



Serving Akershus and Oslo Fylker

# Romerikslaget News

November 2019



**Happy Holidays**

## Take a look at our Romerikslaget Facebook Group!

Velkommen to our lag Facebook group called "Romerike i America (Romerikslag)." Mange takk to the 57 people who have joined the group, including several who live in Norway! Joining is fairly simple. First, you need to have a Facebook account, which is free and easy to complete at [www.facebook.com](http://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.

It's such a great way for members to keep in touch with each other and share information throughout the year! You'll see lots of photos from our fun stevner over the past few years.

Members have been sharing genealogy, cultural and history information about Romerike as well as photos of their own visits to the area. As group administrators, Chris Falteisek and I are happy to answer any questions.

Please contact me, Norma Kjenstad Barnes, [nkwbarnes@yahoo.com](mailto:nkwbarnes@yahoo.com) or Chris at [chrisfalteisek@gmail.com](mailto:chrisfalteisek@gmail.com).

**We look forward to seeing you on Facebook!**

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

# Genealogy

## Obituaries Are Not What They Used To Be

Here is a very interesting website, Wisconsin Scandinavian Obituaries, <https://sites.rootsweb.com/~wisobits/>, managed now by Rootsweb. It is searchable by name and worth checking, even if your ancestors didn't live in Wisconsin because it also lists relatives of the deceased who my have lived in other states.

The older obituaries seem to go into more detail about individual lives and sometimes get very "flowery," for want of a better word. I always seem to spend a lot more time than anticipated on this website because I get caught up in reading the longer obituaries...because they are so "flowery." Here is one example written by H.A. Anderson, a teacher, judge and lawyer of Whitehall, WI that I stumbled upon while looking for someone else. Mr Anderson definitely had a way with words.



"Every little while some member of our community is called to the land of the hereafter whom we are glad to remember because of usefulness or because of amiable and inspiring presence. Mrs. Knudtson combined the traits of both classes. She was versed in that knowledge which can minister to our comfort when the skeins of life become snarled and tangled, and she had long since learned to frame her troubles and sorrows with smiles. Such people are like stars long since dead in abysmal space the light of which go streaming on through after centuries. She was an affectionate wife, tender mother, attractive social unit and devoted Christian. She was born and cradled in one of the most romantic valleys in Norway, which has probably given birth to more poetry, art, music and romance than any other valley in the land of the Midnight Sun. The duration of human memory is so short that if we could, we would like to capture and hold the finest and noblest expressions of life by the magic of some art or science to hang in our public halls or set up by the side of our highways to make glad and inspire the innumerable men...but as we cannot do this, we must content ourselves by gathering the aromas of sweet lives and the images of beautiful presences in the sacred chambers of memory until our own lives are permeated by the essence and beauty of those who have gone before us and thus perpetuate the greatest values of life. H.A. Anderson - April 5, 1925" WHITEHALL TIMES - April 9, 1925."

The genealogy room at the stevne was bustling with activity. Julie Clauson, Karen Nelson and I were kept busy helping members on their quest for information on their ancestors. It was nice to see some new faces and make new friends. As always, if you need help with your genealogy research contact me at [djarvar@wwt.net](mailto:djarvar@wwt.net).

*Deb Jarvar*, Genealogist for Romerikslaget i Amerika

## Welcome Our New Members



### **Julie Ann Kaylor**

6387 Buckley Hall Rd.  
Cobbs Creek, VA 23035  
804-725-6241 [thekaylors4@gmail.com](mailto:thekaylors4@gmail.com)  
Vestre-Baerum Sogn, Asker and Akerhus

### **Rod Bjerke**

21225 Prince Lake Ct  
Crest Hill, IL 60403  
815-782-4748 [rod.bjerke@gmail.com](mailto:rod.bjerke@gmail.com)  
Nannestad

### **Paul Slettehaugh**

**Jimmy Slettehaugh**  
875 313 LN NE  
Cambridge, MN 55008  
763-691-1332  
[pslantz@gmail.com](mailto:pslantz@gmail.com)  
Romerike/Ness, Sonnejfjord

# Fellesraad Bygdelag

## Fellesraad Update 10 Oct 2019

Congratulations to all of you for your successful Stevner! They are the major events for the Bygdelag which require so much preparation and time! Thank you for all you do to keep your Bygdelag up and going!

