

# The Norwegian-American Historical Association

Northfield, Minnesota

# NEWS



# LETTER

*From the NAHA Office to the Association Members*

NUMBER 115

EDITOR, KIM HOLLAND

MARCH 2002

## TRIENNIAL MEETING April 20, 2002

NAHA members are invited to the Twenty-sixth Triennial Meeting of the Norwegian-American Historical Association. Please join us on Saturday, April 20, 2002 at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota. The membership meeting will begin at 3:30 in the Viking Theater on the ground floor level of Buntrock Commons. The Viking Theater provides a comfortable venue where we will gather to hear reports from NAHA staff and committees. The Nominating Committee will present a slate of candidates for the 2002-2005 Board of Directors. After the new Board has been elected they will briefly meet to elect officers for the upcoming triennium. Following the membership meeting you are invited to a social hour at 5:30. Dinner will be served at 6:30 in the Kings' Room. A banquet reservation form is included in the newsletter.

The dinner will be our opportunity to recognize President Lawrence O. Hauge for his 21 years of leadership. Dr. Rudolph J. Vecoli, head of the Immigration History Research Center, will be our key-note speaker. After dinner the European, scholarly tradition of presenting a celebratory volume of writings (*a festskrift*) to mark a special anniversary will be continued as NAHA's *festskrift* will be given to former editor Dr. Odd S. Lovoll in recognition of his 20 years as editor and his contributions to the field of Norwegian-American history. Other surprises are on the agenda! If all goes as scheduled you can also pick up your copy of the *festskrift* following the dinner.

## RESERVATIONS and PROXY

If you are unable to attend, you are urged to forward your proxy to the NAHA office. Proxies are essential in order to establish a legal meeting according to the by-laws. *Please Note:* A Proxy form is included in this newsletter and a self-addressed envelope is enclosed. Also included is the reservation form for dinner. Guests of NAHA members are cordially invited. We are limited in our seating number for dinner so please reply promptly. Details are included in the attached reservation form.

## SALUTE TO OUR PRESIDENT

For 21 years the Norwegian-American Historical Association has been under the leadership, guidance and hospitality of Lawrence O. Hauge. Larry and his great partner, Lois Hauge, have always made us feel welcome at every gathering NAHA has hosted. Larry - we appreciate your devotion to the mission of the Norwegian-American Historical Association.

## ARCHIVES OPEN on SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 2002

The NAHA Docents have completed training from Archivist Forrest Brown and will open the NAHA office from 11:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. on Saturday April 20th. These volunteers can point out the resources in Rolvaag Library and the NAHA archives which you might find useful in completing your own family reasearch. *Please call or email the NAHA office if you are planning to visit the archives on April 20th. We want to have adequate assistance for you.* Through these volunteers we hope to make the archives accessible to members who aren't able to visit during the Monday - Friday hours.

## THANKS TO MEMBERS FOR SUPPORT

A sincere "thank you" to all participating in the Annual Fund Drive. Your support is important and we value your membership. We welcome you as "Charter Members" in NAHA's Annual Fund campaign. Each gift you make has an impact on this small non-profit association. Our mission is to locate, collect, preserve and interpret the Norwegian-American part of American history with accuracy, integrity and liveliness. We can't do it without you! Together we raised over \$39,000 for the Annual Fund!

Nancy Gossell, Clayton Johnson, Ruth Crane, Jim and Sonja Hillestad, Todd Nichol, Brian Rude, Luther Forde, Mr. & Mrs. David Monson, Tom and Marj Fjelde, Marian R. Aaker, Gretchen Hardgrove, Thelma Johnson, Dr. Blanchard Krogstad, Lew Linde, Rev. Allan O. Nelson, Dr. & Mrs. John A. Nilsen, Eugene Nordby, John M. Ophaug, Sidney & Lois Rand, Brynhild Rowberg, Lee Rokke, Lloyd A. Svendsbye, Paul T. Vangerud, Dean Winkjer, Roald Lund, Kathleen Bergan Schmidt, Norman Hagen, William J. Korsvik, Claire Elliker-V. Ågsberg, Donald C. Jordah, Donald Hegg, Virginia Papke, Orrin L. Helstad, Donald L. Dyresen, Solveig Zempel, Becky Brown, Janet Larson Shickell, Alice Kim, Anita M. Fjortoft, Gregg Orwoll, Carl T. Narvestad, Philip A. Quanbeck, Morgan Halvorson, Clarence A. Glasrud, Judge Derwood Johnson, Russell Fridley

