



A Newsletter From the NAHA Office
to Association Members

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From the Front Desk

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On behalf of the NAHA Board of Directors, I am excited to announce that Amy Boxrud has been named the new director of the Norwegian-American Historical Association. Amy brings more than 25 years experience in the fields of publishing, marketing, and non-profit communications to the position. She learned the ropes of book publishing early in her career as an editor at Augsburg Fortress Publishers, and she served as editor of *Viking* magazine for members of Sons of Norway from 2009 to 2013. Most recently, she comes to the association from her position as senior staff writer in the Marketing and Communications Department at St. Olaf.

Amy is well acquainted with the mission and legacy of NAHA, having served on its board of directors since 2010. She has also provided freelance editorial support to the association, assisting with copyediting and production of recent NAHA publications.

A graduate of St. Olaf College with degrees in Norwegian and English, Amy lives in Northfield with her husband, Doug Bratland, and her children Synneva, 15, and Halvor, 13. Her passion for all things Nordic carries into her hobbies, which include Scandinavian folk fiddling and blogging about Nordic food, design, travel, and the arts.

Amy will begin her work as director on February 16, 2015. Amy and I will work together to ensure a smooth transition before my official retirement date of February 27th.



I want to thank all of you who have made my tenure as NAHA director an immensely gratifying experience. I am looking forward to retirement, and to serving NAHA in different ways through volunteering and as an active member. Mange tusen takk for all you do to help us accomplish our mission to locate, collect, preserve and interpret the Norwegian-American experience.

P.S. This year, the NAHA celebrates the 90th anniversary of its founding. Look for special events throughout the year to commemorate this momentous occasion!

**NORWEGIAN-AMERICAN
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION**

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New Additions to the NAHA Archives

The Archives continue to benefit from the generosity of members and friends who have made important donations. Although we aren't able to acknowledge all donations here, we do appreciate every donation, large and small. **We welcome additional donations of Norwegian-American letters, diaries, photographs, family histories, and community and congregational materials.** Families can be sure that their donations will remain open for family consultation in the NAHA archives. They can also be certain that family treasures will not be discarded in a hasty move or by future generations who may have lost touch with their Norwegian-American heritage.

Gary DeKrey, Archivist

Jeff Sauve, Associate Archivist

Recent additions to the manuscripts collection include:

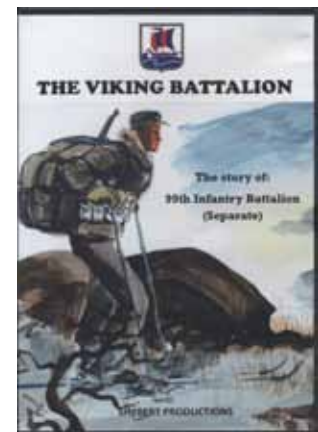
- 100 original letters (1905-1950s) sent to Martha Elena Johannessen Hoversten (1886-1984) from family and friends in Bjorhiem, Norway. Martha immigrated in 1901 and later married Elias Hoversten (1879-1954) on June 29, 1904. The couple farmed near Emmetsburg, Iowa. In 1914, they moved to Island Lake Township near Lynd, Minnesota. **Added to P1685 Norway-America Letters.** Donated by Elizabeth Bade.



Detail of a calling card from the Martha Elena Johannessen Hoversten Collection

Recent additions to Norwegian-American family histories, memoirs, and organizational histories:

- 99th Infantry Battalion Papers. Literature and DVD, "The Viking Battalion. The Story of 99th Infantry Battalion (Separate)" (Shybert Productions, 2013). **Added to P1060.** Donated by Erik F. Brun.



- Corrigan, Margaret Ostlie: *A Collection of History Stories, Reflections* (2014). The Ostlie-Tollefson story started with immigrants from Ullensaker and Vinje, Norway. Includes recollections of farm and school life near Farmington, Minnesota. **Added to P0539 Family Histories.** Donated by Margaret Ostlie Corrigan.
- **Grant County, Minnesota:** digital scans of congregational records. Congregations included: Immanuel (1875-1995), Lincoln (1870-1981), Our Savior's (1908-1995), Pomme de Terre (1875-1903), Pomme de Terre Lake (1875-1903), Elbow Lake (1875-1903)

by Gary DeKrey, Archivist and Jeff Sauve, Associate Archivist

and Gorton (1875-1903). The digital files contain records of births, baptisms, confirmations, marriages, deaths and funerals. **Added to P0537 Congregations.** Donated by Steven Ray, NAHA Associate Member.

