Out: Memoirs by Chaplain Elling E. Ramsey*, a paperbound volume of 198 pages, 1994. Ramsey grew up on a farm near Decorah, Iowa, attended Luther College and began studies at Luther Theological Seminary in 1928. He served the church in many different capacities after ordination.

- Acquired. *The Manitowoc Norwegians* by Robert A. Bjerke, Dobbs Publishers, Manitowoc, Wisconsin, 1994. 280 pages. \$30 includes postage. The title page explains: *Manitowoc-skogen: A Biographical and Genealogical Directory of the Residents of Norwegian Birth and Descent in Manitowoc and Kewaunee Counties in Wisconsin from the First Settlement to 1900.*

The directory, an impressive piece of work in terms of research and labor, contains approximately 1700 entries and significant data about each resident. This must be the first such directory and Bjerke's work can clearly serve as a model for similar studies in the future, whether they be done on a township or county level. Robert Bjerke can be reached at 1127 South Eighth Street, Manitowoc, WI 54220.

- Received from Sonja Hillestad a collection of newspaper clippings about and biographical sketches of Ole Hegge, noted Norwegian skier who settled in Connecticut in 1929 and established ski centers in the East. Hegge, born at Bardu, Norway, in 1898, died June 2, 1994.

- Received from Ruby Ring Magnuson, *Ring*, by Richard Arland Thorud. Iver and Henrika Ring lived at Inderøy in Nord Trøndelag. They had ten children and all of them emigrated to America. They now have more than 500 descendants. Local lore has it that their parents, Iver and Henrika, died of loneliness. This well-done, spiralbound history contains 132 pages, 1994.

- Received from Allen Wastvedt three volumes of diaries kept by H.P. Gunderson, Kenyon township, Goodhue county, Minnesota, 1884-1886. Born in Norway, Gunderson came to Kenyon with his parents in 1869. After working as a farm hand he pursued higher education and took up banking in Hawley, Minnesota, where he died in 1935.

- Received from Clarence D. Paulson his *Bits and Pieces from the Past*. Spiralbound, 120 pages. Much of the material is translations of articles found in *Selbygboken*, 1921 and 1931.

- Received from Carol Hanson Schwinkendorf her *Here Come the Norwegians: A Genuine Story of Norwegians in the*

*Upper Midwest*. Hard cover, illustrated, 274 pages, 1994, \$30. This family history relies on diaries, letters and oral accounts for its narrative material. The author can be reached at 9707 East Mountain View Road #2459, Scottsdale AZ 85258.

- Received from Knut Tveit his *Skektshistorie for Tveit Nordre og Tveit Søndre i Treungen Grend, gardar og greiner, Emigrantene*. Photos, charts, 130 pages, 1993. Tveit is located in Nissedal, Telemark. The history accounts for twelve generations, including those who emigrated.

- Received from Teresa Bakken her *Bakken Family History*, spiralbound, photos, maps and charts, 120 pages. Members of the Bakke family began to leave Hol in Hallingdal in 1861, settling first in Iowa and later in North Dakota. The family is traced back to 1525.

- Received from Karen Almdale Hill her *The Almdale Brothers of U.S.A.* Typescript, 17 pages.

- Received from Alice A. Trask twenty-four letters from family members in Norway to Peder Ludvig Pedersen and his wife, Olga Therese Hanen, who lived in Chicago. Letters date from 1892 to 1905.

- Received from Victor H. Ruste the financial records (14 vols.) kept by his father Christian O. Ruste (1866-1924), a farmer who owned the Barber cheese factory in Mt. Horeb, Wisconsin. He was also a buttermaker. The records relate not only to his business enterprises, but include his personal and household expenses, no matter how small.

Ruste's grandfather left Valdres, Norway, with his wife and eight children in 1850. One of these children, Ole Ruste, was Christian's father. An examination of these records would reveal much about farming economy from 1890 to 1920.

- Received from Evelyn Ostraat Wierenga her *Kaffe Noter*, a collection of stories, anecdotal in character, which her mother Magda Ostebo Ostraat had told over time. Paperbound, 70 pages, 1994. The illustrations by Elsie Thorson are well done.

- Received. *Mylius*, hardcover, 420 pages,

1993. Lt. Otto Carl Von Mulus, born in Schleswig in 1759, was sent to Norway in 1789 where he married and began a Norwegian family line. Some came to America.

- Received from Ardyce Graftaas Jaeb a reproduction copy of *Ministerialbog* for Meraker Congregation, Deerfield township, Steele county, Minnesota, from 1874 to 1919. The book lists baptisms, confirmands, weddings, funerals, communicants and members.

- Received from Claire Groth "The Records of Confirmation from the First Lutheran Church, St. Ansgar, Iowa, April 15, 1855 to 1977." The record was compiled by Conrad Groth. Also, "Directory of the First Lutheran Church Cemetery," prepared by Jon Hendrickson.

- Received from Linda Skauge Sheryak, *An Orphan's Saga: The Autobiography of Carl Robert Narveson*. Unbound typescript reproduction, photos and sketches, 64 pages. The narrative is confined to Narveson's stay at the Wild Rice Children's Home, Twin Valley, Minnesota, from 1909 to 1915. The story is a valuable one. It provides us with our only detailed information about a Norwegian-American orphanage and how it operated.

- Received from Barbara Boraas Collins the papers of Julius Boraas (1871-1952), prominent Norwegian-American educator. His collection now exceeds six document cases.

- Received from Ivar Hansen his *Family History: Porkka/Stenbraaten*. Paperbound typescript reproduction, photos, charts and maps, 299 pages, 1994. The narrative is given in both Norwegian and English. The Porkka name is Finnish in origin.

## Announcement

For reasons of health the secretary has been away from his office for longer periods of time since last September. As a result this *Newsletter* is behind schedule. We hope to be back on track with an annual report (1994) in the next *Newsletter* very soon. Thanks to Ruth Crane the day to day administrative work has not suffered. Things in that domain are in excellent condition.

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