Your Norwegian American Historical Association depends greatly on the support and active participation of members. Membership fees, donations and volunteer activity keep us going and allow us to do the good work of archiving the Norwegian-American experience and creating publications to tell the story. Having a solid Board of Directors elected from the membership is especially important. Two recent events reminded me of this fact.

First, I join in remembering Lawrence “Larry” Hauge, our former President who recently passed away. Larry’s tenure was a long one. He helped begin the transition from a volunteer organization to one with paid staff. He supported modernizing our bylaws and recruiting new talent for the 21st century. He was a solid leader in every respect, and we remember his accomplishments.

Second, I want to report your current Board had a wonderful strategic planning session at our regular two-day meeting in Northfield in April. There are so many opportunities to plan for and we are seeking ways to keep strong and relevant going forward. It was clear from our discussions that the biggest challenge remains finding resources to meet our basic needs. We depend so much on annual gifts and appreciate all members who remember us in this fashion. We also need added support for climate control in our archives and for keeping publications going.

Our valuable archives do not currently have the basic climate control which is necessary for full protection of the resources. We are partnering with St. Olaf in this project. Final plans and a budget are not yet complete, but we will be asked to add our financial support to the effort.

Publication costs continue to increase. We know you our members love receiving books. We have to find ways to help those valuable resources funded into the future.

Plans for these challenges will unfold, guided by your Board. Our current Board is ripe for the task….we have an incredibly talented and diverse group of leaders. At their own expense, Board members from all across the country made the trek to Northfield for our last meeting, one of the best attended in years.

Combined with the daily efforts of our excellent staff and your support, we will move forward! We will be asking you all to participate in the months ahead.

Enjoy summer! We have all been waiting for it!

Brian Rude
President, NAHA Board of Directors
The St. Olaf Choir Tours Norway

The following is an excerpt taken from *The St. Olaf Choir, A Narrative* (1997) by NAHA member Joseph M. Shaw, emeritus professor of history, St. Olaf College. Used with permission of the author.

In June 2013, the St. Olaf Choir will embark on its 100th anniversary tour of Norway. See the enclosed brochure for dates and locations.

The Choir left Northfield on its extended tour to Norway, not with any fear of ill omen which superstition may have attached to this particular date, but with the most joyful anticipation of a sea voyage and of a visit to that country of beauty and freshness which has been described to us from our earliest childhood.

The Choir invited the pastor of St. John’s Church, the Reverend T. H. Haugan, to make the trip to Norway with them and to serve as their spokesman at receptions, banquets, and other occasions. It was a happy choice, for Pastor Haugan admirably fulfilled his role. P.G. Schmidt wrote of him, “He was an exceptionally fluent speaker in Norwegian and on many occasions the audience was charmed both by his winning personality and by the fine presentation of his message.”

There were concerts on the way in St. Paul, in Wisconsin, and Brooklyn, New York. On June 24th the Choir sailed from New York for Norway on the “Christianiafjord.” It reached Bergen, Norway on July 4th and gave the first concert. Afterwards a banquet was given for the Choir in the Grand Hotel by the Anglo-American Club. When Pastor Haugen was introduced, he expressed thanks on behalf of St. Olaf College for the wonderful reception and won the warm esteem of his listeners when he said:

We knew that Norway’s heart was big and warm but not as big and warm as we have seen and experienced it. We, of course, also realize that mother Norway looks with regret on the many folks that have left her shores to establish homes across the sea. But I want to assure you, my friends, that we cherish all that we have received from our mother country. We will preserve this priceless treasure, our heritage, and we will endeavor to make it felt in the community life of the great country on the other side of the Atlantic. To come back to Norway for many of us is like coming home.

From Bergen the ship took the Choir along the coast with stops at Stavanger and Kristiansand on the way to the capital city, Christiania, later called Oslo. “Our most hearty welcome was felt when we sailed into port at Christiania where thousands of people awaited our coming and three hundred voices sang out their songs of good cheer and brotherhood,” wrote K.E. ’16 in the *Viking* summary of the tour.

The welcome for the Choir was genuine enough, but the size and enthusiasm of the crowd was also related to the fact that the ocean liner “Christianiafjord” was the first ship of the recently established Norwegian-America steamship line and on this occasion was completing its first voyage from America to Norway.

