



Serving Akershus and Oslo Fylker

Romerikslaget News

March 2016



Greetings from President Joel Botten



The Fellesraad Centennial program is nearing completion and excitement is building. Some of the finest speakers on the subject of the past, present and future of Norwegian culture will be present at the Earl Brown Center and Double Tree hotel in Brooklyn Center May 5-8, 2016. Information centers, displays, vendors, Norwegian dignitaries, folk dancers, activities for children and a gala banquet will make the experience memorable. Bring your Norwegian bunad and join the parade. Find further information and a Fellesraad Centennial registration form in this newsletter. Information is also on line at www.Fellesraad.com.

Your Romerikslaget board invites you to a pre-convention lag annual meeting and luncheon to be held Thursday, May 5 at 11:00 am at the Double Tree Hotel. To attend this meeting and optional genealogy session, please fill out the Romerikslag Luncheon Reservation form below and send it to our treasurer. Following the lunch, our genealogist and others will be available to help you with research via the internet from 1:00-4:00 pm. We will not have our collection of bygdeboks etc., but if you make a request on the registration form, our librarian will bring the area book(s) you need. Arriving on Thursday will give you an opportunity to attend a 7:00 pm welcoming reception and a power point slide program of Norwegian sites and happenings throughout the Midwest collected and presented by author, photographer and publisher Doug Ohman. This celebration is one of those once-in-a-lifetime experiences. Hope to see you there!

Hilsen,

Joel



Fellesraad
Celebrates
100 Years
May 5-8, 2016

ROMERIKSLAGET LUNCHEON RESERVATION (DO NOT send with Centennial Registration)

Name(s) _____

Address(es) _____

Phone # _____ E-mail _____

Number of single menu lunches at \$23.00 ea. _____

Amount enclosed _____

MAKE CHECK TO: Romerikslaget in America.

SEND TO: Mary Gross, 401 S. 1st St. #1822, Minneapolis, Mn. 55401.

Bygdebok(s) I request: _____

My genealogy question: _____

Akershus Fylke
Ovre Romerike-
Eidsvoll, Feiring,
Gjerdrum, Hurdal,
Nannestad, Nes,
Ullensaker
Nedre Romerike -
Aurskog-Høland,
Blaker, Enebakk, Fet,
Hakadal, Lørenskog,
Nittedal, Rælingen,
Setskog, Skedsmo,
Sørum
Follo - Frogn, Kråk-
stad, Nesodden,
Oppegård, Ski,
Vestby, ås
Vestre Akershus -
Asker, Bærum
Oslo Fylke

Genealogy News

Norwegian Bygdebok is Going Online!

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, also known as the LDS is in the process of loading searchable bygdebok information.

Most of you probably know what a bygdebok is, but in case you don't... a bygdebok is basically a collection of books for a certain kommune or locality in Norway (bygdebok is singular, bygdebok is plural.) They contain a broad general history about every farm in that kommune including names and birth information of the families who lived there. They are a wealth of information with lots of pictures. They are in Norwegian but not impossible to figure out. And, as always, the information should be verified before adding it to your family history.

Go to the LDS website, familysearch.org. Under SEARCH at the top of the page, select GENEALOGIES. At the bottom of that page click on the BLUE button ALL, then select COMMUNITY TREES and begin your search. I entered the information for my great grandfather, Gulleik Knutson at Hordaland, born

1858. This is the information I received along with a family tree.

Quoted text: Full Name: Gulleik KNUTSON GEITLE
Gender: M Birth date: 1858 Birth place: of Geitle, Evanger, Evanger, Hordaland, Norway Father: Knut KNUTSON Mother: Marta GULLEIKSDOTTER
SOURCES (1) Evangerboka, Band II, p. 204

I wish it would give me the whole family but at least I know which bygdebok and page number to check. There are about 40 books currently online but there will be 410 when they are finished, so keep checking if you don't find what you are looking for today.

Happy searching.

Deb Jarvar



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Website: www.romerikeusa.org

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An ad policy has been adopted by the Board of Romerikslaget. It reads as follows: Individuals or companies can submit articles that include contact information but do not include any prices. The lag Board reserves the right to edit or reject any submissions and will suggest to non-members that they join or make a donation to the lag.

Romerikslaget News is the official publication of Romerikslaget i Amerika and is published each March/Jul/Nov. Members receive the newsletter, stevne registration packet, access to records of Norwegian government and church records, Membership Directory and the help of our genealogist.

