

The Norwegian-American Historical Association

Northfield, Minnesota

NEWS



LETTER

From the Secretary's Office to the Association Members

NUMBER 75

Editor, LLOYD HUSTVEDT

FEBRUARY 1988

1987 — A GOOD YEAR

Briefly stated the highlights of 1987 include the triennial meeting held in Chicago, the election of five new members to the executive board, a royal visit, the publication of *Marcus Thrane: A Norwegian Radical in America* by Terje Leiren. Our editor, Odd S. Lovoll, forwarded *The Testing of M. Falk Gjertsen* by Nina Draxten to the printers, and this book will be distributed to the members late in January. The history of the Norwegians in Chicago by Odd S. Lovoll entered its final stages of completion before the turn of the year. This publication may come off the press in June, 1988. There was a modest gain in membership and a remarkable gift income of more than \$27,000. The archives, under the care of Charlotte Jacobson, continue to expand and are in impeccable order.

The 21st Triennial Meeting

Because of the forthcoming history on the Norwegians in Chicago, it was appropriate that our general membership meeting should be held in that city. The October 9 convention, planned and arranged by Rolf Erickson, William J. Korsvik, Darrell Treptow and L. Charles Brewick, took place at the spacious and elegant University Club of Chicago, 74 East Monroe Street. Korsvik's membership in this club made use of these facilities possible.

The executive board met in the forenoon and the general meeting was called to order in the afternoon where reports covering the past three years were made by Odd S. Lovoll (editor), Ruth Crane (assistant secretary), Lloyd Hustvedt (secretary) and Rolf Erickson (Chairman of the Chicago History Committee). Speaking for the nominating committee, Rolf Erickson presented a slate of 23 nominees to serve on the executive board (18 incumbents and 5 new). All were elected without further nominations.

In a brief meeting following the general session, the new executive board re-elected their former officers: president, Lawrence O. Hauge; editor, Odd S. Lovoll; treasurer, Arthur E. Andersen III; secretary, Lloyd Hustvedt; assistant secretary, Ruth Crane; 1st and 2nd vice presidents, Roy N. Thorshov and Rolf Erickson respectively. Janet Rasmussen, Pacific Lutheran University, who had earlier served on the executive board, was elected to the board of publications.

The dinner, attended by 80 persons, was preceded by a social hour co-hosted by the American Scandinavian Association of Illinois. Odd S. Lovoll gave the main address "Images through 100 Years of Chicago History." Musical numbers were provided by the outstanding Norwegian composer and organist, Knut Nystedt, and by the gifted Swedish baritone, Bo Ohlgren. The evening program also included the presentation of "Awards of Merit" to Harriet Hustvedt (Highwood, Illinois) and to Josefa and Harry Andersen (Chicago) for their sustained support of the NAHA. President Lawrence Hauge read the citations and presented the awards.

New Board Members

ARLEY R. BJELLA was a senior partner in the law firm of Bjella and Jestrab in Williston, North Dakota, when he became Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of Lutheran Brotherhood in Minneapolis in 1970. During his tenure in office Lutheran Brotherhood experienced remarkable expansion, moved into a new building, and increased manifold its philanthropic program, providing support in many forms to Lutheran institutions. But institutions like Vesterheim in Decorah and the NAHA have benefitted as well. As a memorial to the founders of Lutheran Brotherhood, nearly all of

them Norwegian Americans, Bjella led the way for establishing the Norway-America Heritage Fund in 1986, a fund now managed jointly by Nordmanns-Forbundet and Norge-Amerika Foreningen in Oslo for the purpose of promoting closer contact between Norway and its counterpart in America.

Bjella holds honorary degrees from Gettysburg College (Penn.) and Concordia College (Moorhead) and was awarded the Royal Order of St. Olaf, Knight First Class in 1979. Although he retired as Chairman of Lutheran Brotherhood in 1987, he continues as a director and is still active in many civic and professional organizations.

KAREN DAVIDSON marks what can be called an "unto the second generation theme" as far as the NAHA is concerned. Her late father, Arthur O. Davidson, served two terms as president of the NAHA, and died holding that office in November, 1979. Ms. Davidson graduated from Luther College in 1973 with a Scandinavian Studies major, earned a Masters Degree in Education from Harvard University in 1974, and later worked in an art museum at Harvard. She completed her Masters Degree in Business Administration in 1984, and since then has worked for Sotheby's (art sales) in New York. She is Assistant Vice President in the Marketing Department.