- Nesse, William D. *Hans and Danielle Nesse: Their Lives as Missionaries in China* (2014). **Added to P0539 Family Histories.** Donated by William D. Nesse.



- Stradling, Esther Ruud. *American Fever: A Biography of Ole Ruud, Pioneer of the Washington Territory, Additional Letters 1880-1897* (2012). **Added to P0435, America Letters Collection.** Donated by Delana Ruud.
- Walstad, Joseph. *The Edited Journals of Julius Oscar Walstad* (2004). J.O. Walstad (1869-1950) was a Nebraska pioneer, homesteader, painter, builder, and for 48 years an evangelist to the Scandinavian people in North Dakota, South Dakota,

Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Nebraska, Texas, Colorado, Utah and California. **Added to P0539 Family Histories.** Donated by David Walstad.

Other recent donations to the collection:

- *Børne Blad* (La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1895/52 issues & 1900/52 issues). **Added to the Norwegian-American Newspaper Collection.** Donated by Cynthia Rubin, Board member and Associate Member.



Cover from the January 1895 issue of *Børne Blad*



Sølørlaget Medal from the 1925 Centennial Celebration

- Bygdelagene Papers/Sølørlaget (additions). Framed panoramic images of stevne gatherings: 1913 Solunlaget/Fargo, North Dakota; 1913 Østerdalslaget/Fargo, North Dakota [reproduction]; 1922 Solørlaget/Crookston, Minnesota; and 1923 Joint Solørlaget and Østerdalslaget/Fergus Falls, Minnesota. Artifacts: a Solørlaget medallion from the Norse-American Centennial (1925) and Solunlaget stevne silk ribbon (1914). **Added to P0465.** Donated by Caroline Herfindahl.

Highlights from the NAHA Collection

Sometimes the story behind a collection in the NAHA archives is as much or more interesting than the collection itself. In December 1950 we received the diaries of a Lauris (Lauritz) Larson, donated by Reverend O.J. Lutness of Enderlin, North Dakota. In a subsequent letter, written on January 6, 1951, Rev. Lutness describes how he came to be in possession of the diaries as well as the personality behind the writer. The diaries themselves are primarily a record of the daily temperature and climate conditions between the years of 1885 and 1897.

“It was about July 1st, 1916. I had just moved to Perley, Norman County, Minnesota, to assume charge of that field. I had brought my cow to pasture and was returning to town when I met a man on a bicycle. He was a large man, about 60 years of age, fully six feet tall, his face covered with a busy tangle of gray beard. He wore a heavy duck coat with sheepskin collar (a winter coat), his cap was of black plush, much used at the time. It was also a winter cap. He was bare-footed. The winter clothing, the July weather and the bicycling minus shoes all added up to an incongruous picture. I was quite astonished.

When I came back to town, I at once began to tell of what I had seen. “Oh, that is Lauritz Larson,” I was told. “He lives by the Johnson Mill.” (Four miles east of Perley)

Later I came to know him well. He was a peculiar man, uncouth and filthy in some ways, but well-read and well-informed, a man who could write poetry without end whenever he wanted to.

This is what I learned of his earlier life: Born in Norway; came to America while young. He homesteaded in Norman County, Minnesota, somewhere on the prairie between Perley and Ada, the county seat. He had married and had a boy and a girl. Long before I knew him, his wife had taken the children and left him. It was impossible for any person of orderly habits to live with him. He was filthy, ate like a pig, was a heavy drinker and terribly touchy. But in the midst of all this sordidness, he could enjoy the reading of books like “The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire”, by Gibbons. I know because he gave me the entire set; they had been much used.

His farm was in a settlement of people from Valdris in Norway. With these he was at loggerheads all the time so he wrote a poem entitled “Krigen med Valdriserne,” (The war with Valdres). It had 52 versus. Most of us could not do anything like that even if our lives were at stake. (In parenthesis let me say his family turned out well. The son became an artist while the girl was a school teacher.)