(in honor of Ruth Hanold Crane), Kathleen Stokker, Norman Erickson, Patricia Cutshall, Edith Buttenhoff, Glen Fors, Corinne Davidson, Shirley Santoro, Robert Granrud, Karen Davidson, Brit Peterson, Lois Holland, Paul Christianson, Elva Sheard, Clair Husby, Elvin Heiberg, Marlys O'Brien, Helge Seljaas, Joe Shaw, Raymond A. Rovang, Kim Holland, William N. Georgeson, Duane & Elaine Kringen, Borg Hanson, William Melton, Gordon/Charlotte Rasmussen, Solveig Steendal, Helen M. Pederson, Jon Gjerde, Robert S. Duxstad, Mary Ann Olsen, Darrel Gonyea, Otto Ofjord, O. Walter Johnson, Dr. Eugene Fevold, Betty Rockswold, Joan Buckley, Janet Pultz, John R. Christianson, Zay Rugland Lenaburg, Lawrence O. Hauge, Clarence Sheffield, Jr., Lloyd Hustvedt, Walter F. Mondale, Mr. & Mrs. William O Lyders in memory of Oscar & Esther Lyders Nils Lang Ree, O.J. Tomson, John R. Tunheim, Layne Haugen, Ole Tweet, Ella Valborg Tweet, Dean Buntrock, Egil Almaas, Ralph Egeland, Philip Ramstad, Richard Skaar, Louis Blumengarten, Mrs. Charles O'Kieffe, Margit Weingarten, Karen Holt, David Holt, Delores Thorson Lewis, Molly Aasten, Eleanor Robien, John Schevenius, R.M. Granum, Carl Solberg, Kathleen Thomson-Moss, Jean Marck, Harlan D. Grinde, Roger Moe, Helen Heitman, Mrs. Joel Stavlo, Renee Hermanson, Warren & Margaret Saetre, Lois Drews, Trygve L'nneboth, Andrea Een, Dorothy Root, Hartvig Melbye, Harlan Nelson, Allan Thoreson, (in memory of Carl Chrislock), Paul Qualben, Chris Velline, Ronald Johnson, Barbara Quinn, Sylvia Meagher, Lars Djupedal, David Hardy, Erlaine Seeger (in memory of Freda Johnson Hovden) Mr. & Mrs G.T. Schjedahl, Patricia Williams, Rev. Gordon Hanson, Elaine Graham, Wayne Rohne, Janet Geronime, Dr. Henry & Charlotte Hansen, Elaine Schulstad, Dennis Sorheim, Gerald Sime, Robert Firing, Paul Schmitt, Margaret Egekviist, Richard Tvedten, Harry Anderson, Eunice & Victoria Finstad, David Jacobs, John Karevoll, Doris E. Kornfeld, Valborg, Fletre Linn, Carlyle E. Anderson, N.T. Braatlien, Norval Engelsen, Betty Fladeland, George Aker, Frederic Giere, Everett Everson, Johan Ronningen, Beverly Smith, Rigmor Swenson, Symra Society of Decorah.

#### REMEMBERING OSCAR AND ESTHER LYDERS

William and Phyllis Lyders recently made a gift to NAHA to commemorate the long lives of Oscar and Esther Lyders. Oscar Lyders was the founder of the Waldorf College Choir in 1916. It is at Waldorf College where Oscar met and married faculty member Esther Michaels. In 1928 Oscar joined the faculty at Midland College in Fremont, Nebraska, where he founded the a cappella choir for that college. Both Oscar and Esther had long and productive lives. We appreciate the extended interest the Lyders family has in the Association and thank them for remembering NAHA in their planned giving. Gifts to a small non-profit association like NAHA can have a major impact on that organization. Thank you Bill and Phyllis for honoring the lives of Oscar and Esther! We encourage others to follow this example.

#### IN HONOR OF JOHN LANGUM

John Langum, son of David J. Langum of Samford University, died earlier in 2001. NAHA was one of the organizations listed to receive memorials and we thank these groups and individuals who remembered John through a gift to NAHA. Dr. & Mrs. Thomas E. Cortis, Cumberland School of Law Student Bar Association, Cumberland Law Review, Cumberland School of Law, A. J. & Janet Bolla, American Civil Liberties Union of Alabama.

#### INTERESTED IN A NAHA BOOK GROUP?

*Editor's note: I learned of an informal book group that reads and then meets to discuss NAHA's publications. I asked them to share with us what got them started. For several years many of my NAHA books went unread. My intentions were good but I just did not find the time. All of that changed a few years ago when three of us from South Minneapolis formed a NAHA reading group. Now our books are being read and discussed. We look forward to new publications.*

Since we had a lot of catching up to do we decided to read some of NAHA's earlier publications. We were drawn to the diaries and correspondence of the early Norwegian immigrants who came to minister to their countrymen and women in Wisconsin and Iowa.