RUSSELL W. FRIDLEY became the director of the Minnesota Historical Society (MHS) at the age of 27 in 1955. During his 30 years in office the MHS expanded from a staff of 40 and an annual budget of \$190,000 to a staff of 300 and a budget of \$12 million, making the MHS a national leader in state and local history.

A graduate of Grinnell College (Iowa), Fridley earned a M.A. degree in history at Columbia University, and holds honorary degrees from Concordia College (Moorhead) and Gustavus Adolphus College. His publications include *A Student's Guide to Localized History*, *The Uses of State and Local History*, *Historic Sites of North Dakota*, and *Minnesota: A State That Works*. His duties as director also included being Editor in Chief of *Minnesota History*. After leaving office in 1986, Fridley has been doing research for a biography on Floyd B. Olson.

ARTHUR R. HUSEBOE is chairman of the Humanities Division and professor of English at Augustana College, Huseboe received his M.A. from the University of South Dakota and his Ph.D. from Indiana University and began teaching at Augustana in 1961.

Dr. Huseboe, a true work horse, has done much to promote Norwegian-American interests. He is the executive director of the Nordland Heritage Foundation of Sioux Falls, was a co-founder of the Nordland Fest (1974), an annual event which began at the College, but now includes the city of Sioux Falls. As director of the *Western Experience*, a NEH funded program, he incorporated immigration studies and has given scholarly attention to writers like O.E. Rølvaag, Frederick Manfred and Herbert Krause. He serves on the South Dakota Board of Historic Preservation, on the South Dakota Centennial Commission and is chairman of the South Dakota Committee on Humanities.

DOROTHY BURTON SKÅRDAL, born in Omaha, Nebraska, has taught at the University of Oslo (American Institute) since 1964. She earned her Ph.D. at Harvard University. Her dissertation research led to the publication of *The Divided Heart: Scandinavian Immigrant Experience Through Literary Sources* (1974). A number of Dr. Skårdal's students have written their dissertations on Norwegian-American writers, in fact, nearly all of them have now been treated. Dr. Skårdal has spearheaded two major conferences in Norway on Norwegian-American history and literature which brought together both Norwegian and American scholars. The proceedings of the first conference (1984) were published, *Essays on Norwegian-American Literature and History*. The second conference took place in Stavanger in 1986 and she is currently planning a third for 1989. Dr. Skårdal replaces our earlier Norway board member, Dr. Kjetil Flatin, formerly the director of the International Summer School at the University of Oslo. He felt that he could not continue to serve after moving to a new position.

NOTE! Whenever some 1400 books are mailed, things can go wrong and often they do. *The Testing of M. Falk Gjertsen* by Nina Draxten is now being sent out to the members. Should this book not reach you, notify the secretary's office. Because of the 4th class rate, books are not forwarded but are returned to the sender. If you have a new address, be sure to let us know.

Membership

As the figures below will show, 77 new members were added, while 42 terminated their membership for a net gain of 35. Each year there is considerable movement from one membership category to another. The picture here is most encouraging: 115 members transferred to a higher category while 69 opted for a lower one.

Beginning and Closing Figures				New Members and Cancellations			
	Jan. 1 1987	Dec. 31 1987	+/-		Added	Cancelled	+/-
Associate	555	553	-2	Associate	50	28	+22
Sustaining	246	255	+9	Sustaining	19	10	+9
Patron	75	85	+10	Patron	1	4	-3
Life	511	524	+13	Life	7	0	7
Deceased Life	123	128	+5		<u>77</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>+35</u>
	1,510	1,545	+35				

Gift Income

We are pleased to report that income from gifts amounted to \$27,101.75. The distributions were as follows: O.E. Rølvaag Memorial Fund \$23,856.75; Chicago History Project \$3,000; Kenneth O. Bjork Chair in Immigration Studies \$245. Persons or institutions that made contributions of \$100 or more are listed below. These contributions account for nearly 90 percent of the total. Contributions made directly to the Chicago History Committee, (where separate accounting takes place), are not included in these figures. A more complete financial report will be made in a later *Newsletter*.

