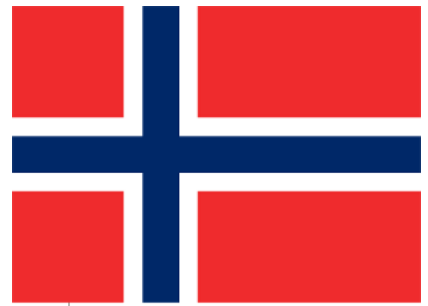




# Romerikslaget News



## Romerikslaget at 2024 *Flere Lag Stevne!*

August 6-9

Willmar, Minnesota

Front Row: Jean Knaak, Sharon Ell, Mary Baumgartner, Norma Kjenstad Barnes,  
Carol A. Olson, Linda McKeen, Julie A. Clauson, Joy Shong, Mary Gross.

Back Row: Ann Romo, Ray A. Olson, Barbara J. Nelson, Cindy Ostlie,  
Chuck McKeen, Joel Botten, David Williamson.

Next *stevne*: August 5-8, 2025

Stoney Creek Hotel & Conference Center

La Crosse, Wisconsin

SAVE THE DATES!

## Notes from the President

*Hilsen!*

We have so much to be thankful for this autumn! I'm grateful for the blessing of gathering for another wonderful *Flere Lag Stevne* in August, this year in Willmar, Minnesota. *Tusen takk* to our *Romerikslaget* members, Joy Shong and Mary Baumgartner, for working on the planning committee to make a successful event.

Our new Co-Genealogists Linda McKeen and Barbara Nelson did a wonderful job of setting up the *Romerike* section of the Genealogy Lab with the assistance of Julie Clauson and Chuck McKeen. Carol Olson joined the crew in aiding attendees searching for ancestral information.

At our *Romerikslaget* Annual Meeting, we reelected several officers to new terms and elected Ray A. Olson as a new Director to replace the retiring Alberta Rupert. *Tusen takk* to Bert for many years of service to our lag and *velkommen* Ray to the Board! (pg. 8.) We approved moving our lag *bygdebok* collection to Norway House in Minneapolis for storage in a safe archival environment. We can pick up and bring the books to *stevne* every year. (See Linda's article "Books" pg.7.)

Several speakers elaborated on this year's *stevne* theme: "A Skillet in One Hand, a Hoe in the Other: Norwegian Women Settlers." We heard tales from an immigrant grandmother's humorous memoirs and other stories of hardy and heroic Norwegian female pioneers in Minnesota. A fit ending was a morning bus tour to an historic Lutheran cemetery and the Kandiyohi County Historical Society Museum.

Hope to see you next year at La Crosse, Wisconsin!

Happy Thanksgiving  
& *God Jul!*

*Norma Kjenstad Barnes*



***Oslo & Akershus  
Fylke (the new  
Viken Fylke  
disbanded as of  
January 2024!)***

***Ovre Romerike -  
Eidsvoll, Feiring,  
Gjerdrum, Hurdal,  
Nannestad, Nes,  
Ullensaker***

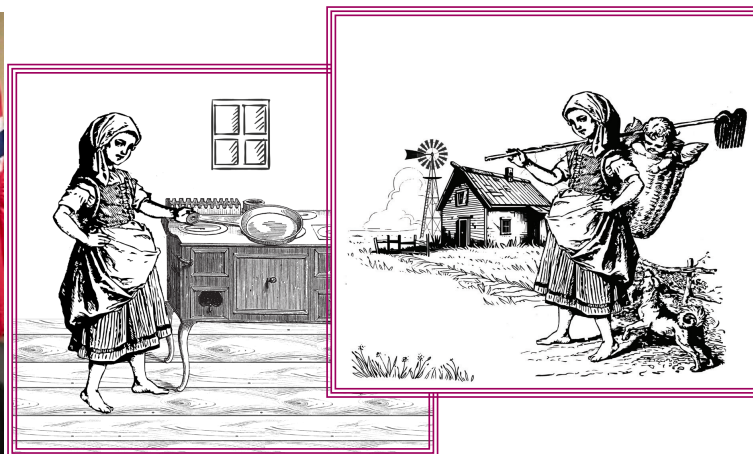
***Nedre Romerike -  
Aurskog-Høland,  
Blaker, Enebakk, Fet,  
Hakadal, Lørenskog,  
Nittedal, Rælingen,  
Setskog, Skedsmo,  
Sørumsdal, Follo -  
Frogn, Kråkstad,  
Nesodden,  
Oppegård, Ski,  
Vestby, Ås***

***Vestre Akershus -  
Asker, Bærum***



# FLERE LAG STEVNE

"A Skillet in One Hand, A Hoe in the Other:



Mary Baumgartner



## Norwegian Women Settlers"

An annual gathering of descendants and friends  
of the Trøndelag, Gudbrandsdal,  
Northern Hedmark, Solør and  
Romerike regions of Norway



6-9 August 2024  
Willar Conference Center  
Willmar, Minnesota



Norma & MC Sid Stivland

Bunad Parade - Thursday night Banquet







*Romerikslaget* research area in the Genealogy Lab.



