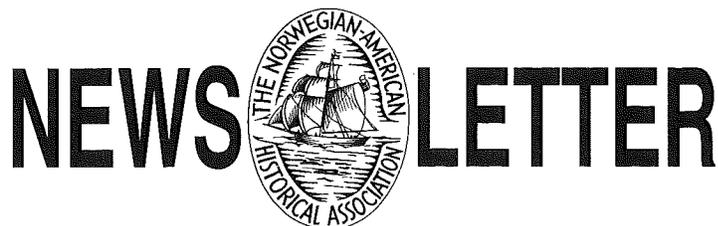


The Norwegian-American Historical Association

Northfield, Minnesota



From the NAHA Office to the Association Members

NUMBER 135

EDITOR, KIM HOLLAND

FALL 2008

NAHA MEMBERS GATHERING – OCTOBER 25th

In the past, NAHA's membership meeting has been held every three years. (We all looked forward to those Triennial gatherings!) However, not long ago the NAHA by-laws were updated to hold a membership meeting every other year rather than every third year. In the future you can look forward to meetings in even numbered years! Our final triennial and first biennial membership meeting will take place **Saturday, October 25, 2008** on the campus of St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota. NAHA staff and committees will present reports about the accomplishments and activities that have taken place since the last membership meeting in 2005. These reports will be presented at **4:00 p.m. in Viking Theater** located in the main level of Buntrock Commons. Parking is available on the north side of Buntrock Commons and all the locations are wheel chair accessible.

A **social time** to gather with your fellow members will begin at **5:00 p.m.** on the upper level of Buntrock Commons, outside of the Trollhaugen Dining Room. St. Olaf College's well-respected caterer, Bon Appetit, will serve a lovely salmon dinner. The **banquet will begin at 6:00 p.m.**

We will recognize Lois Rand for her many contributions to NAHA over the years at the banquet. Not only was Lois the first woman to serve as president of NAHA but for many years she worked behind the scenes to broaden NAHA's perspective and membership.

We are honored to have Dr. Nina Archabal, the Director of the Minnesota Historical Society as our after-dinner key-note speaker. Dr. Archabal has been the director of MHS since 1987 and guided MHS through significant changes. Director Archabal oversees Minnesota's state historical society, documenting the many contributions and changes made by a wide variety of ethnic groups. We look forward to hearing her view of the future.

Please complete the form inside including your name and that of your guest. Cost for the dinner will be \$35 for each person. **Reservations and checks must be received no later than Tuesday, October 21st.** Name tags will be made for you and your guest(s). These can be picked up at the social gathering prior to the banquet.

SEASON OF CHANGE

With national and state elections soon upon us and with the economy in turmoil it is interesting to look back at different points in history and see that political movements have long

been agitating for change. In North Dakota the name "Nonpartisan League" has been nearly forgotten but it was a movement that captured the mind and politics of a Norwegian immigrant, Sveinung Anundsen (S.A.) Olsness. S.A. left Telemark, Norway in 1883 at the age of 20 years old. Young S.A. settled in Sheyenne, North Dakota and created quite a remarkable life for himself.

Olsness was a faithful recorder of details, maintained a daily journal and kept in touch via letters with a wide range of friends and family both in the United States and Norway. A distant relative, Kristina Torkelson Gray located 25-30 years worth of S.A.'s journal entries at the Institute of Regional Studies at the North Dakota State University in Fargo, North Dakota. The May 2008 newsletter for the Telemark lag, *Telesoga*, features an article about S.A. and his passion for the democratic process. Kristina found an early letterhead of S.A.'s in his correspondence and it read: *S.A. Olsness, Farmer and U.S. Citizen.*

In 1914 Governor Hanna requested Olsness be part of the contingent from North Dakota that delivered the bust of President Abraham Lincoln to the King of Norway. In 1917 S.A. was elected to be the Commissioner of Insurance for North Dakota. To learn more about the Nonpartisan League of North Dakota you can visit www.nd.gov/hist/ the website for the State Historical Society of North Dakota.