When I knew him Lauritz lived alone in a small house near the Johnson Mill. He was a fair carpenter and had some work although the people were reluctant to hire him for they disliked to have him in the house, because of his filthy ways. It took a good stomach, I have been told, to be at the table when Lauritz ate. If anyone gave the slightest sign of annoyance, or laughed at him, he was highly indignant and would carry the resentment ad infinitum. He had an evil tongue and used it freely.

One of his peculiarities was that he did not use shoes except in winter. A neighbor told me that Lauritz went with him to Perley one fall in November. They drove in a wagon. It was bitter wind from the north, and these Red River Valley winds surely can cut. Lauritz had shoes on but no socks. There was a big gap between the shoe and the trouser leg. So the farmer asked him if he was cold. “It is chilly around the shoulders” was his answer. No complaint about the feet.

One summer he went to Moorhead with Christen Dosland, a neighbor. He had not been to Moorhead in thirty-one years. While he was walking around, admiring the growth of the city, the police spied this funny fellow who paraded without shoes, so they arrested him. He was very indignant, told them that he had come to town with Christ Dosland. This did not make sense to the minions of the law, for C.G. Dosland was an attorney of high standing in town and would hardly have men like this one as an associate. However, he came and of course knew Lauritz and got him out of Jail. Some of the old-timers seem to have been short on names for their offspring, for Christen Dosland was a brother of Christian Dosland, known as C.G. The police in Moorhead insisted that Lauritz should get shoes on, but they could not find a pair in all Moorhead large enough, so they compromised by getting a pair of big rubbers.

There were two women in the community who could take Lauritz in hand and clean him up once in a while. One was a widow who operated a large farm. She often hired him to do simple carpentry

Lauritz Larsen by Rev. O.J. Lutness (1951)

work; the other was a middle-aged neighbor girl. They would arbitrarily take him to the kitchen sink and scrub his hands and neck with a brush. How they got by with this manhandling was a puzzle to the rest of the world.

I cannot remember how it came about that Lauritz and I became chummy, but we did. He was really an intellectual, and interesting to exchange ideas with. He was sly, too, and often tried to stick me with the meaning of some unusual word he had picked up. Sometimes he succeeded and then again I would beat him at his own game. He would come into the house with his bare feet, rain or shine, which was at times exasperating to my wife, but we carried on.

Then he received a letter from a sister in Norway, inviting him to come home and spend his reclining years in his native land. This was, I believe, in 1921 or 1922. He decided to do so. He had money enough left to get his passage and still get into Norway. A certain amount was required for that. He was very enthusiastic about going. He gave me most of his books. The diaries were among them.

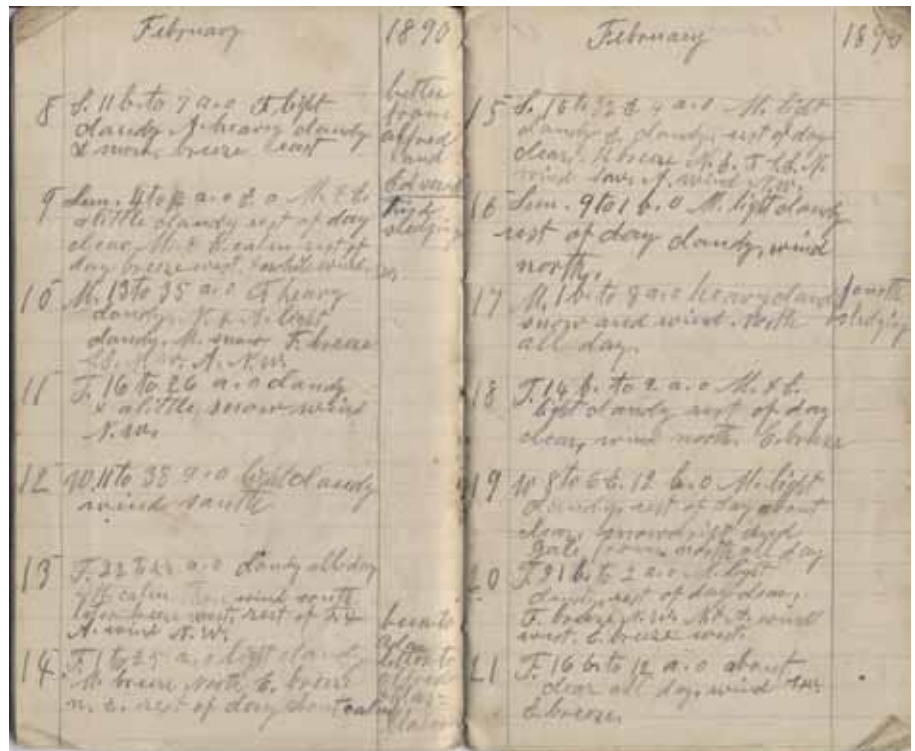
He came to say good-bye and I was really touched. So was he. He had been up to Mrs. Aabye, the widow, for dinner that day. It was still winter. She had scrubbed him up until he looked quite respectable. He had pretty good clothes, too, so that he could pass without being conspicuous.