One of our favorites was *The Diary of Elizabeth Koren* (NAHA 1955). We never cease to be amazed with the sacrifices these devoted people made when they gave up a comfortable life in Norway to come "til Amerika" to preach God's word. A recent trip to Koren's Washington Prairie church outside of Decorah, Iowa helped us to further understand their ministry.

Not all who came to the Midwest were immigrants. A few came as observers and lecturers. Among them was a well-known poet, dramatist, novelist and politician Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson. (See *Land of the Free*, NAHA 1978) His letters written in 1881 and 1882 to his wife Karoline, to the Oslo newspaper "Dagbladet" and to his tour arranger, Rasmus B. Anderson in Madison, Wisconsin gave wonderful insights into this complex man.

Our group tries to meet once a month to discuss our assigned reading. When there is a book signing or an educational activity related to the book, we incorporate that event with our meeting. It can be a great way to expand your knowledge of things Norwegian-American. We hope that we have inspired you to read the books in your collection of NAHA books.

Your fellow members - Mary Ann Olsen, Thelma Johnson and Marian Aaker. *If you are interested in knowing who is in your area and might be interested in discussing a NAHA book we invite you to contact the NAHA office via email or phone. We can compile the list of people in your area who have indicated their interest in getting together to discuss a NAHA book. It could be that a neighbor or someone at your church is already a NAHA member and you can take it from there!*

#### NEWS FROM 2001 HAUGEN SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

*Editor's note: I asked the most recent winner of the Einar and Eva Lund Haugen Scholarship to tell us how she used the scholarship money to advance her doctoral studies.*

by Kristin A. Risley

Receiving the Haugen Scholarship last spring was one of the greatest honors of my life. The Haugens' work has influenced and inspired me, from my first days of studying Norwegian as an undergraduate at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, to my current dissertation work on Norwegian-American literature and culture at The Ohio State University. The award also meant a great deal since it came from NAHA, the place that I consider my scholarly "home." I am therefore writing to express my thanks and share some of the singular opportunities and experiences this generous scholarship afforded.

First and foremost, the scholarship released me from my regular teaching and administrative duties at Ohio State. The precious time off allowed me to devote my summer to dissertation work, the highlight of which was a research trip to Norway from June to July. I spent most of my time in Oslo, using the collections at the University of Oslo and the National Library. During my stay, I lived in a dormitory with Norwegian and foreign students at Kringsjå, a short train ride from the university and the downtown. In addition to working in the libraries, I met with other scholars of Norwegian-American studies and members of NAHA-Norway and the Nordmanns-Forbundet (Norseman's Federation). It was a pleasure for me to discuss my work and spend time with such generous people. I was also fortunate to make two short trips during my stay: one to see family and friends in Bergen, the other to find and photograph the Hans Christian Heg monument in Lier. My visit to the statue was one of the final pieces in an ongoing research project and became a pilgrimage of sorts.

The final stage of my Haugen scholarship will be, quite fittingly, a research trip to the NAHA archives in Northfield this spring. The Haugen Scholarship has allowed me to make important progress on my work, and also reminded me why I love this project and need to keep at it.

### HAN OLA og HAN PER

A life-size bronze sculpture, by artist Craig Bergsgaard, of the Norwegian-American cartoon characters, Ola and Per, will be dedicated in Spring Grove, Minnesota on May 18th. A full day of activities is planned. The US Postal Office has developed a pictorial cancellation for the dedication of the Ola and Per statue. The Spring Grove Post-Mistress will hand cancel your envelopes with the Ola and Per stamp if you bring them to the Post Office on the 18th. For more information call 507.498.5617 or see [www.spring-grovern.com](http://www.spring-grovern.com) click on "Quest" for the schedule of events surrounding the dedication of Ola and Per. For background on this popular Norwegian-American comic strip by Peter Rosendahl, you will want to see the 1984 NAHA publication by Einar Haugen and Joan N. Buckley entitled *Han Ola og Han Per*.

### CALL FOR PAPERS - NAHA-NORWAY

The eighth seminar of the Norwegian-American Historical Association, Norway Chapter, "Norwegian-Americans in a Nation of Nations," will be held on June 25-28, 2003, at the University of Bergen. NAHA-Norway encourages seminar contributions based on many academic traditions. Literary, historical, social science, fine arts, and cultural studies, as well as multi- and interdisciplinary approaches are appropriate. NAHA-Norway also emphasizes the need to see Norwegian-American Studies in the context of international migration and ethnic studies in general. Presentations may be delivered in English or Norwegian and should not exceed twenty minutes.