Romerikslaget i Amerika is a Norwegian American association whose members have ancestral roots or present-day ties to the area that nearly surrounds Oslo, Norway, called Romerike. The lag was founded in September 1990 to honor the unique culture of Romerike and to strengthen the bonds with the parishes of our ancestors.

Genealogy Stories From Members

Romerikslaget member Rev. Gerald Peterson has been working on his ancestry on and off for the past 10 years. He described a restlessness that was calmed after he was able to “experience the family roots first hand”. This is his story.

HUSER/HANSEN FAMILY HISTORY

On July 28-29, 2015, I finally had the privilege to visit actual sites of my Norwegian ancestors. The Huser/Hansen's are on my paternal grandmother's side of the family. Thanks to Sharon Babcock, researcher of the Hadeland Lag, who suspected that the area I was looking for was in Akershus. Sharon forwarded my information to Carol Niewinski, former researcher for the Romerikslag. Carol confirmed that she was able to find my ancestors. It's been quite a challenge!

As far back as I can remember my grandma and her older sister Mary said that the family had come from Bergen, Norway. In 2006, I found and won an auction on eBay for a man to search in the Norwegian bygdeboks. He didn't find anything around Bergen. He didn't know why, but he decided to see if he could find any family names in the Akershus area. To his surprise, he found my ancestors there.

He copied and mailed some information about the family. It was in Norwegian which didn't help me much.

In April 2015, I was studying maps of Norway with the hope of locating the churches connected to my family. Of what I was finding, I wasn't sure that they were the right locations. I was running out of time. My church gave me a one month sabbatical for 2015. My wife & I found a 14 day tour of Germany starting July 14. Given that I would be so close, I was hoping to be able to make a quick side trip to Norway and Sweden to visit sites of my family tree. I still needed verification of the correct locations.

Again, Carol Niewinski went to work on it and was able to confirm the churches of Sorum, Blaker and Nes. She sent copies of maps of the area. I also purchased the Europe maps for my Garmin. And thankfully once I was in Oslo, Norway the Garmin recognized the location.

There were 3 churches that had been tied with my family: Nes, Sorum and Blaker. Hans Halvorson, b. 16 December 1810 was my great, great grandfather who married Ana Marie Johannesdr. at the Nes

Kirke on the 06 December 1834. Sigvart Hansen was my maternal great grandfather. He was born on the 24 May 1854. He was baptized at the Sorum Kirke. His wife, Marthe Randine Hansdr was born 03 March 1848 in Blaker, Norway. They were married at the Blaker Kirke. The family seemed to be somewhat transient in that Hans was born in Ude-naes, Naes, Norway.

As the story goes, my great grandfather, Sigvart and a half-brother, Engbert, immigrated to the U.S. in 1883. They arrived on the ship Pavonia on 26 Apr 1883. (Just prior to leaving Norway, my grandma's older sister Mary was born 19 March 1883. From the New York harbor, they settled in a community called Bergen, McLeod County, Minnesota which is southwest of Minneapolis, near Glencoe. At this point Sigvart & Martha had 3 children: Annie, b. March 1878; Henry, b. 1880 and Mary b. 1883.

The Hanson brothers worked as masons for about 2 years after arriving. About this time, Sigvart and Engbert decided to change their surname from Hansen to the Huser. (Huser was the name of the farm where Sigvart was born).

Sigvart & Martha had four more children in Bergen, McLeod, Minnesota: Bessie, b. 28 Nov 1884; Ole, b. 25 Aug 1886; and my grandma, Senora Ragna, b. 22 Feb 1889. Another daughter, Marthe E. was born on 20 Sep 1893. It must have been a difficult birth because Martha died 5 days later on 25 Sep 1893. The baby only lived another 4 ½ months, dying on 08 Feb 1894. As I mentioned earlier, Mary always said that they had come from Bergen, Norway (the thing is that she was a newborn when they immigrated to the United States. And as it turned out, the younger siblings were born in Bergen... Minnesota). I found this story after traveling to the Bergen, MN area. They had been members of Bergen Norwegian Lutheran Church and the family cemetery was tied with this church. I found the headstones for Sigvart, Martha, Marthe E., Henry and other Huser relatives.

