



Romerikslaget News



Genealogy Connections Discovered at Stevne



Ray and Linda Embertson, John Bjerke and Mary Baumgartner

It was truly a pleasure to work with members seeking their ancestors in the genealogy room at the stevne this year. I would like to thank **Julie Clauson** and **Norma Barnes** for their help.

Some efforts were successful, some are ongoing...as usually happens in genealogy. I am still trying to scale a brick wall for **Linda McKeen**. I was able to find several new ancestors for **Paul Meierding** just prior to the stevne and his wife, **Jorun**, discovered she was related to **Betty Larson** (Hove family name from Vik i Sogn). Betty was one of my dear friends from Eau Claire who recently passed away and would have been delighted to know of the connection.

One very surprising and accidental success was a connection between Romerike members **Mary Baumgartner** and **John Bjerke** to **Linda Embertson** of Solørlag. While talking to **Ray and Linda Embertson**, they mentioned the name **Shipman**. My sister has a connection to the Shipman name through marriage so the name stuck with me. That same day, **Mary Baumgartner** also mentioned the Shipman name in passing. I suggested she talk to Embertsons, which she did, and discovered there was a possible connection to Linda's ancestors.

This is the follow up from **Mary Baumgartner**: "We got together in River Falls on Tuesday, Oct 2nd, at the public library and a restaurant. We had all brought things to share. **John Bjerke** has done such a wonderful job with the genealogy - he has several 3-ring binders as well as a library bound hardcover book of the **Shipmans**. He let Linda and Ray take that home to use. The three of them plan to meet again in October when Embertsons are coming to the Twin Cities to take care of their 8-year-old twin granddaughters. They will bring the book back to John and visit some family grave sites. The three of us are related through **Alvin Shipman** (1784-1858). He had five sons. We are each from three of the five sons. John descended from **Ezra**, Linda from **Isaiah**, and I am a descendant of **Charles**. John is 9th generation, Linda is 10th generation, and I am an 11th generation descendant.

We had a great time together! Thanks to you for making the connection, Deb!"

So...it pays to talk to people about their family. It always amazes me how often casual conversations turn into WOW moments. Sometimes they are not even Norwegian connections, but still amazing.

Deb Jarvar, Genealogist Romerikslaget i Amerika



Romerikslaget and Solørlag America Joint 2018 Stevne

2018 Stevne Memories by *Mary Gross*

Our 2018 stevne was held at the Bigwood Conference Center in Fergus Falls, MN September 12-15, with 83 participants from Romerikslaget, Solørlag, and 15 prospective members of a newly formed **Agder Lag**. Romerikslaget and Solørlag have shared a stevne since 2009. Agder Lag members met during our stevne and we hope that once they become an established lag, they will join our stevne each year.

Wednesday, September 12 began with a presentation by **Elaine Hasleton**, Solørlag member, Fellesraad President and Chief Genealogical Officer for Family Search in Salt Lake City. She talked about “Researching the Forest Finns (Finskog)”. Many of our lag members have a bit of Finnish/Norwegian ancestry so this topic is of interest to both lags. **Deb Jarvar**, Romerikslaget genealogist, offered “Beginning Genealogy” for members new to genealogy.

Thursday started with the **Opening Session and Welcome**. We sang anthems, introduced lag officers and new members, shared stories and told good Norwegian jokes! The Hospitality Room opened with more lefse than anyone could eat! and is a good place to stop between events to have a cup of coffee and a delicious snack.

Our bus with 44 riders, toured the Fergus Falls/Battle Lake area. We stopped at the **Ottertail County Museum**, celebrating its 150th anniversary. From there to the **Trefoldighed Norwegian Lutheran Church**, a 1870’s church set in the countryside adjacent to the Ottertail River. The Women’s Group served a wonderful Norwegian meal, of huge meatballs and potatoes, delicious lefse, salad, and Norwegian cookies, the most delicious rommegrot I’ve ever tasted, and risengryn grod (Norwegian rice pudding) with raspberry sauce. This was definitely the highlight of our tour!

From there we toured **Prospect House**, an 1882 home owned by Jay Johnson, the great grandson of the original owner. Chock full of Civil War artifacts from his great-grandfather, Cap Colehour, the furnishings and decor haven’t changed since 1929.