King Haakon and Queen Maude attended the concert at the University of Aula in Christiania. Special care was given to having the Choir in place on the platform at
100 Years Ago, June 1913 by Joseph M. Shaw

8:00 p.m. Choir member Ida Haugen described the arrival of the royal pair: "They walked leisurely up to their places and we sang 'Gud sign vor konge god,' ('God bless our good king'), everybody standing until we were through and the king and queen were seated. Our concert was a success, the king and queen smiled their thanks and shook hands with Prof. Christiansen, a thing which the Christiania people say the royal pair have never done before."60

The itineray plan followed by the Choir was to travel by train from Christiania northward to Trondheim and from there take the coastal boat “Lyra” southward along the coast and into some of the fjords, giving concerts along the way in coastal towns and cities. They would leave the “Lyra” at Larvik, the town in which F. Melius Christiansen grew up, and return by train to Christiania.61

On the way to Trondheim, the group stopped at Lillehammer for a boat trip on Lake Mjösa and a visit to Maihaugen, the outdoor museum located on a hill above the city. In Trondheim the Choir sang two concerts in the Nidaros Cathedral and visited the grave of Bernt Julius Muus, founder of St. Olaf College. A wreath was laid at the grave, which is near the Cathedral, and the Choir sang Christiansen’s “Som sol gaar ned i havet” (“As sinks the sun at even”). Following the first concert in Trondheim, a review in one of the city’s papers had these observations among others:

The reviewer’s reference to “Deilig er Jorden” (“Beautiful Savior”) would indicate that it was an optional number since it does not appear in the printed program. The Söderman piece was actually a song cycle of three numbers sung in Latin. In addition to the Grieg, “Lover den Herre” (“Praise to the Lord”), and “Deilig er Jorden,” the program offered only two more numbers sung in Norwegian, “Der Ringes paa jord” and “Moderens Sang” (“The Mother’s Song”), both by F. Melius Christiansen. Other numbers were “O Bread of Life” by Heinrich Isaac, “I Know That My Redeemer Liveth” from Messiah, and “Wake, Awake for Night is Flying” by Philipp Nicolai. A Ladies’ Quartette sang two numbers: the first was not identified; the second was Christiansen’s “The Lord is Full of Compassion.”63

The arrangement of traveling along the Norwegian coast on board the “Lyra” provided both transportation and a comfortable home for the Choir for two busy but enjoyable weeks of concerts and sightseeing.64 The review in the town of Stenkjaer found the singing of “Deilig er Jorden” (“Beautiful Savior”) to be “of overwhelming effect.” A writer

Continued on page 4
Again the choir sang loud, this time the last number before intermission, and when we finished, the goats, that had now come all the way down were gathered just outside the window which we had removed, giving a veritable concert of their own. Their intonation was something to hear. During the intermission choir boys in evening dress could be seen chasing these pesky critters up the mountain and that too was quite an attraction.67

Norway's spectacular scenery drew appreciative responses as the Choir proceeded up to fjord country. "We shall always remember the beautiful morning up Geirangerfjord, how we watched the over-hanging mist clear away and reveal to our eager sight the towering peaks and the snow-clad mountain tops. Winding in and out through the irregular course of this fjord we would at times seem hemmed in on all sides when gradually there would appear some opening for escape, " wrote one of the students, recalling the experience.68

The Choir's visit to Larvik was of particular interest because F. Melius Christiansen had lived there from age seven to seventeen and there received his start as a young musician. At the banquet given in the Larvik Grand Hotel he paid tribute to his organ teacher, Oscar Hansen. The concert in the Larvik church convinced a reviewer that reports about the Choir's singing elsewhere in Norway were not overstated. "It is probable that..."
continued

Norway had never heard singing nearly as fine as theirs....With the very first song the audience was completely won. Christiansen's own beautiful and splendidly arranged numbers held the public, which, with every nerve tense, listened to the great waves of tone that the conductor secured from the choir.  

The St. Olaf Choir gave further concerts in Christiania, Eidsvold, and in southern Norway. Its final day in Norway was August 3rd, the birthday of King Haakon. The Choir sent a telegraph to the king congratulating him on his birthday and thanking him for the kindnesses it had been shown everywhere in Norway. The king replied in a telegraph addressed to Paul G. Schmidt: “I thank the Norwegian-American singers for their good wishes and wish them a happy voyage home.” The final concerts were presented at churches in Gothenburg and Malmö in Sweden, and in the City Hall in Copenhagen, Denmark. The return to the United States was made aboard the S.S. “Hellig Olav” which arrived in New York on August 18, 1913.