Soon after the death of his wife and infant daughter, Sigvart moved his family near Lewis Lake in Kanabec County. It was there that he purchased farmland and built a log cabin. Sigvart and his son Ole farmed the land until his death in 1927 at the age of 72. The log cabin remained standing until the 1980's when it was burned down to make room for a trailer home for my uncle Morris.

Genealogy Stories From Members

Sigvart's losses wouldn't end after moving to Lewis Lake. Henry broke through the ice and drown on Lewis Lake in 1889 (age 19). Annie died (age 45) in 1923 having 2 small children. Annie's sister Mary and husband raised Annie's 2 children as their own. Ole never married. He farmed the homestead until his death in 1952. He was 66. My grandma and her sister Bessie, married Peterson (Swedish) brothers. The 2 sisters and their husbands had farms next to each other. I heard that there was a worn path through the corn field for the sisters to visit each other.

Through my genealogical research, I hoped that one day I would be able to actually visit the Huser farm. On July 29, 2015, my wife & I had the privilege to visit the Huser farm near Blaker and Sorum. I had found a Norgeskart.no map from the Norwegian Genealogical Society of California. It was amazing the detail that appeared as I enlarged the map. I was able to find the Huser farm! The present owner remembered when he was young, 2 women had visited from the U.S. that were relatives of the Hanson's. He recalled that 2 brothers had immigrated to the U.S. and changed their names from Hanson to Huser. My great grandfather was born on the middle Huser farm (there being North, Middle and South).

Churches visited with family ties:

My wife Karen and I met the church warden at the Sorum Kirke on the morning of July 29. He gave us a tour of the inside. This was the church where Sigvart was baptized. The baptismal font was made of solid limestone. Sorum church dates back to 1166 AD. That being said, they are celebrating the 850th anniversary in 2016! The building and grounds have been well maintained. The building is the tallest in the area. The warden explained that in many of the communities, no building can be taller than the church. The church has remained a key part of the community given her age.

We followed the warden to Blaker Kirke which is where Martha Randine Hansdr was a member and where she married Sigvart. The interior had been renovated. It's apparent that the outside walls could use a coat of paint.

We then met with the pastor at the Nes Kirke which was built after my ancestors had been married. What amazed me was that before we entered the church, the pastor invited us to take a look at a map that he had found in a closet. It was the very map that I was able to search online from the Norwegian Genealogical Society of California! He had tried to study the map to help

us find the Huser Farm. We had just come from the farm and were able to point the location out to him on the map!

After the tour of the church built in the late 1800's, the pastor drove us to the Nes Ruiner Kirke, the actual church where my great, great grandparents would have been married.



Karen and Rev. Gerald Peterson at the Sorum Kirke

Romerikslaget Members: Tell Your Genealogy Story

Members, whether you are new or have been with us for awhile, are welcome and encouraged to tell your genealogy story. It is how we get to know each other and who knows, our ancestors might have been neighbors. We won't make that discovery until you have shared your story.

Send your story to the newsletter publisher, Dorothy Mehl,
2111 E North Crescent,
Spokane, WA 99207
or email dorothymehl112@msn.com.

Member News

Welcome to Our New Members

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Correction from the November newsletter:
Nancy Reynold's correct email address is nreynold@hbci.com.

Arlene Christopherson

Memorial services for 83 year old Arlene B. Christopherson were held on June 20, 2015 at Shepard of the Hills Lutheran Church, Crossville, Tennessee. Survivors include husband Robert Christopherson. Arlene was active with Romerikslaget for many years, as Historian and Membership Vice President as well as publishing the newsletter .

Earl Angell

Memorial services for Earl Angell, 93 were conducted at on Dec. 17, 2015 in Spencer, IA. Angell passed away Dec. 6, 2015, at St. Luke Lutheran Home. Earl Verner Angell, the son of Paul and Magna Milde, was born Oct. 11, 1922, in Lankin, North Dakota. Earl served in the Coast Guard during World War II and Civil Air Patrol. Earl then graduated from Moody Bible Institute of Chicago in 1952. Earl enjoyed a long career in the United States Postal service. Earl was an avid stamp collector as was his mother, Magna. He also enjoyed traveling, as Earl toured many countries and especially Scandinavia.



Norma Ilene Telford

Norma Ilene Telford, age 88, of Eau Claire, WI, died January 18, 2016 in Eau Claire, Norma was born March 19, 1927 in Longwood, Clark County, Wisconsin to Donald and Lillian (Jackson) Warner. She married Donald ("Duce") Telford in October of 1956 and moved to Eau Claire where they raised their children.