I had a letter from him as soon as he reached home. Then after considerable time, he wrote me

again. Then he was building himself a house. He could not, he said, live with his sister. She was worse than "Fanden's Mor", the name he had for his wife. I am inclined to think it was not easy to be the sister in the case. Again he wrote, and then he was at the tuberculosis hospital in Norway. About the time his house was ready, he became ill with T.B. It may be the pay-off for the way he abused himself. I had another letter from him at the hospital. He told me he had taken communion one day and that it had been a wonderful experience. He seemed to be reconciled to the thought of death. The final chapter in the story was written by the superintendent of the hospital. He had promised Lauritz to write me after he was gone, which he then did.

I feel sad when I think about Lauritz. Most people saw only the filth and uncouthness about him, and probably had some run-in with him and considered him a no-account derelict, but this was not true. There is usually some gold to find among the dross if we go hunting for it.

His friendship did not cost me anything to speak of. Even if most people were glad when he left, since it was one case less for the local charity, he had at least one person on earth with whom he could exchange ideas. In his own way, he did enrich my life not a little."



A page from the diaries of Lauritz Larson with weather data recorded at Perley, Norman County during February 1890.

What We are Reading by Jackie Henry



Rødland, Kjartan, *Draumen vart verkeleg, Vestnorsk utvandringscenter 1997-2012*, Vestnorsk Utvandringscenter (2013) ISBN: 978-82-7834-046-2

Since late summer, the Norwegian-American Historical Association has received several publications related to Norwegian immigration.

Kjartan Rødland, a retired journalist and director of information at Bergen and Oslo, wrote *Draumen Vart Verkeleg* a history of the west Norway immigration center in Sletta, Radøy commune in Hordeland in commemoration of their 15th anniversary. Rødland describes the activities which led to the creation of the immigrant center, constructed almost entirely by volunteer labor. Several museum buildings were moved from the U.S. to the immigrant center property, including the home of Dr. J.C. Serkland of Rothsay, Minnesota; a schoolhouse from Marboe School District near Forman, North Dakota; the early log cabin of Andreas Olsen Seem from Underwood, Sverdrup Township, Minnesota; the Brampton Lutheran Church; a small cabin used as a teacher's residence moved from

Brampton, North Dakota, as well as the City Hall and prison from Elizabeth, Minnesota.

The book contains many photos of immigrants from the area, as well as a photographic record of the disassembly and reassembly process involved in moving the buildings (including the stained glass windows of the church) across the U.S. and the Atlantic Ocean.

The immigration center also contains memorials dedicated to Norwegian-American pioneer women, the 99th Infantry Battalion (the Norwegian Battalion) from World War II, and Norwegian-American pioneers who brought the sport of skiing to the U.S. and Canada, as well as other monuments dedicated to prominent Norwegian and Canadian American immigrants.

In addition to the historical buildings and monuments, the immigrant center hosts an annual seminar on topics related to immigration and subsequently publishes the papers presented. The book also includes information about immigrants who later returned to their native Norway. Essays reflect on the accomplishments of the center's first fifteen years.