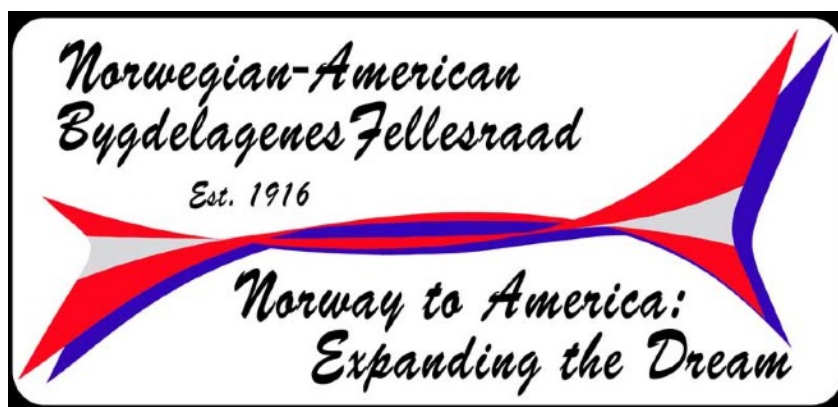
Jill Wahnoutka talked about Norwegian pioneer Guri Endreson, then we visited her grave at historic Vikor Lutheran Cemetery.



Barbara J. Nelson, Linda McKeen, Chuck McKeen, Norma Barnes, and Joy Shong taking a break in the Hospitality Room!







***Bygdelagenes Fellesraad Update - Sept 2024***  
Elaine Helgeson Hasleton, President

As we come to the end of our “*Stevne* Season” we look back with fondness on the creation and renewal of friendships, and the classes and activities that rejuvenated our love for Norway! *Mange takk* for your diligent work to keep these *Stevner* going as they are a tremendous job!

We look now to autumn and the approaching holiday season! I ask myself “what can I do now to contribute to my *bygdelag*?” Preserving our *Lag* history should be high on our list. If we don’t preserve it, who will? Collecting our papers together, we can send/bring them to the Norwegian American Historical Association (NAHA) at St. Olaf’s College in Northfield, MN. According to their Archivist, Kristina Warner, we don’t even need to sort them out. They will do that!

The Crossings 2025 celebrations are also foremost on our minds, as we honor the first organized emigration from Norway in 1825. We provided resources at our *Fellesraad* Annual Meeting in May. Also check the following website for more information on the multiple Norwegian and Norwegian-American organizations and how they are celebrating and sharing information about this history:

<https://crossings.norwegianamerican.com/>



## Introduction to Norway

*By Mary Gross*

In 2006 Rolf Hagen, one of my Norwegian cousins, hired a genealogist to find me. This was when I discovered that my great grandmother was the only member of her family who had remained in the U.S. after immigration from Norway in 1884. Her father and five brothers with their families had all returned to Norway by the early 1900s. After her death there was no contact between our families until this phone call. In 2008 my sister, her son, and I traveled to Norway to meet Rolf and his family. Since then I've been back three times and they've visited us twice. In September of 2024, my husband and I brought my daughter Sara and her husband Dave to Norway. We planned a short trip to see our cousins and to show Sara and Dave some of our favorite places in Norway.

We arrived in Oslo on September 19th. The next day Sara and I took the short train ride to Eidsvoll where Rolf's daughter, Anne Kristin, and her family live. Rolf died suddenly in 2010 after my sister Dorothy, my brother Jim and his wife Joan, Barb and I had come to Norway to meet him and his family. Sadly, he never was able to make the trip to the U.S., which had been his dream. Anne Kristin, her partner Atle, and her son Øyvind took us to the family cemetery, where Anne Kristin cares for the family graves. Her mother had just died a few days before after being ill with cancer, so it was a hard time for her.

After that we drove next door to a farm called Fenstad. This was where Anne Kristin's great grandfather Ole Sigvart Hagen (my great grandmother's brother), had settled after his return from the U.S. He and two of his brothers farmed together in the U.S. and made enough money to purchase this farm when they returned to Norway. The current owner of the farm was outside building a new garage. He was very friendly and spent a long time with us, showing us around the farm. He thinks the house was originally built in 1703 when the adjacent church was built. It has been remodeled throughout the years since, of course. But he showed us one of the main rooms, which has the original logs still in the walls. Several years ago he took down the barn that Ole Sigvart had built in 1904. He used the bricks and some of the windows in his home. The garage he's building also has those same bricks. One of the most interesting things he showed us was a photo he'd taken when the barn was torn down. It was of an etching he found in one of the walls that says "Emanuel Hagen, Fenstad, 1904". That was Anne Kristin's grandfather.