Prospective speakers are invited to submit a half-page proposal and a one-page CV to NAHA-Norway Chairperson Dina Tolfstby, Norwegian-American Collection, National Library of Norway, Oslo Division; P.O. Box 2674 Solli, N-0203 Oslo; Norway, fax: +47 2327 6010 ([dina.tolfstby@nb.no](mailto:dina.tolfstby@nb.no)). For further information please contact Dina Tolfstby or Orm øverland, Engelsk institutt, Universitetet i Bergen, Sydnesplassen 7, 5007 Bergen, Norway ([orm.overland@eng.uib.no](mailto:orm.overland@eng.uib.no)). Proposals are due no later than October 15, 2002. Those who wish to attend the seminar without giving a paper should also notify NAHA-Norway at the above address to receive information.

### ADDITIONS TO THE ARCHIVES

Received from Gordon L. Jacobson, Jacobson Family History, Norway-America-Iowa, Their Story: Thron Jacobson and John Thron Jacobson. 478 pages, in binder and 69 page appendix of helpful information and photos. Includes copies of census reports, land grants, farming information, newspaper clippings and much more.

Received from Roy Franklin Anderson, Ole Olsen Rykhus's Family History, 67 pages spiral bound. Photos, copies of newspaper articles and documents show the movement and expansion of this family.

Received from Nedra Cook, Norwegian Connections, family history actually completed in Norway and then translated to English for the family members in the United States.

Received from Bob Kittelson, correspondence from the 1970's and 1980's, between Della Kittelson Catuna and Professor Clarence Clausen as they discussed the translation of the Norwegian soldiers' letters for Colonel Heg and His Boys.

Received from Leland Sather, Utah Historical Quarterly, Fall 2001, Vol.69, number 4. This quarterly is dedicated to the skiing and winter recreational pursuits in Utah as the state prepares for the 2002 winter Olympics. Of course Norwegian-Americans were involved in skiing activities. The names of Halvor Bjorggaard and Alf Engen are important to Utah's winter sports industry. Bjorggaard left Wanamingo Minnesota and the Aurora Ski Club of Red Wing, Minnesota to undertake the duties of ski professional for the Odgen Ski Club. Tragically Bjorggaard was killed in a motorcycle accident and was buried in Wanamingo in 1931.

Received from Ralph and Marilyn Olson, A Journey From Norway to America, A Chronicle of the Family of Tom and Ellen Olson. This is a narrative to complement the earlier work, Norway to America, the Genealogy and History of the Family of Tom and Ellen Olson. 21 pages, spiral bound. Includes maps and photos of the farm in Norway as well as photos from family gatherings.

Received from the Valley Grove Preservation Society, documents and records from the church's earliest days, including the deed to the land on which the church stands, the Luther League constitution, the Ladies Aid minutes, communion records and much more. Valley Grove, one of the congregations served by B.J. Muus, discontinued worship services in 1973. However, the grounds and surrounding land are maintained by the Valley Grove Preservation Society, which in 2000 raised money to purchase 111.3 acres of land surrounding the site.

Received from Lawrence Aasen, *A Look Back to Ole and Mary Aasen, Their Children and the Early Days*. 15 pages, stapled booklet written in 1971. In 1881 Ole spent his first North Dakota winter living in a cave. Later that year Ole married Mary Lein in Fargo, North Dakota. The booklet follows the lives of their six children.

Received from Lawrence Aasen, Torger and Bertha Brenden, *Pioneer Farmers*. 8 pages stapled booklet written in 1975. The Brenden family left Spring Grove, Minnesota in 1879 and via covered wagon traveled almost 15 miles a day before arriving in Taft, North Dakota, 350 miles away. Here they broke sod and turned it into a productive farm.

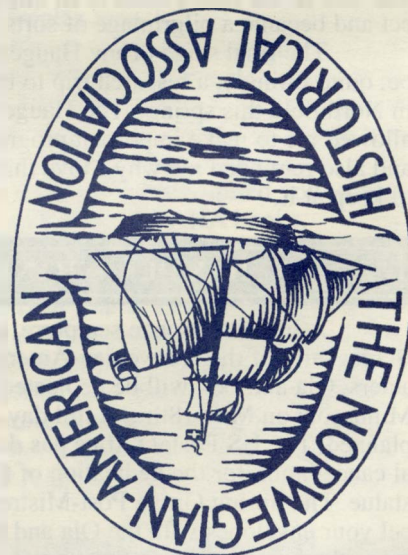
Received from Carl Solberg, *Recollections*, by Josef Emil Running, loose leaf, 58 pages. Josef's parents emigrated from Dombaas Norway in 1878 and settled in Martin County, Minnesota. Josef, born in 1891, recalls his father treasuring the news from the *Skandinaven* newspaper and that he was 17 years old before he ever traveled more than 20 miles from home. Josef attended St. Olaf for eight years, while it was both an Academy and a College. Josef became a teacher and Math professor. At age 86 Josef made his first trip to Norway to see the area his family and neighbors had spoken about so frequently. In his best Gubrandsdalen dialect Josef was successful in asking directions to the farm on which his father had lived.