Notes:


54. The Viking '16, '17, '18 (Northfield, Minn.), 219

55. Minutes of St. John's Lutheran Church, Entry 116, May 20, 1913.

56. Schmidt, 61.

57. Ibid.

58. Viking '16, '17, '18, 220.


61. Viking '16, '17, '18, 221.


63. 1913 European Choir Tour Program.

64. Schmidt, 60-61.


67. Ibid., 63.

68. Viking '16, '17, '18, 221.

69. Simpson, 107

70. Ibid., 115

71. Viking '16, '17, '18, 223.

Photos are from the St. Olaf College Archives and used with their permission.

Several St. Olaf Choir members at Lillehammer in 1913
In 1913, The Honorable Nikolai Grevstad served as U.S. Minister to Uruguay. Born in More og Romsdal and educated at the University of Christiania (Oslo), Grevstad served as editor of the Dagbladet in Norway from 1880 to 1883. Shortly thereafter he emigrated to the United States and took a position as editor of the Nordvesten, in St. Paul, Minnesota. Politically active in the Republican Party, Grevstad received an appointment as Ambassador to Paraguay and Uruguay from 1911 to 1914. The Norwegian-American Historical Association received his papers sometime between 1959 and 1965, including correspondence from the period when he served in the Foreign Service.

Grevstad received the following letter from Olav I. Rove, Vice Counsel for Norway in Wisconsin.

Milwaukee, Wisconsin
May 13, 1913

Hon. Nicolai Grevstad, 
U.S. Minister, Montevideo 
Uruguay

My dear Mr. Grevstad:

Your kind favor of March 21st has been duly received and I thank you for the stamps which you enclosed. I shall appreciate it very much if you will kindly continue to send me stamps from the two countries to which you are accredited. If you care for any of the duplicates that I have I shall be very glad to furnish you some if you will kindly let me know.

Now, in strict confidence I may tell you that the paper to which I referred in my former letter was Nye Norge, published by Mr. Franklin Peterson of Brooklyn. Since I wrote you he skipped the paper one week and then came out with one number and then stopped about three weeks. Now I understand that he has formed a kind of corporation but I know that the capital is not at all sufficient to keep the paper going. As a matter of fact I think that the new lease on life is acquired through the total abstainers of Brooklyn, who are arranging a 17th of May celebration in opposition to the one arranged by the Norwegian National League, which League the paper has continually been fighting. I believe that Mr. Peterson is a man of considerable literary ability but in his editorials he has always been antagonistic to the existing regime in Brooklyn, but his antagonism has been expressed in such a manner that it has created a great deal of unpleasantness, and I imagine his subscription list has dwindled considerably.

Nordisk Tidende has improved greatly under Mr. Rygg but as yet is only a local paper. I do not know whether he tries to make the paper on the style of Skandinaven as it was in your day. Mr. Peterson’s paper usually gets here Monday but as yet I have not received it.
Mrs. Jenny de Besche, wife of Dr. Johan de Besche of this city, died May 1st after an operation for appendicitis. Her death came rather suddenly and was entirely unexpected in our little colony. As a matter of fact most of them did not know that she had been taken to the hospital. Dr. de Besche has made up his mind that as soon as he can get his affairs arranged he will leave for Norway and settle down in that country. He expects to leave about the middle of July.

We had a visit here from Mr. C.J. Hambro, the secretary of "Nordmansforbundet". He comes as the representative of that society and also for the purpose of interesting the Norwegians in this country in the exposition in Christiania next year. He has been very enthusiastically received all through the northwest and this is not, as is often the case, newspaper talk, but genuine enthusiasm and I believe his work will result in a great deal of good.

Of course you know that North Dakota has appropriated $10,000 to send a delegation to represent the state at Christiania next year. A similar bill appropriating $15,000 is now before the legislature of this state and the chances for its adoption are very good. The bill introduced in the Minnesota legislature appropriating $25,000 was defeated by a small margin in the house, although it passed the senate, but in strict confidence I will tell you that I have private information that a bill will again be introduced in the extra session which is to be held next fall and the bill will then undoubtedly be passed.

What a pleasure it must be to be a man to go in and buy matches for $10, cigars for $50, etc. I would really like to have the experience for once, that is, provided either that I have money to spend so that I would not miss it, or else that dollars were not any larger than they are in your country.