We know that Officer changes have been made at your Business Meetings held during Stevner. Please forward the names of new officers and their contact info to Gene Rodi. [the.webmaster@fellesraad.com](mailto:the.webmaster@fellesraad.com) Once Gene has made the changes on the Website, we will then print new Explorer brochures. Let me know if you want some sent to you.



Fellesraad has obtained its 501c3 status as a charitable donation status. Individual Lags can tap into this status and use our EIN number, which is a Tax ID number. Contact Bob Torkelson, Fellesraad Treasurer at 952-457-3954 or at [the.treasurer@fellesraad.com](mailto:the.treasurer@fellesraad.com).

As an example, Family Tree DNA just contacted us for our (Fellesraad) Tax ID number. They needed the number to show that they donated a DNA kit to us for the drawing at our Annual Meeting last May. If other businesses contribute items to your Lag, they will need to know our ID number.

The Fellesraad Board has voted to participate in the Matching Funds Campaign for the Norway House Bibliotek in the amount of \$45,000. The deadline is 30 April 2020. We invite all Bygdelags and Bygdelag members, and others to participate in this worthwhile venture. More definite information about this Bibliotek will be shared soon, as Norway House is writing an official document regarding our funding details. They plan to break ground in the Fall of 2020. Be sure to put Bibliotek on the Memo line of your checks.

Planning has begun for the 2025 Commemoration celebrating the bicentennial of Norwegian emigration to America. While it seems a long time until the celebrations, it is none too early to plan for them. Participants on the planning committee include Fellesraad/Bygdelag, Norway House, NAHA, Norwegian Consulate, Vesterheim Museum, Sons of Norway, Norwegian-American Genealogical Center, Sloop Society, and the Norwegian Emigrant Museum in Ottestad, Norway. This celebration will be all-encompassing in many different venues. It is so great being Norwegian and Norwegian-American!!

***Elaine Helgeson Hasleton***, Bygdelagenes Fellesraad, President, [www.fellesraad.com](http://www.fellesraad.com)

## A Message From Romerikslaget President Julie Clauson

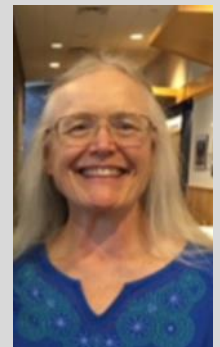
September was rainy but it didn't put a damper on our Stevne. The planning committee did an excellent job getting it all set up for us. The genealogy room was busy, and Deb was able to help a few more people. And the silent auction did well, which helps our genealogy fund.

As many of you know, I store the Lags genealogy books. For the past few years I have been wanting to get the books reorganized to make it easier to unpack at the stevner and repack for storage. By getting them reorganized I could provide a better list for Deb so she would know what we had.

I'm happy to announce that that task has finally been done. With the help of my oldest niece Emily we spent a major part of a Saturday unpacking the books, sorting and repacking them. We used five of the eight large totes the books were stored in and we purchased eight smaller size totes. We redid the inventory sheets and created a list for Deb. I condensed the list down and you will find it with this newsletter. I would like everyone to know what we have in our library. Maybe it will entice some of you to come to our next stevne and take a closer look.

Speaking of our next stevne, I will close with letting you all know that it will be held at the Best Western in New Ulm, MN. Thanks everyone and Happy Holidays.

***Julie Clauson***



# Romerikslaget and Solørlag America Joint 2019 Stevne

## Notes from our 2019 Stevne

Our 2019 Annual Romerikslaget/Solørlag Stevne was held in Willmar, MN at the Best Western Plus Hotel & Conference Center from September 11-14. We had 32 participants from Romerikslaget. Solørlag members **LaVonne Hookom and Andy Berg** had worked hard planning the schedule, and it turned out to be a wonderful stevne once again.