That evening during supper we listened to **Chris Falteisek**, a member of Romerikslaget, play the piano and entertain us with “Nordic Christmas Customs and Traditions with Music” and photos from his trips to Norway and Scandinavia.

Friday morning **Chris Schuelke**, the Director of the Ottertail County Museum, presented “150 Years of Ottertail County”. Many Norwegians were drawn to the area to farm the fertile land. Then **LeAnn Hookom** talked about her summer living in an AirBB in Norway. With much humor she told about learning how to manage the buses, entertaining her many visitors, and getting around Norway. It was one of our favorite presentations.

After lunch **Terry Lejcher**, retired Minnesota DNR Hydrologist, told us about the geology and hydrology of the Ottertail area. When huge glaciers receded, boulders and debris were left that made the land bumpy, becoming the shoreline of Lake Agassiz from thousands of years ago.

The lags held their Annual Meetings. Romerikslaget elected a new president, **Julie Clauson**. **Joel Botten** retired after 12 years as president. We presented him with a plaque and a beautiful Norwegian rosemaled letter box. The Silent Auction ended and bidders picked up their winnings.

Our Banquet followed with the **Laurie Strom Trio**, two violinists and a cellist. They played Scandinavian, American folk, and classical music. **Homer Saetre** and **LeAnn Hookom** from Solørlag entertained us with Norwegian jokes. There was a bunad parade accompanied by the trio.

Saturday morning **Elaine Hasleton** gave a genealogy presentation, “Was My Childhood Home in Alexandria the Hospital Where My Grandma’s Little Brother Died?”. She took us through the investigation she made to figure out this mystery. It was obvious to all of us that doing genealogy is like being a detective sometimes.

We held the annual **Memorial Service**, where we remembered our lag members who died in the last year. A noon luncheon closed our stevne. Once again, it was good to get together with old friends and new, to do genealogy, learn more about our Norwegian heritage and about the area we are visiting, and share experiences. We look forward to next year’s stevne September 11-14, 2019 in Willmar, MN.

Romerikslaget and Solørlag America Joint 2018 Stevne



Romerikslaget News



Deb Jarvar and Julie Claussen

Welcome President Julie Claussen

Hello Everyone,

My name is Julie Clauson. I've been a member and director for six years. At this year's stevne in Fergus Falls, MN, I was elected your new President.

I would like to thank Joel Botten for being past President and all the years of dedicated service he gave to our lag. Eunice Helgeson present Joel with a very nice portable writing desk in appreciation.

This year's Romerikslag and Solørlag stevne was a lot of fun. Deb Jarver was able to help people with their genealogy research. Everyone was happily talking about the bus tour, visiting the Ottertail County Historical Museum, Prospect House and Civil War Museum and the wonderful reception they received at the Trefoldiged Norwegian Lutheran Church.

We had special guests at this year's stevne. Prospective members for the possible new Agderlag met at the stevne. They also attended the programs, bus tour and banquet with us. We are hoping when Agderlag is finally incorporated they will join Romerikslag and Solørlag in future stevnes.

Thank you all for having confidence in me to be your President. From the first time I attended a stevne and became a member, I felt that Romerikslag was family. I will do my best to not let the family down.

Julie A. Clauson



Velkommen to Romerikslaget Facebook Group!

Please check out our lag Facebook group called "Romerike i America (Romerikslag)." We encourage our members to participate as a great means of keeping in touch with each other and sharing information throughout the year! First, you do need to have a Facebook account, which is free and easy to complete at www.facebook.com. Then just sign in to your page and enter "Romerike i America" in the finder box at the top, when the group page appears then click on "Join" and submit your request to join. Members can post photos of their own visits to Romerike, as well as sharing genealogy, cultural and history information about Romerike. At our stevne last fall, Norma Kjenstad Barnes volunteered to create the group and she is the administrator for it. Please join us!



Romerikslaget and Solørlag America Joint 2018 Stevne

STEVNE EVALUATION

Every year at the end of our stevne we ask people to fill out an evaluation form to help us plan for future successful stevner. We share the information with board members from Romerikslaget and Solørlag. This year we decided you might want to know what we find out, so you can share any ideas or recommendations you might have. If you have comments to make you can send them to me at maryfrancesgross@gmail.com. Out of 83 participants, 22 filled out evaluations.