With kindest regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,

Olaf I. Rove

A biography of Olaf I. Rove can be found in *History of Milwaukee, City and County, Vol. 3*. He was born in Fredrikshald, Norway on 15 April, 1864 to Severin and Azora Rove. He emigrated from Norway in 1884, first to New York City, and later moved to Madison, Wisc. where he attended the University of Wisconsin, earning a law degree in 1890. Rove worked for the Norwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company. In 1906, he was appointed vice consul for Norway and received the Order of St. Olaf in 1912 in recognition of his work in the consular service. In 1914, during a four-year term as president of the Sons of Norway, he traveled to Norway to represent the Norwegians of the United States at the one hundredth anniversary of the adoption of the Norwegian Constitution.

Olav I. Rove is the adoptive great-grandfather of political advisor and strategist, Karl Rove.
In Memory of Lawrence O. Hauge, 1922-2013

Lawrence O. Hauge joined the Norwegian-American Historical Association in 1978. He was elected to the board of directors in November 1980 at about the same time that Odd Lovoll began his tenure as editor of the Association. In less than one year, on September 26, 1981 Lawrence agreed to serve as president of the organization, a position which he held for 21 years until retiring from the board in April 2002. Lawrence and his wife Lois would graciously host gatherings launching the many publications which debuted during his tenure as president.

Brian Rude, current NAHA President recalls, “Larry was the consummate gentleman who cared deeply about promoting Norwegian heritage. He was a joy to work with -- always positive, fair to all, selfless. He guided NAHA successfully for two decades and helped lay the foundation for our future successes.”

Lawrence Olav Hauge was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota on May 28, 1922 to Ole I. and Laura Solheim Flekke Hauge. Educated in the Minneapolis school system he earned a degree from the University of Minnesota School of Mortuary Science in 1947. He also attended the Minnesota School of Banking at St. Olaf College and attended the U.S. Army Officers School in Ft. Custer, Michigan.

For many years, Lawrence practiced mortuary science in Minnesota and Wisconsin, owning and operating funeral homes in Minneapolis, St. Paul, Stillwater, Hopkins and Duluth. In addition, he was active as a real estate developer constructing apartment and commercial buildings throughout Minnesota and Wisconsin. He served as Chairman of the Board of Suburban Financial Bank of Eden Prairie, Farmers State Bank of Redwood Falls, the Bank of Henderson and Citizens Bank of St. Louis Park.

In addition to professional associations in banking and the mortuary business, Lawrence served on the board of regents of Augsburg College, the Ebenezer Society Foundation Board and the Norwegian American Chamber of Commerce. He was a member of many service and Norwegian cultural organizations including Sons of Norway, Norwegian-American Cultural Institute, Torske Klubben, Vesterheim, Syttende Mai Minnesota and Bergenslaget. He was the first president of Thorleif Haug Lodge, Sons of Norway and served as president of Bethany Lutheran Church. He developed the idea for Klubb 500, creating an endowment to support Mindekirken, the Norwegian Memorial Church in Minneapolis.

Lawrence served in the U.S. Army during World War II, attaining the rank of Captain. He received the King Olav Medal, presented on behalf of his Majesty King Olav V in February 1981. He also received the Service Medal from Nordmann’s Forbundet.

Preceded in death by his wife Lois, son James and daughter Kaye, one brother, one granddaughter and one great-granddaughter, Lawrence is survived by children Roger, Paul, Mark, Laurie and Kristine and their spouses, daughter-in-law Barbara Anne Gans, 16 grandchildren and 22 great-grandchildren.
New Additions to the Archives

January 1 – March 31, 2013

Gary De Krey, Archivist
Jeff Sauve, Associate Archivist

We 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. We especially welcome materials pertaining to post-World War II immigrants. 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.

Recent donations to the manuscripts collection include:

- **Family Histories and Genealogies, P0539**
  
  Agnethe Forseth (1855-1955) Family Collection (scans only). Mrs. Forseth was born in Faaberg, Norway, Sept. 29, 1855. Her husband, Christian, died in 1903 in Fredrickstad, Norway. In 1905, Mrs. Forseth and four small children immigrated to McIntosh, Minnesota, and in 1910 homesteaded in Grandview, Montana. The collection contains numerous descriptive letters written by Mrs. Forseth between 1906 and 1926 to her attorney in Norway, who facilitated her semi-annual military pension payments. Collection includes military papers of Christian Forseth and family photographs. **Donated by Marie Monroe.**

- **Family Histories and Genealogies, P0539**
  
  Tilda Akersmyr Tofteland Family Papers. Tilda Akersmyr Tofteland (1897-1986) was a charter member of Agderlag and was its secretary for 24 years. Papers include over 500 poems and articles authored by Tofteland. **Donated by Dennis Johnson, NAHA Associate member & Lily Tofteland Hartmann.**