We started out with opening of registration and genealogy. **Elaine Hasleton** gave a presentation on Swedish/Finnskog research. This was followed by a presentation by **Rod Kurth** on “Digital Archives of Norway” where Rod talked about changes with the archives. Bygdelag boards met for their board meetings.

On Thursday, Opening Session welcomed us with singing anthems, introductions and show & tell, and the required Norwegian jokes for entertainment! The Hospitality Room opened with wonderful Norwegian treats.

**Dean Urdahl** talked about “Dakota War Events Near Willmar” with lots of gripping stories about Norwegian families in the 1862 war. The bus tour following his presentation, visiting some of the areas he mentioned.

People not on the bus tour watched the movie, “The 12th Man”, about a Norwegian resistance fighter fleeing from the Gestapo during WWII. On the bus tour, stops included the **Kandiyohi County Historical Museum**, the Guri Endesen Memorial at **Vikor Church**, and the **Pioneer Log Church/Interpretive Center/Cabin**, which is a replica of the original Norway Lake Church (1868), built similarly to our Norwegian ancestor’s churches. We toured **Sibley Park** with naturalist **Kelsey Olson**, who shared stories of Norwegian immigrants.

Thursday evening we were entertained with **Greg Harp’s** photographs of Kandiyohi County, and an open mike, where people told jokes, shared stories, & played harmonicas!

On Friday vendors exhibited their goods including hardanger, rosemal, mosaics, and wood crafts.

**Barb Levin**, author of “Old Norway Reminiscences”, shared stories of local Norwegian immigrants.

**Lowell Torkelson** showed his woodworking. He’s one talented guy, who obviously loves what he does.

**Larry Odin Opseth**, author of “Homesteader’s Hopes” talked about his family’s homesteading.

At First Time Attendee Luncheon, we met new members, and members who were attending their first stevne.

**Earl Knutson** gave us a presentation on “Scandinavian Culture in Modern Minnesota” followed by the lag Annual Meetings and Election. At our meeting, we had officers elected for terms as follows: Vice President for Membership: **Susan Waldera**, Secretary: **Eunice Helgeson**, Director: **Chris Falteisek**, Director: **Mike Miller**. **Bill Naseth** was elected to fill the remaining term for **Linda Curtis**.

We voted to donate \$500 to the Bibliotek of Norway House in honor of **Jon Pederson**, who was integral to it’s formation. All bygdelag will be able to use the Bibliotek for storage of their genealogy materials. The Bibliotek will have temperature-controlled storage available for our precious materials.

At 4:00 pm the Silent Auction closed with lots of last minute bids. Romerikslaget members were very generous with their donations of items this year and we made \$402 toward our genealogy account. Thank you!

Group photos were followed by our Banquet, where many wore either bunads or Norwegian sweaters. We were entertained by **Sound Image Barbershop Quartet**, who made us laugh and even sing along.

Saturday started with a Memorial Service to remember those who have died during the year.

**Lois Mackin** presented “Beginning DNA”, and explanation of DNA testing and what kind of test to use.

After the closing luncheon we said goodbye to our friends once again. It was another fantastic stevne with so many great experiences. Next year we will be in New Ulm September 16-19, 2020. We’re hoping you will join us!

**Mary Gross**, Romerikslaget Treasurer

# Romerikslaget and Solørlag America Joint 2019 Stevne



## Membership News

### *In Memoriam*

#### **Julian O. Sandsness**

Romerikslaget i Amerika charter member Julian O. Sandsness passed away September 28, 2019 at the age of 91. He was one of the three key players in the founding of Romerikslaget i Amerika. In 1989 when he was in Norway, he sought genealogy help from Bjørg Holúm. Bjørg, who knew Priscilla Sorkness, contacted her and said, "Why don't you have a Romerikslag in America?" Julian was on the planning committee and was a Director 1990-1992.