In 2007, the region of Nordhordland, including Lindås, Radøy, Masfjorden, Fedje, Modalen, Meland and Austrheim formed a sister city relationship with the Fergus Falls, Minnesota area, including Elizabeth, Rothsay and Underwood.

The second publication, translated as *The Genealogists Guide to Immigration, 1825 to 1930*, by Liv Marit Kaakenstad, provides readers with a host of resources aimed at

Norwegian family historians. The first part of the book describes the journey a Norwegian immigrant might have experienced traveling via Hull, England while the second part of the book deals with research sources in Norway, the United States, the UK and Canada. Haakenstad includes a number of useful appendices valuable to both the Norwegian and the U.S. researcher, including microfilm and internet based sources. She also includes information about the Norwegian-American collection at the Norwegian National Library.

Both books are published in Norwegian, but with ample illustrations and access to a simple online translator program, even non-Norwegian speakers will find useful information within and well worth the effort. These publications will be added to the Norwegian-American imprint collection at the Rolvaag Memorial Library, and cataloged as part of their collection.



Haakenstad, Liv Marit, *Slektsgranskerens Guide til Utvandringen 1825-1930*, Vigmostad & Bjørke AS (2013) ISBN: 978-82-419-0872-9

S. C. Anker-Holth, Inventor

Magnus Bjørndal wrote the following obituary for S.C. Anker-Holth, which appeared in the November 1935 Norwegian American Technical Journal. The article and photos are from the Knut Gjerset Collection at NAHA and are a good example of how later Norwegian immigrants moved between the U.S. and Norway on a regular basis.



S.C. Anker-Holth, undated photo

“Anker-Holth, S.C., engineer, was born in Oslo, Norway on March 10, 1859. In 1868 his family moved to Kongsberg where he grew up and received his preliminary education. At the age of fourteen he invented an electric motor with sixteen electromagnets. This motor he exhibited at the Oslo University in 1872. Anker-Holth was sent to Trondheim’s Tekniske Lærestanstalt where he was graduated as mechanical engineer in 1879. The same year he came to Chicago where he was employed by the Hercules Iron Works and soon advanced to chief engineer. Later he

was employed by the McCormick Harvester Machinery Company in a similar position. Here he designed a series of mowers, reapers, corn and rice harvesters and self-binders. In 1885 he invented a steam-driven plow on folding rails with ten-inch plowshares. This was the first caterpillar tractor ever built. In 1889 Anker-Holth founded the American Machine Company in Oslo, Norway and imported to Norway a great many American machines of various kinds. He also invented a tile-laying machine which he exhibited in Bergen, Stockholm and Paris.

In 1901 he invented several cream separators, and in 1907 the self-balancing cream separator which carries the inventor’s name and to this day is one of the best on the market. His business interests brought him back to America, but in 1916 he decided to retire to Norway with his family. He could not get used to retired life, however, and in 1920 he took his family back to the United States and settled in Southern California. Here he designed a successful fish trimming machine for the American Packing Company.



Illustration of the self-balancing cream separator from a 1924 sales brochure

Anker-Holth was a member of the American Chemical Society; he was a Free Mason and member of the board of the Norway Club in Los Angeles. He died in Los Angeles on April 10, 1933, survived by his widow and five children.”



The Anker-Holth Manufacturing Company
FORT HURON, MICHIGAN

Illustration of the manufacturing plant from a 1924 brochure advertising the self-balancing cream separator

2014 Donor Honor Roll

Includes all gifts and pledges made between January 1, 2014 and January 27, 2015

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 Patricia Tharp
 Allan R. Thoreson
 Richard W. Thorson
 Kevin Tvedt, S
 Arlen Twedt, S
 Norman Vinnes, S
 Arlen Viste, S
 Kristen Walseth
 Donald Wang, S
 Joel A. Watne, S
 Vincent & Verla Williams
 Sarah Zeigler

In Memory Of/In Honor Of

In memory of Florence (Hoven) Corcoran
 Dale and Jean Searles

In memory of Eunice and Edward Hansen
 Kristin Hansen Haroian

In memory of Gunder Herlofsen
 Jon Hovland

In memory of Martha Tande Jacobsen
 Stan Hultgren

In memory of Myrtle Otterness Nord
 Mary Burrichter and Janet Witcher
 Lisa and Michael Coons
 Ruth and Doug Crane
 Steve and Carol Marie Johnson
 Dale and Jean Searles