Speakers and Topics were rated as high quality by all. Those who went on the **Tour** rated it highly. **Genealogy Centers** were rated as high quality by all who used them.

The **Hospitality Center** was rated high by most, but some complained the room we were given was too small for us (which was an understatement!) We are at the mercy of the hotel when it comes to the room available for Hospitality, unfortunately.

The **Banquet** response was mixed, mostly because the food was spotty. People who ordered salmon were very pleased but those who ordered the pork chop were dissatisfied. I had the pork chop, and I agree! People all liked the trio that provided entertainment for the banquet.

Everyone was happy with the **Entertainment** provided during the stevne.

Food provided by the Bigwood Event Center was really spotty. There were meals where the entree ran out and poor substitutions were made and were served late. Many people were happy with their food, and others were dissatisfied by one meal or another.

People were satisfied by the **Vendors** who came, although some would like more vendors. One problem we run into is lack of space for vendors and some vendors who are disappointed in sales for just one day so don't return.

The **Cost** of the stevne was mostly satisfactory, although the cost of hotels is a factor for many who say it keeps going up. The cost of the stevne itself is considered very reasonable.

The **Length** of the stevne is a concern for some, although the majority like the current length. We have reduced the stevne to just 3 1/2 days, Wednesday to Saturday at noon. We used to have four total days. Some people would like the longer stevne so they have more time in genealogy. Others would like the stevne to be available on weekends so young employed people can attend. The cost of rental increases on the weekends. As far as scheduling, most people were happy with this stevne's schedule.

Comments & Suggestions:

Many people complained that the meeting rooms at the Bigwood Event Center were cold, despite attempts to ask employees to do something about the temperature.

One person suggested Fellesraad consider helping to finance stevner for the lags. Another idea was to have Fellesraad organize two large stevner for lags to share in the summer. The concern is that those who belong to more than one lag can't afford taking the time or the money to attend more than one per year.

Some participants who belong to both Romerikslaget & Solørlag would like to have that acknowledged somehow. At present you can register as belonging to only one of the lags.

Two people suggested the stevne be held in the summer instead of in September. We did talk about this with our boards and found that others much prefer keeping it in September.

People who went on the tour were very happy with the Ottertail County Museum, the Trefoldighed Lutheran Church luncheon, and the Civil War House Museum. Some would have liked more time in each of those spots. Many commented on the quality of the speakers, especially LeAnn Hookom, Elaine Hasleton, Chris Falteisek, & Terry Lejcher. Many also loved the Laurie Strom trio entertainment at the Banquet. They loved the jokes from Homer Saetre and LeAnn Hookom.

Nearly everyone expressed how much they love seeing old friends and making new ones at the stevne each year. They see that as the main reason to keep attending.

Mary Gross Romerikslaget Treasurer

Membership News

Welcome Our New Members

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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

IS YOUR MEMBERSHIP UP-TO-DATE?

Dues are due at the beginning of the year so please send your renewal to: Susan Waldera, N6062 N. Skutley Rd., Taylor, WI 54659. It seems to be more difficult to keep track of when to renew as most people receive their newsletter by email. If you aren't sure if you are up-to-date, you can call me at 715-662-2661, email me at lswaldera@centurytel.net or send me a letter. Romerikslaget's only income is its dues, so your membership is of great importance to keep this organization active. The annual dues are \$15/person or \$20/household (max 2 persons) in in the USA. \$20/person outside USA if newsletters are mailed. Please make check payable to: Romerikslaget.

MANGE TAKK *Susan Waldera*, V. P. Membership



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 i Amerika Membership

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Facebook Administrators • Norma Kjenstad Barnes and Chris Falteisek

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<http://www.fellesraad.com/romerikslaget/Romerikslaget i Amerika - fellesraad.com>

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Romerikslaget i Amerika

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Mail form & check to:

Susan Waldera
N6062 N Skutley Rd
Taylor, WI 54659

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.

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*Mange takk
to our hard working
Officers and Board of Directors.*