Norma was an active member of The Sons of Norway and Romerikslaget. Norma was the family's genealogist, devoted to researching and preserving the family history. She is survived by her husband, Donald "Duce" of Eau Claire; two daughters, Karen (Steve) Moen of Eau Claire and Jane (Gabor) Tar of Afton, MN; grandchildren Ryan (Katrina) Moen, Rachel Moen and Sarah (Casey) Schroeder; one great grandson, Brody; one sister, Ann Larson of San Antonio, TX.



Romerikslaget i Amerika

To continue membership, or become a new member, complete and mail this form.

Name (1): _____

Lag ancestral area: _____

Name (2): _____

Lag ancestral area: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone () _____ Fax _____

E-mail: _____

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Individual \$15.00 New Renewal

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(Payable in US Dollars)

Please mail email me a sample newsletter

I would like to join. Enclosed is my check.

I am renewing my membership for 2016.

Enclosed is my check.

Payable to: Romerikslaget

Mail form & check to:

Susan Waldera
N6062 N Skutley Rd
Taylor, WI 54659

Fellesraad Centennial Celebration

Calling All Norwegians Huge Historic Norwegian Celebration A Century of Supporting Norwegian Bygdelag



2016 marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Norwegian-American Bygdelagenes Fellesraad (NABF). All are welcome to learn and take part in this historic and grand centennial celebration on May 5 - 8, 2016. The conference and celebration will be held at the Brooklyn Center, a northwest suburb of Minneapolis just off Interstate 494. Thursday and Friday will be at the Doubletree by Hilton in Brooklyn Center. Saturday and Sunday will be at the Earle Brown Center in Brooklyn Center. There are optional activities on Sunday at Norway House and Mindekirken in Minneapolis.

Thursday, May 5:

Registration and a dessert/coffee reception will "kick off" the centennial at the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel in north Minneapolis. Acclaimed Minnesota author and story teller, Doug Ohman, will treat us with his new topic and photos: "Norwegian Images in Minnesota."

Friday, May 5:

Registration, research and informational booths, and an orientation session will continue at the Doubletree Hotel. Concurrent sessions will be focusing on two areas: "Norwegian-ness Past, Present, and Future" and "Twenty-First Century Norwegian Family History."

The following guests will be speaking on diverse topics throughout the day:

Terje Mikael Hasle Joranger, historian/scholar at the University of Oslo will speak about the Norwegian-American character;

John Christenson, Professor Emeritus from Luther College, will speak on "What Does it Mean to be Norwegian?";

Gracia Grindal, Professor Emeritus from Luther Seminary, will speak about the strength of early leaders;

Øyvind Gulliksen, Professor Emeritus of American Studies, Telemark University College in Norway, will speak on "Strength, Grace & Skills of Norwegians;"

Dennis Gimmestad, historian, will facilitate a panel addressing symbolic, enduring and invisible Norwegian ethnicity;

John Yilek, author, historian and lawyer, will speak on cultural landscapes and why immigrants left, incentives for emigrating and areas where they chose to live;

Karen Humphrey, historian and author, will speak about technology and traditional depositories;

Duane Swanson, historian, will speak about the future of printed materials in the digital era;

Elaine Hasleton, historian, certified genealogist, and lecturer, will speak about melding old and new research techniques; and bringing us up to the moment;

John Storlie, Director of Genetic Research, will speak about DNA and its impact on family history in the 21st century.

An **evening program** will include acknowledging people instrumental in the bygdelag movement. This will be followed by a historic glimpse into bygdelag history: "**Building a Lag House**" presented by Ole and Lena and friends.



Fellesraad Centennial Celebration

Saturday, May 7:

Many varied activities and programs will take place at the beautiful Earle Brown Heritage Center in north Minneapolis, a short distance south of the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel. Exhibits, vendors, and lag displays will be set up most of the day.

A “**Norwegian Day Camp**” for young people, ages 5-16, will include games, folkdance lessons, singing folk songs, Norwegian art classes, learning a little about Norwegian history, and a visit from a ventriloquist! The a.m. programs will include; the **fellesraad annual meeting**, an opening session, a performance by the energetic **Stoughton High School Folk Dancers**, and speaker **Terje Mikael Hasle Joranger**.