Lutheran Brotherhood	\$10,000	R. I. Jacobson	\$300
Harriet Hustvedt	4,000	Harold Larson (estate)	300
Eva and Einar Haugen	2,000	Ole V. Groos	265
Mrs. (Grethe) Nils O. Seim	2,000	C. A. Clausen	200
Mobil Foundation	1,270	R. L. Lillestrand	200
Russell W. Fridley	1,000	McGraw-Hill Foundation	200
Anonymous	1,000	Freda Hovden	100
Chicago History Committee	800	Gladys Weseth Nelson	100
Alfred D. Olson	500	Bertha Sylliaasen	100
			<u>\$24,335</u>

A Royal Visit

His Majesty, King Olav V made his first visit to the NAHA quarters in 1976, his second took place during the king's visit to St. Olaf College on November 25. Our president, Lawrence O. Hauge, was among the speakers at a special convocation program arranged for the King in Boe Memorial Chapel. It did not end here. Lawrence and his wife, Lois, had the king as a guest for Thanksgiving dinner at their Edina home the following day.

King Olav V, despite his 84 years, proved to be vigorous and jovial, interested in our work and more informed about the NAHA than expected. He examined several manuscript boxes, read portions of some America letters, and became much attracted to the Rowberg Biographical File. He proved to be one of our kindest and least demanding guests. All who visit the NAHA must sign the guest register, kings included (see picture).



Random News

- Received from Eunice Hagen Beck *To the Mountains*, a translation of *Til Fjelds* by Ole E. Hagen (1904). Hagen (1852-1908) came to America in 1881. He edited and published *Rodhuggeren, Fram*, and edited *Normanden* (1893-1903) and was a staunch populist. Though disguised, we suspect the story concerns his own early life in Norway.
- Received from Carl Fyhrie his *Maeland-Fyhrie*, a typescript reproduction family history with maps, photos and illustrations, 216 pages. The first 87 pages constitute an autobiography. Carl Fyhrie (b. 1914) worked for Illinois Bell for 33 years, was a civic leader, an accomplished musician, and a performing magician, an art he first developed as a hobby.
- Died. O.G. Landsverk, 86, of Rushford, Minnesota. Landsverk was a research physicist with the atomic project during World War II and later founded Landsverk Electrometer Co. In later years he defended the Kensington Rune Stone and other runic finds, advancing the belief that they contained cryptograms. He served several terms on the NAHA executive board.
- Died. Henriette Koren Naeseth, 88. Professor Naeseth taught at Augustana College (Rock Island) from 1934 until retirement in 1968, serving as chair of the Humanities Division for 23 years. She wrote about the Swedish and Norwegian Theater in Chicago. Her study into the life and work of Marcus Thrane was unfortunately never completed due to illness.
- Received from Torgny Anderson *The History of the Endre Barstad-Anderson Family* by Torgny Anderson, *et al.*, typescript reproduction, spiral bound, photos, 35 pages. The Barstad family emigrated from Rogaland in 1857, settled first near Westby, Wisconsin, and later moved to Lyon County, Minnesota, in 1872.
- Received from Rolf Erickson *The Family of Gammelutstumoen* by Ola Grandum, Tynset, Norway. Typescript reproduction, hard cover, photos, index, 73 pages, 1987. This work, first published in Norway (1974), was translated by Rolf Erickson and Annette Nordberg-Schulz and edited by David Paul Dowse.
- Received from Lou Celle Nelson Ferlik autographs of Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson and Ole Bull, and a royal decree issued by Christian IX, King of Denmark, dated June 25, 1877. These documents were first given to St. Olaf College and later transferred to the NAHA.
- Received from Mrs. Wm. A Wellard *Some Stories of the Sands—Brathovde Families*. Typescript reproduction, spiral bound, 95 pages.
- Received. The papers of Lorence Munson Woodside, author, translator, educator, and civic leader. Woodside was born of Norwegian immigrant parents in Hamilton County, Iowa, in 1877. Her papers span the years 1888 to 1953 and fill five document cases.
- The Committee on Awards of the Concordia Historical Institute presented Dr. James Hamre with an Award of Commendation for his biography, *Georg Sverdrup: Educator, Theologian, Churchman*, published by the NAHA in 1986.
- Received from Clarence Kilde his notes, manuscripts, scrapbooks, letters, clippings, photos and reviews concerning the life and authorship of Waldemar Ager. This donation provides a significant supplement, increasing our Ager collection from eight to eleven document cases.
- Received from Margaret Chrislock Gilseth her novel *Julia's Children: A Norwegian Immigrant Family in Minnesota*. This well-written story of 448 pages has its setting in Wanamingo, Minnesota. The principle characters (names disguised) are drawn from the author's own family. Some of the peripheral characters, however, are not disguised, making this work a kind of documentary in novel form. Privately published under the name Askeladd Press, P.O. Box 616, St. Charles, MN 55972. \$16.95 (includes postage). Highly recommended.

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