#### **Jon R. Pederson**

A memorial service for Jon R. Pederson, an active individual in the Norwegian-American community, was held at Mindekirken October 13. Jon passed away unexpectedly on August 29. Jon served on the Norway House Board of Directors and was former Board Chairman. He was active in the Bygdelag, and many other organizations. He was "larger than life" in his passion for all things Norwegian. Memorial donations may be made to the following organizations: Concordia College Language Vilages, Norway House or the Northern Star Council Boy Scouts of America.



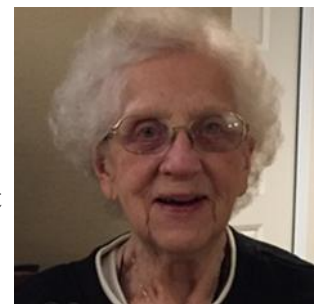
#### **James Mehl**

James Bernard Mehl (Jim) passed away on July 31, 2019. He celebrated 80 years of life and 57 years marriage to his wife Joan. He proved to be an optimist and an outlier to the very end, dying peacefully in bed surrounded by family. Jim was an Emeritus Professor of Physics, retired from the University of Delaware, in the field of acoustics. He served as Department Chair and Associate Dean for Research. Since 1999, he lived on Orcas Island in Washington State. He is survived by his wife Joan, sons Nathan and Bernard, grandchildren Jeremy, Justin and Solana and siblings John, Dorothy, Mary, Barb and Richard. Jim was a member of Romerikslaget, attended stevner and occasionally wrote a book review article for the newsletter.



#### **Lucille Langheid**

Lucille Jeanette (Jensen) Langheid, 93, of Grand Forks, ND, passed away May 3, 2019. She was born on December 17, 1925, in Grand Forks, the daughter of Gustav and Marie Jensen. As a longtime member and cultural director at the Sons of Norway, she made lefse and celebrated Syttende Mai. She was an award-winning Rosemaler, and a founding member of the Nordland Rosemaler's Association. She taught classes and sold her art at the Norsk Hostfest and the Nordic Fest in Decorah, IA. Genealogy was a passion, tracing her ancestry, as a member of the Gudbrandsdals Lag and the Romerike Lag. Survived by her children, Gary Langheid and Shelley (Langheid) Bares, grandchildren, Tonya (Chan) Harries, Amanda (Jason) Amble, great-grandchildren Annika, Lukas and Isaak Harries, Liam and Brody Amble. Preceded in death by her husband Olger, daughter Terry, great-grandchildren Emma, Braeden and Lauren Amble, brother Elroy Jensen and sister Alice Seaverson. Interment at Bygland Cemetery.



*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

## Lag Officers and Directors

### President • Julie A. Clauson (2018-2021)

22 14th Ave. S.W., New Brighton, MN 55112  
651-633-3600; email jollyjac@aol.com

### V. P. for Membership • Susan Waldera (2019-2022)

N6062 N Skutley Rd., Taylor, WI 54659  
715-662-2661; email LSWALDERA@centurytel.net

### V. P. for Genealogy • Deb Jarvar (2017-2020)

9405 Murphy Ln., Eau Claire, WI 54703  
715-874-6678; email djarvar@wwt.net

### Secretary • Eunice Helgeson (2019-2022)

5541 Woodlawn Blvd., Minneapolis, MN 55417  
612-724-7202; email EuniceHelgeson@aol.com

### Treasurer • Mary Gross (2018-2021)

401 S. 1st St. #1822, Minneapolis, MN 55401  
507-640-1417; email maryfrancesgross@gmail.com

### Director • Bev Slettehaug (2017-2020)

5701 Orchard Ave. N., Crystal, MN 55429  
763-535-3616

### Director • Mary Baumgartner (2017-2020)

433 E. Maple St., River Falls, WI 54022  
715-425-7117; email baumgam@yahoo.com

### Director • Chris Falteisek (2019-2022)

643 35th St. W., Hastings, MN 55033  
715-529-7340; email chrisfalteisek@gmail.com