Olsness found politics engaging and a way to help the farmers of North Dakota. He became involved with the Nonpartisan League (NPL) which disliked the power held by out-of-state businesses (i.e. banks, railroads and grain companies) in North Dakota politics. Feeling they were not treated fairly, a group of North Dakota farmers formed the Nonpartisan League (NPL) in 1915. Members advocated that state ownership of grain elevators, flour mills and banks would solve their economic problems created by "eastern monopolies". Essentially they trusted their own elected officials in the state of North Dakota more than they trusted outsiders. The NPL was briefly successful in the elections of 1916 the farm problems were not solved as quickly as the party hoped and when this combined with the economic setbacks of the early 1920's, the power of the NPL faded away. Lasting results of the party include a state-owned bank, mill and elevator that are still in operation. The NPL merged with the Democratic Party of North Dakota in 1956.

For more background on Norwegian Americans involved in political parties and bringing about change you may want to check into NAHA's 1991 publication *Norwegian-Americans and the Politics of Dissent 1888-1924*, written by Lowell J. Soike.

CHANGES AT NAHA

I will be leaving NAHA before the end of the year. My husband, John Green, accepted a position in Des Moines, Iowa so we will eventually become citizens of the Hawkeye State! It has been a pleasure these past nine years to meet so many fine members and work with the wide variety of scholars and family historians eager to learn more about those Norwegians who settled in the United States. The NAHA Board of Directors is exploring transition options for NAHA.

In the meantime many important key elements will remain the same. Catherine Cleland, NAHA's friendly and capable Administrative Assistant, will continue to handle your membership dues and renewals. Catherine can be reached at 507-786-3221, or emailed at naha@stolaf.edu. Archival questions and appointments to use the archives or the Rowberg Collection can be directed to Gary DeKrey or Jeff Sauve at 507-786-3229 or email at: naha-archivists@stolaf.edu.

CHANGES AT THE MINNEAPOLIS NORWEGIAN ROYAL CONSULATE GENERAL

Recently the Norwegian Royal Consulate General was converted to an Honorary Consulate General. While this is not a change that was welcomed by many in the upper mid-western states we are happy to report the Norwegian government, in its wisdom has appointed Former Vice-President Walter F. Mondale Honorary Consul General, and Gary Gandrud as Honorary Consul. The new office will include a consular officer, a higher education and research officer, as well as an innovation and business development officer.

We are pleased that both Walter Mondale and Gary Gandrud are members of NAHA and appreciate NAHA's mission to document Norwegian contributions to life in America.

FOR YOUR 2009 CALENDAR

"Ethics in the Workplace: The Norwegian and American Experience—A Conference Exploring Models for Ethical Approaches to Business in Norway and America." A conference for American and Norwegian scholars, business people, community leaders and St. Olaf students to explore models for ethical approaches to business in Norway and America and discuss the influence of a shared Norwegian heritage. The dates are April 3 & 4, 2009 at St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN. To be included in the mailing list for more information, please email dalgaard@stolaf.edu.

SUMMER PLANS IN NORWAY 2009?

If you are planning a trip to Norway in 2009 perhaps you want to combine your trip with the **NAHA-Norge** seminar to be held **June 26-29** in Ottestad, near Hamar, Norway at the Norwegian Emigrant Museum. The full seminar emphasizes the study of the entire migration process and different approaches among Norwegian immigrants and their descendants in America. The deadline for prospective speakers to submit their half-page proposal and a one page CV is November 1, 2008. Direct your information to the Chairperson of NAHA-Norge,

Knut Djupedal at: knut.djupedal@emigrantmuseum.no.

You are welcome to attend the seminar without presenting a paper. Notify NAHA-Norge at the above address if you are interested and they will send you the pertinent information about lodging, the program and registration.

DON'T FORGET LOCAL CHURCH HISTORY PUBLICATIONS

When you are working on a family history it can be challenging to learn about daily life at the time your great-grandparents were earning a living and raising their children. Great resources that are often overlooked can be the local publications congregations published when they celebrated a landmark anniversary. These often contain lists with names of baptisms, confirmations, marriages, funerals and who served on committees. You may find photos of pastors, church councils, ushers, and women's organizations. More than once we have heard people say they had never seen a photo of their great-grandmother until they saw her in the group photo from Ladies Aid!

Two recent examples of Sesquicentennial Histories arrived for the Norseland Lutheran Church and Norseland area just outside of St. Peter, Minnesota. This may not be typical of all congregational histories but this could serve as a terrific example for committees at other churches or communities facing the daunting task of writing a jubilee or centennial history.