In memory of Julius Oscar Walstad
 Diana Walstad

In memory of Audrey Sands Wickoren
 Joanne A. Englund

In memory of Virginia Shaw
 Ruth Crane

In memory of Lauritz & Alletta Thompson
 Richard W. Thorson

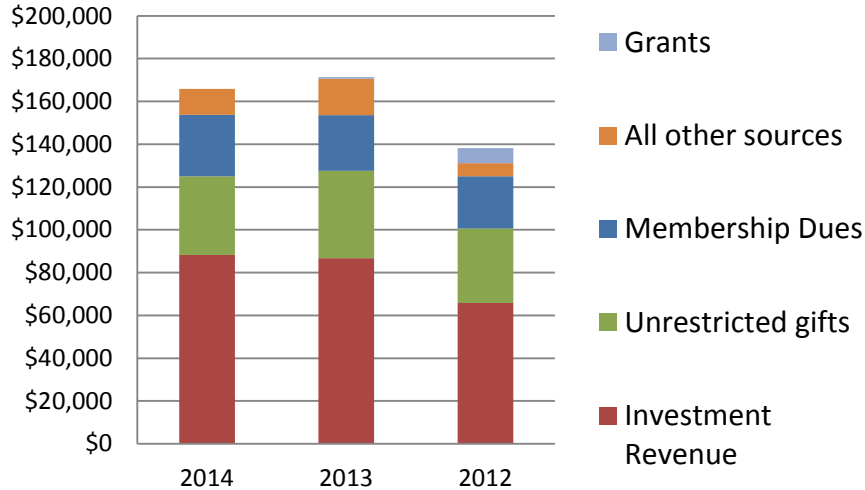
In memory of Charles Irwin Wilson
 Lily Hartmann
 Helga Hoffman

In honor of Blaine Hedberg
 Eric W. Greenfeldt

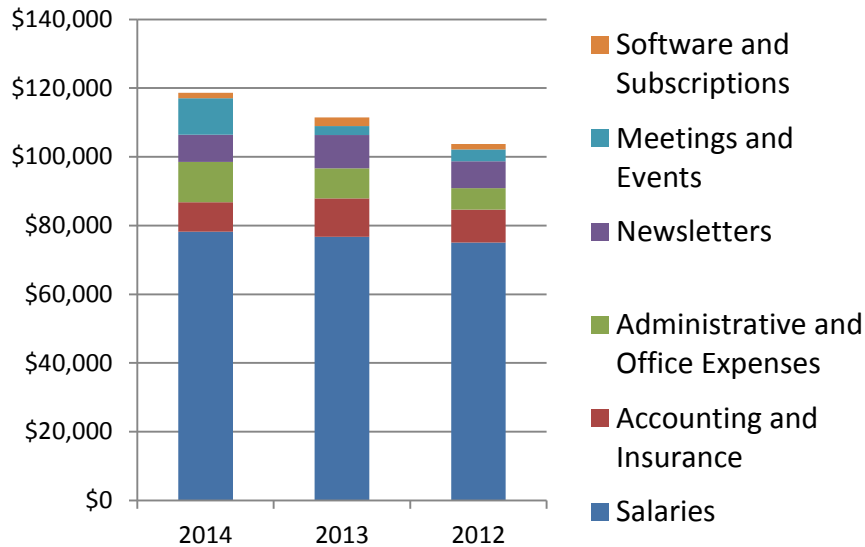
In honor of Jeff Sauve
 Craig & Stephanie Skortman