- **Family Histories and Genealogies, P0539**
  

Recent donations of local histories include:

- **Family Histories and Genealogies, P0539**
  

- **Local History/Meeker County, Minnesota, P1523**
  

Recent donations of audio recordings:

- **Audio Recordings, P1719**
  
  “Fighting Men of Norway: Norwegian Songs of Freedom,” three-disc phonograph album (Keynote Recordings, New York, 1942). Features six songs performed by the Zion Norwegian Lutheran Church chorus under the direction of Agnes Forde. **Donated by Kristin Loken (from the estate of Dr. Robert D. Loken).**
Collections Up Close: “The Fighting Men

When Kristen K. Loken donated the three-disk, six-song phonograph album, “Fighting Men of Norway” (see recent additions to the archives), she added in her donation letter that the album belonging to her late father, Dr. Robert D. Loken, was found while cleaning out his farm site in Reva, Virginia. She concluded her note by expressing an interest in learning the background of the album.

Keynote Recordings: From Red Army to Hot Jazz

The album, produced in 1942 by Keynote Recordings in New York City, retailed for $2.75, and was dedicated to the “heroic people of Norway--fighting-men all, whose valor springs from their love of freedom and democracy.”

The newly minted label, established two years earlier in 1940, was known mainly for its political recordings, including such fighting-song packages as “Red Army Chorus of the U.S.S.R.,” “Songs of Free China,” “Songs of the Yugoslavian Guerrillas,” and “Freedom Sings” featuring the Spanish Republic Army Chorus and Orchestra (recorded in 1939 and reissued).

In 1943, one year after releasing “Fighting Men of Norway,” Keynote Recordings revamped its repertoire from political to popular by issuing significant jazz recordings. Billboard Magazine took notice in its March 4, 1944, issue: “Keynote set to Invade Longhair Jive Disk Field.”

According to the album’s accompanying song booklet, the sixth selection, Hjemmefrontens Sang, was derived from an old folk tune and “became the song of the Underground Army carrying the fight inside Norway.”

The following selected lines provide a flavor of the “modern” text adaptation and illustrate fervent dislike for Norway’s oppressors:

Song of the Home Front

(Selected lines)

We’re Norsemen! The Nazis shall feel how we hate;
A worm-eaten Quisling we’ll soon liquidate;
Just keep your head steady and hold your arms ready,
Ere long the command for rebellion will sound.

The New York Times review provided a strong endorsement of the album, “If the songs of the people tell you something of their valor and spirit--
of Norway”, by Jeff Sauve, Associate Archivist

and they do--this album is a further appreciation of the unflinching courage of the Norwegian people.”

Another review from an obscure self-proclaimed Marxist-orientated magazine, New Masses, praised the church choir, “In this album the Norwegian chorus know their way around the notes and attack with a unison of purpose and diction. To a large extent the music has a certain quality that one associates with a hymn book.”

Communist Connections and Ultimate Demise

Eric Bernay’s name appears in the song booklet as the principle representative of Keynote Recordings. Bernay, who had co-founded New Masses, launched the record label. The connection between the Marxist magazine and the recording company did not go unnoticed, particularly by the U.S. Congress House Committee on Un-American Activities, which included a California junior congressman, Richard M. Nixon.

In July 1947, Walter S. Steele, who appeared before the committee in the capacity as chairman of the national security committee of the American Coalition of Patriotic, Civic, and Fraternal Societies, singled out several individuals, including Bernay, who in his mind operated “Red Camps.” (As a point of reference, Bernay had stepped aside in March 1947 as Keynote’s president in favor of record executive John Hammond.) Steele’s testimony included:

“Another link in the Communist cultural chain is Keynote Recordings, Inc.,...This outfit propagandizes through recordings. It has recently extended its efforts in issuing albums of records of a Communist propaganda nature.”

Whether or not Steele’s testimony had a direct effect, under Hammond’s management, the label went bankrupt in 1948 and was sold to Mercury Records.

NAHA plans to professionally digitally transfer the 71 year-old album in the near future.
The Norwegian-American Historical Association Norway Chapter (NAHA-Norway) will organize its twelfth seminar June 18-21, 2014

The seminar will be held at Fagernes in the scenic Valdres region north of Oslo, and its theme will be linked to freedom and migration in a Norwegian-American context. Call for papers and practical information will be available soon. For more information please contact NAHA-Norway chair Terje Hasle Joranger. E-mail address: tmh-jora@online.no.