Received from the St. Olaf College archives, 18 copies of *Cantata for Soprano, Baritone, Chorus and Orchestra* written for the 1825-1925 Norse American Centennial. Text by B.J. Rothnem and Music by F. Melius Christiansen.

Received from Ralph O. Thrane, *Who Was Gjertrud Gullisksatter Helle Aamodt Nilsen Nettum? And Where is She Now? A family mystery is explored around a great grandmother who left the Toten area of Norway and settled in the Toten area of Goodhue County. Gjertrud died in 1873 and was buried in the Hoff Lutheran Church Cemetery. For years the only marker was a tree planted by her husband, Johan in 1873. Family lore says Johan brought the spruce seeds with him from Norway. Johan moved with his children to Kindred North Dakota where he lived for another 40 years. Gjertrud's tombstone was moved to North Dakota to be near that of her husband although the actual remains stayed in Goodhue County.*

Received from the Royal Norwegian Consulate General in Toronto, Canada "*Somewhere on the East Coast of Canada*" - *Norwegian Wartime Activities in Nova Scotia 1940-1943*, by Jostein A. Kjelsrud, 119 pages, hard cover. Thousands of Norwegian seamen and soldiers trained as part of their fight to liberate their homeland after the Nazi invasion. Whaling vessels were converted to become convoy escort ships. For security reasons, very few people knew of the activities in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia and it was often referred to only as "*somewhere on the east-coast of Canada.*" This is a very interesting war-time story involving Norwegians doing their part for Norway. In May, King Harald and Queen Sonja will help draw attention to the Norwegian-Canadian Heritage Museum north of Toronto where the Royal Norwegian Air Force trained during W.W. II. The training area for the Royal Norwegian Air Force was named "*Camp Little Norway.*" More than 3,300 officers and crew had their training here between 1940 and 1945.

Received from Barbara Quinn, *Amund and Ingeborg Levorsen and Children from Rollag, Numedal, Norway*. Loose leaf, approximately 80 pages. Pelican Rapids, Minnesota became home for some of the family before moving to Norge, Virginia. Photos, maps and reprints of travel letters in the "*Rothsay Record*" detailed a train trip to Texas to look for land.



*Change Service Requested*

507-646-3221

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

**NORWEGIAN AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION  
PROXY TO VOTE**

Members who are unable to attend the twenty-sixth Triennial meeting are requested to send their proxies to the NAHA office. You may name a fellow NAHA member as your proxy, or you may wish to appoint a member of the Board. Below are listed names of the Board members/officers who will be attending.

Ruth Hanold Crane  
Nancy Gossell  
Lawrence O. Hauge

John R. Tunheim  
O.J. Tomson  
Lois Rand

Mary Ann Olsen  
Solveig Zempel  
Lloyd Husvedt

I, \_\_\_\_\_, of \_\_\_\_\_ (city)  
in the State of \_\_\_\_\_ appoint \_\_\_\_\_

with full power of substitution, to be my substitute and proxy, to vote at the meeting of the Norwegian-American Historical Association to be held at St. Olaf College on April 20, 2002.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Return to NAHA **no later than April 12th**. A self- addressed envelope is provided for you.

---

**BANQUET RESERVATION \$30.00  
per plate**

Enclosed is my payment of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ (number) reservations for the Twenty-sixth Triennial Banquet for members and friends of the Norwegian-American Historical Association on **Saturday April 20, 2002** at St. Olaf College Buntrock Commons Kings' Room. Social Hour 5:30 p.m., Dinner at 6:30. Please return the reservations to the NAHA office **no later than April 12, 2002**. (Envelope enclosed) Your canceled check will be your receipt. Your banquet ticket will consist of a ready-made nametag, which you will pick up at the Social Hour.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Guest(s) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

FROM \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_



Administrative Director  
Norwegian-American Historical Association  
1510 St. Olaf Avenue  
Northfield MN 55057-1097