Norseland, Where the Big Woods Meets the Prairie contains early history of the settlement including the Dakota Conflict of 1862. The history presents an English translation of a letter written by Eric Johnson describing the trauma his family and other settlers endured while fleeing for their lives. The book also places this event in context regarding how the United States government did not meet their obligations to the Dakota Indians and the resulting desperation which led to the conflict. These histories can also be a source of what the community was doing in response to world events. "Ration books" and lotteries for farm machinery during W.W. II are explained to those for whom this is new information. Commodity prices at different eras are included as well as photos of buildings, farm equipment, social groups, businesses and clubs are also featured.

EDVARD GRIEG SOCIETY, INC. NEW YORK in DALLAS

The Society was founded in 1981 by members of the Norwegian-American cultural and business communities to honor Grieg and reinvigorate interest in his music and also to introduce a range of Scandinavia's important but less familiar composers to the American public. On Sunday, October 26, 2008 the current President of the Society, Per Brevig, will conduct the Dallas Symphony Orchestra at the Meyerson Symphony Center. For more information and tickets call (214) 692-0203.

PORTLAND OPEN STUDIOS features 3 NORWEGIAN ARTISTS

Here is a chance to go behind the scenes to see where, how, and why art is made in an up close and personal view during Portland Open Studios, a self directed tour of artists workplaces, in 98 locations throughout metro Portland on **two October weekends: 11, 12, & 18, 19.**

The Scandinavian Heritage Foundation is a proud sponsor of Portland Open Studios for the first time this year, due to the presence of four local artists of Scandinavian descent: Photographer Heather Leklem Wells (Norwegian), painter and author Margie Lee (Norwegian and NAHA member), painter Lorraine Dowty (Finnish) and painter Kari Dunham (Norwegian). The \$15 Tour Guide, in calendar format, comes with two tickets, maps, pictures of all artists' artwork, and contact information, is available at Art Media, New Seasons, and other stores listed on www.portlandopenstudios.com.

THANKS TO OUR MANY SUPPORTERS!

NAHA gratefully acknowledges the generosity of the members and friends of NAHA who have made financial gifts to NAHA, January – August 2008.

\$20,000 and above

The estate of Josefa Anderson and the estate of Ruth Vigness

\$10,000 and above

Ruth E. Hanold

\$1,000 and above

Chrislock Estate · Luther O. Forde · *Ruth Hanold Crane* · Liv Hustvedt · John Karevoll · Brit Aabakken Peterson

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\$5-\$50

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Special Donations:

Noreen Benson – In Memory of Rev. L.A. Benson,
Sarah & J. Ben Buck – In Honor of Lois Rand's Birthday,
Kristen Crisp – In Honor of Paul and Jo Scheffel,
Dr. Frederic A. Giere – In Memory of Lloyd Hustvedt,
Ruth E. Hanold – The Hanold Crane Fund,
Norwegian American Genealogical Association – *Honorarium by Judge Tunheim*,
Norwegian Lutheran Memorial Church – *Honorarium by Judge Tunheim*,
Brit Aabakken Peterson – In Memory of Dorothy and Henry Bedell,
Walter Rugland – In Honor of Amelia and Marta Lenaburg,
Paul R. Scheffel – In Memory of Betty Rockswold,
Edith Thorstenson – In Memory of Lloyd Hustvedt,
Tom Tombarge – In Honor and Appreciation of Forrest Brown

NAHA Board Members



NAHA BIENNIAL BANQUET RESERVATION FORM

\$35 Per plate

Enclosed is my payment of \$ _____ for _____ (number) reservations for the banquet for members and friends of the Norwegian-American Historical Association on Saturday, October 25, 2008 at St. Olaf College, Buntrock Commons, Kings Room. **Social Hour begins at 5:00 p.m., Dinner begins at 6:00 p.m.**

Please return the reservation to the NAHA office (1510 St. Olaf Avenue, Northfield, MN 55057) **no later than Tuesday October 21st**. Your cancelled check will be your receipt. Your banquet ticket will consist of a ready-made nametag, which you will pick up at the social hour. We think you will enjoy spending time with people who care about Norwegian contributions to life in the United States!

Name: _____

Guests: _____

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