Annual Report for 2014

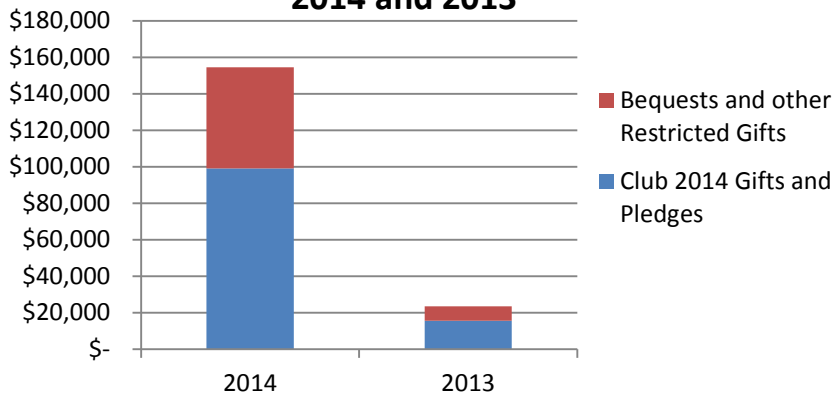
Sources of Operating Funds



Non-Publication expenses



Restricted Gifts 2014 and 2013



Invested Fund Balances as of December 31, 2014

O.E. Rolvaag Memorial Fund (Endowed Fund for Operations)	\$1,042,977
Theodore C. Blegen Fellowship Fund (Editor's Fund)	\$411,529
Sigvald Quale Norwegian Society Fund	\$234,648
Operating and Temporarily Restricted Funds	\$319,251
Club 2014 Campaign for Archive Climate Control (Goal of \$160,000)	\$114,870

Investment Income for 2014

Realized Gains	\$49,506
Interest and Dividends	\$38,091
Unrealized Gains (Losses)	\$18,274

Notes: In October 2014, the NAHA Board approved an investment policy for unrestricted bequests which allocates the first \$7,500 to the current operating fund and directs the remaining balance to be added to the O.E. Rolvaag Memorial Fund.

Total investment gain on invested funds (market value) between January 1, 2014 and December 31, 2014, after expenses and disbursements, was 8%.



NORWEGIAN-AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

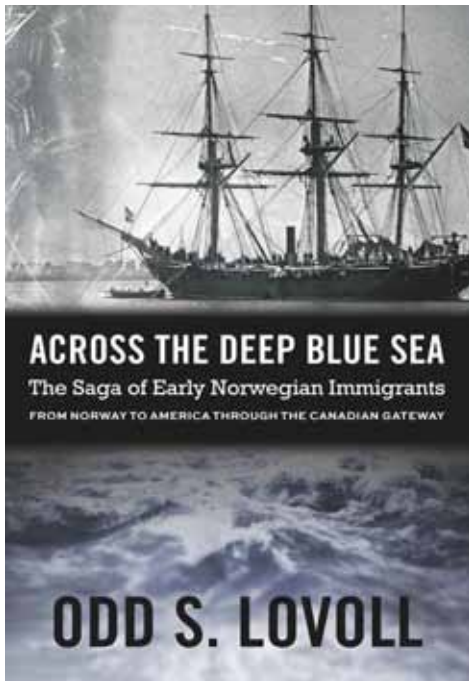
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Across the Deep Blue Sea by Dr. Odd Lovoll, Minnesota Historical Society Press, (February, 2015)

Special Book Distribution in 2015

Dr. Odd Lovoll, who served as editor for the Norwegian-American Historical Association from 1980 to 2000, Professor Emeritus at St. Olaf College, and respected author of many well-researched and groundbreaking studies of Norwegian-American topics has recently completed work on a study of Norwegian immigration through the Canadian gateway. In this book, published through the Minnesota Historical Society Press, Dr. Lovoll focuses on the period of immigration between 1850 and the late 1860s, when the majority of arriving Norwegian immigrants traveled to North America via Canada. He draws on personal narratives, fresh archival research and existing historical materials reframed to shed light on this early and understudied period of Norwegian immigration.

In honor of the 80th birthday anniversary of Dr. Odd Lovoll, the executive committee of the NAHA board of directors approved distributing Dr. Lovoll's recent work to current members of the association. While we typically distribute only works published by the NAHA, the committee wished to recognize the body of Dr. Lovoll's past work as editor for the association and his continued research into the Norwegian immigrant experience. We thank Dr. Lovoll for foregoing royalties for this publication, and the Minnesota Historical Society Press for special pricing which allows the NAHA to present our members with a complimentary copy. We will begin shipping books to current members in late February.