### Director • Norma Kjenstad Barnes (2018-2021)

4902 S. Oxbow Ave. #205, Sioux Falls, SD 57106  
605-496-8632; email nkwbarnes@yahoo.com

### Director • William Naseth (2019-2020)

1009 East Ave., Red Wing, MN 55066  
651-388-8230; email wnaseth@gmail.com

### Director • Alberta Rupert (2018-2021)

220 N. Ilwaco Rd., River Falls, WI 54022  
715-425-7069; email Bertlr@hotmail.com

### Director • Michael Miller (2019-2022)

511 Madison St., Apt. 1, Anoka, MN 55303  
763-370-9249; email miclesmil@yahoo.com

### Past President • Joel Botten

1314 Pine Pointe Crv., St. Peter, MN 56028  
507-351-6712; email joelbotten@gmail.com

### Newsletter Editor • Dorothy Mehl

2111 E. North Crescent Ave., Spokane, WA 99207  
509-489-3868; email DorothyMehl112@msn.com

### Historian • Julie A. Clauson

Facebook Administrators • Norma Kjenstad Barnes and  
Chris Falteisek

Past Presidents: Priscilla Sorknes†, Andreas Jordahl  
Rhude, Cathryn Berntson Huntsman†, Earl Grefsrud†, Ei-  
leen Gulbranson†, Marcia Hamilton†, Joel Botten

## Website:

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

[www.fellesraad.com](http://www.fellesraad.com)

Join Romerikslaget i Amerika.

Romerikslaget i Amerika is a Norwegian American association.

## Romerikslaget i Amerika

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

Name (1): \_\_\_\_\_

Lag ancestral area: \_\_\_\_\_  
(from listing on front page of newsletter)

Name (2): \_\_\_\_\_

Lag ancestral area: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

### Dues:

Individual \$15.00 \_\_\_ New \_\_\_ Renewal

Household (2 person maximum) \$20 \_\_\_ New \_\_\_ Renewal  
and outside the USA if newsletters are emailed rather than mailed.

Norway/Canada (if newsletters are mailed) \$20 \_\_\_ New \_\_\_ Renewal

(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 2020. Enclosed is my check.

**Payable to: Romerikslaget**

**Mail form & check to:**

Susan Waldera  
N6062 N Skutley Rd  
Taylor, WI 54659

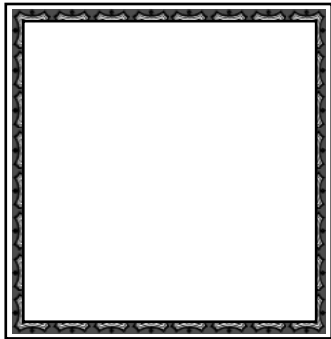
**Romerikslaget News** is the official publication of Romerikslaget i Amerika and is published each March/Jul/Nov. Members receive the newsletter, step-by-step registration packet, access to records of Norwegian government and church records, Membership Directory and the help of our genealogist.

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.

Postmaster: if undeliverable  
Return to:  
2111 E North Crescent  
Spokane, WA 99207

### *How to Have a God Jul*

We Norwegians love our nisse but we have learned to treat them with caution. They are loyal and can be helpful and mischievous. They can appear and disappear.



Portrait of an invisible nisse.



Rare Sighting of a Nisse sleeping after eating.

Some nisse live with people. They help take care of the animals and work on the land and bring success to the family. If you give the nisse rice porridge topped with lots of butter, sugar and cinnamon on Christmas Eve, the nisse will be happy. But if you don't believe in the nisse and don't give him his rice porridge, the nisse may play a trick like stealing clothing or switching sugar with salt, or he might even leave if he gets angry enough.

**So if you want a God Jul, make sure your nisse has a happy Christmas!**