Mary Gross, husband, daughter & cousins,  
Eidsvoll, September 2024

Next we went to the farm called Unnildstad, which was purchased by Anne Kristin's grandfather Emanuel. He and two of his brothers farmed there. It's still owned by family members.

The next day my husband Tom, Sara, Dave and I took the train to Eidsvoll. We spent the morning at an outdoor folk museum where women were baking bread in an old fashioned oven. The bread was delicious. After that we all went to Anne Kristin's home to gather with her children and grandchildren, who all live in Eidsvoll. They're a very close family and are so warm and welcoming.

*(continued)*

## NOVEMBER 2024

## ROMERIKSLAGET I AMERIKA

We spent two days in Oslo where we visited the opera, the Munch Museum, the Vigeland Museum, the Akershus Fortress, the Resistance Museum, and enjoyed the restaurants. On the 24th we took the “Norway In a Nutshell” train to Myrdal, then Flåm, and then the ferry to Balestrand. It’s a small village on the Sognefjord that we love. It became well-known in the late 1800s when artists settled there because of the beautiful fjord and the mountains. Some of those artists built “dragon houses,” beautiful red homes with dragons on the corners and decorated in the Norwegian version of “Swiss” chalets. A famous hotel there, the Kvikne, was frequented by Kaiser Wilhelm before WWI. We stayed at the Hotel Midtnes, which is smaller, full of antiques and has beautiful views of the village.



Mary & Tom Gross in Bergen, September 2024

### **BOOKS** by Linda McKeen

What could be better than wandering through books? To hold a book is to wonder what's inside. To wonder about how it's relevant to me. Soon Chuck and I will be moving the *bygdebok* collection of Romerikslag to Norway House in Minneapolis. I have touched each one of them as I stamped the inside with "Property of Romerikslag i Amerika [www.fellesraad.com/romerikslaget](http://www.fellesraad.com/romerikslaget)". New archival labels adorn the spines.

It has taken me way too much time to do what seemed a simple task but I couldn't resist a bit of wandering through each of them. Of course, I'm hoping to find a patronymic that looks like it might be my family. While I have been working with the books, I have had my detailed map book close by. I have new sticky tabs on more pages than ever before. I am grateful that someone, many someones, who cared enough to plow through old records and rewrite them into a *bygdebok*. They are invaluable second sources.

On the 26th we took the ferry back to Flåm, where we took another ferry to Gudvangen. This took us through the Naeroyfjord, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It has some of the most beautiful views in Norway. From Gudvangen we took a bus to Voss, and then got on the train to Bergen. We took the funicular up to Mount Fløyen, went to the fish market, the art museum, walked through Bryggen and to the Bergenhus Fortress. Mostly we walked around the city and enjoyed the views and restaurants. On the 29th we flew home. It was a wonderful trip.

The Family Histories have been of particular interest to me. Time is so short at *stevne* that I have never taken the time to read through any of them. But now I have read stories near where my family lived. Perhaps my family shared some of these moments. Hardships and blessings, births, deaths, and celebrations to be remembered. Immigration stories and reasons for moving from Ohio to Iowa to Minnesota. The generations of stories are inspiring and motivating.

Attending *stevne* is great for so much. But never enough time for all of it. Never enough time to just sit and read the precious stories of a life from the Family Histories. Even though some of the authors of our collection of Family Histories have passed, I want to say ‘thank you’ to them and all authors for the thoughtful, dutiful, inspiring stories. And thank you to those who are still among us and writing their stories. Although I started many years ago writing my immigrant stories, I am now motivated to get them done.



NOVEMBER 2024

ROMERIKSLAGET I AMERIKA

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## WELCOME NEW MEMBER!

**David R. Williamson**

**Lake Forest, Illinois**

### Romerike Ancestral Areas: Oslo/Akershus

David attended Flere Lag Stevne in Willmar as a member of Tronderlag and decided to join Romerikslaget.

In his remarks below, he was highly complimentary of our genealogists at *stevne*!

“Barbara Nelson and Linda McKeen were helpful with information in the Genealogy lab. Carol Olson was knowledgeable about Oslo. They are excellent genealogists. My great-grandfather, Axel Peterson (Persson) from Sweden, was born on October 14, 1863. His three older brothers were emigrants from Sweden to Oslo/Akershus. Axel Peterson emigrated to Chicago, Illinois in 1881. He was married to Dorothea Halvorsen (Trondheim, Norway) in Chicago in 1893. Axel’s mother, Magdalena Erlander Rabock, visited her three sons in 1890 in Oslo, Norway. I don’t know what happened to her after 1890. She was 69 when she visited her sons.

Thank you and Best Regards,  
David Williamson”

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**Facebook Administrators:** Chris Falteisek & Norma Kjenstad Barnes



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