The **noon luncheon program** will honor all descendants of charter members of the bygdelag. Afternoon speakers include:

Knut Djupedal, Director of the Norwegian Emigrant Museum & Research Center in Hamar, Norway, will speak on the “Bygdelag & Fellesraad Helping to Establish the Museum;”

Laurann Gilbertson, Chief Curator at Vesterheim Museum will speak on “Revitalizing Folk Arts“;

Ida Marie Tenvik-Bringedal of Skien, Telemark, will speak about the contemporary art scene in Norway.

The climax of this historical event will be the **evening banquet with a bunad parade**, speaker, and entertainment.

Sunday, May 8:

Mindekirken (Norwegian Memorial Church) invites all to attend either an English service at 9 a.m. or a Norwegian service at 11 a.m. A light lunch will be served at the church at noon.

The beautiful **Norway House** welcomes visitors for coffee and cookies from 9:00-1:00.

Mindekirken is located at 924 E. 21st St., Minneapolis and Norway House is next door.

To find additional details and updates, visit the NABF website: www.fellesraad.com/centennial
All attendees must be registered. Contact person: Jean Knakk knakk002@gmail.com

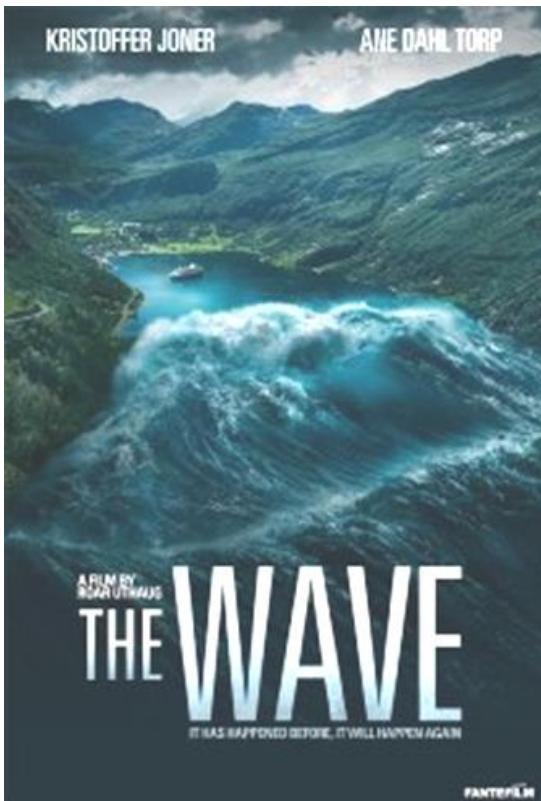


A Brief History of Bygdelag and Fellesraad

The Norwegian term bygdelag refers to a societal organization from a rural area of Norway. The earliest Norwegian-American bygdelag were organized by emigrants and descendants of emigrants who settled mainly in the Midwest. The first bygdelag organized in 1899 and through the years more than 140 local and national lag have been formed but, unfortunately, many discontinued due to the world wars and lack of leadership. Today, twenty-nine lag continue to be active, holding annual conventions in varying locations and focusing on cultural and educational programs.

After 1914, several lag officers found a need for an umbrella organization to unify and support the bygdelag activities. The Norwegian-America Bygdelagenes Fellesraad (NABF) council was formed in November of 1916 to be an advisory organization, to support and guide in the development of the bygdelag movement and to influence the cultural activities. The NABF has managed cooperative projects for the good of all bygdelag and visitors, which will be exhibited in this historic centennial celebration.

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New Norwegian Movie “The Wave”

Nestled in Norway's Sunnmøre region, Geiranger is one of the most spectacular tourist attractions. With the mountain Åkerneset overlooking the village-and constantly threatening to collapse into the fjord-it is also a place where cataclysm could strike at any moment. The Norwegian movie “The Wave” is about a tsunami striking the area.

After putting in several years at Geiranger's warning center, geologist Kristian (Kristoffer Joner) is moving on to a prestigious gig with an oil company. But the very day he's about to drive his family to the city, Kristian senses something isn't right, and when that mountain begins to crumble, every soul in Geiranger has ten minutes to get to high ground before a tsunami hits, consuming everything in its path. Those ten minutes are nerve-rattling but as the wave continues the stakes only get higher.

Norway is a rockslide prone area and “The Wave” is based on a rock-slide tsunami incident which destroyed a Norwegian town on April 7, 1934, killing 40 people. Prior to that in 1905, a similar incident triggered a tsunami killing 60 people.