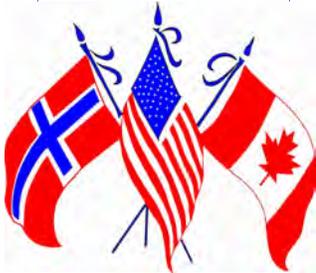


TeleNews



**News for Descendants of Emigrants
from the Telemark region in Norway**

Volume XX, Number 2
September 2013

Published by
Telelaget of America

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Greetings from the President

The 2013 7-Lag Stevne held from Thursday, July 11 to Saturday, July 13 at the Holiday Inn & Suites in St. Cloud, Minnesota was very successful. Congratulations to Anne Sladky, stevne coordinator and the Hadeland Lag for the excellent program; top-notch entertainment; highly-regarded tour options; and vendor displays and genealogical assistance. With 72 of our members in attendance Telelaget had the most attendees of any of the seven lag. Four Telelaget members made presentations related to the program theme, "Norwegian-Americans in the Civil War." Gene Estensen of Hudson, Florida presented "The 15th Wisconsin Regiment"; Torbjørn Greipsland of Askim, Norway spoke about "Norwegian-Americans in the Civil War"; Dr John F. Kirn, Jr. of Midlothian, Virginia presented "The Homestead Act" and "Origins of the Civil War"; and Anne Sladky of Walker, Minnesota presented "Norwegians in the Confederacy."

As has been our practice in recent years, we have held Telelaget's annual meeting during the last day of the stevne. [The minutes of the annual meeting are shown on page 6.] At our annual meeting we elect or

re-elect three members to the board. Several years ago the board established a change to the by-laws in which board members were limited to serving two consecutive 3-year terms. This was an attempt to get new perspectives and to enable more people to serve on our board. The down side of the by-law change is that some of our very productive leaders no longer serve on the board. This year, three long-term members: **Shelley Jerviss, Darrel Johnson** and **Elaine Nordlie** were not eligible for re-election. Shelley, school librarian from Houston, MN, has been on the board for 21 years. She has served as treasurer; membership chair; secretary; and as Telesoga co-editor. Darrel, a retired 3M engineer from Sebekka, MN, has served on the board for 15 years; as genealogist; and as vice president. Elaine, a retired elementary music teacher from Dassel, MN, has served on the board for 14 years including as president; as vice president; as TeleNews editor; and as tour director for our Telemark tours in 2002, 2007 and 2012. Fortunately, Shelley, Darrel and Elaine will continue to serve Tele-

laget. Shelley will coordinate the distribution and sales of our major publications; Darrel will serve as genealogist; and Elaine will serve as a resource in a variety of capacities including assisting with future Telemark tours and mentoring new board members.

On behalf of all our members I wish to express a debt of gratitude to Shelley, Darrel, and Elaine for their dedicated service to Telelaget of America.

Mange hilsner,
John Haugo
President

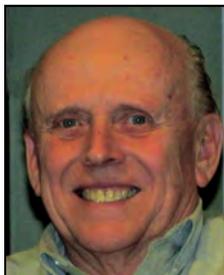


Former board members: Darrel Johnson, Elaine Nordlie, Shelley Jerviss

Telelaget's Web site:
www.telelaget.com

Johnsons and Mathison Elected to Board of Directors

Carol and Neil Johnson, and Judith Mathison were elected to the Board of Directors of Telelaget of America at the July 13, 2013 annual meeting in St. Cloud, MN, held at the conclusion of 2013 7-Lag *Stevne*.



Carol and Neil, who are husband and wife, live in Madison, WI. They have been active members of Telelaget since 1994. They participated in the 1997 Telemark

tour and have attended most of the *stevner* over the last twenty years. They have made four trips to the Telemark region of Norway. Carol has written a number of articles for *Telesoga*. Her career was in the commercial banking industry. After retiring several years ago she has kept busy volunteering at her church and Meriter Hospital. Her interest in all-things Norwegian started when her future father-in-law told her about the Rose-maled chest his grandparents brought from Telemark. The trunk has had a place of honor in the Johnson home for 47 years. She does genealogical research for families from Telemark that settled in Dane County, Wisconsin.

Neil grew up in Madison where he has lived his entire life except for two years on an aircraft carrier while in the U.S. Navy. After being discharged from the Navy he received an associate degree in mechanical design. Neil worked for 35 years in the manufacturing engineering

department of a medical equipment company. He retired in 2006 from the current owner GE Healthcare. He and Carol enjoy sharing their family history with their three sons, three grandsons and a granddaughter. As board members Carol and Neil's hope is to broaden Telelaget members' knowledge of Telemark culture.



Judith Mathison was born and raised in Wauwatosa, WI, a suburb of Milwaukee. She attended St. Olaf College with a major in German. After college she worked for a German organization in Bonn-Bad Godesberg, Germany for 18 months. For a good portion of the last 30 years, Judith and her husband have operated a manufacturing company founded by

her parents, Mathison Metalfab, Inc., that specializes in close-tolerance custom light-gauge metal fabrication. Last summer they sold the business and retired. All of Judith's ancestors immigrated to the United States in the middle years of the 1800s. Judith's interest in her Norwegian heritage is manifested in several ways. She enjoys Hardanger embroidery, which has become a favorite pastime over the last few years. She has had a life-long interest in her genealogy that has peaked in the last three years when she has begun research to learn more about her ancestors and their lives. Recently, Judith returned from a trip to Norway that included visits to the areas, and in some cases the ancestral family farms. Her unique heritage-related interest is that she raises three Norwegian Fjord Horses on their farm. Judith and her husband have a son who lives in St. Paul. A younger son passed away in 2008.

Norway House Achieves First Phase

Norway House, with its Norwegian-American Cultural and Business Center project envisioned as a meeting place for Norwegian-Americans in Minnesota, has found a home in Minneapolis. The nonprofit organization announced the purchase of the Wings Financial Building at 913 East Franklin Avenue in Minneapolis. The news was released on Friday, May 17, the *Syttende Mai*. The 12,000-square-foot Wings Financial Building, built in 2004, will serve as the Norway House Education Center. The building, which is adjacent to Mindekirken - The Norwegian Lutheran Memorial Church, will be the first phase of the Norway House project. The Wings Building was paid for as part of an ongoing \$10 million capital campaign that will also be used to buy additional land parcels and pay for construction costs. The second phase will include a new 15,000-square-foot conference and

event center to be built on the same block and adjacent to Mindekirken. It will be available for special events, weddings, and corporate and private events. Royal Norwegian Consul Thor Johansen proposed the idea of a Norway House in 2004 and enlisted more than 25 notable Norwegian-Americans to begin planning for the facility. Minnesota is home to more than 100 Norwegian-American organizations and has over 865,000 citizens of Norwegian descent.

The Norway House Board continues to raise funds from Norwegian-American organizations and individuals to support the completion of the Center. Please contact Norway House officials at www.norwayhouse.net or call 877-247-7439 to learn about the project and to participate in its support.

New Members

Barbara Charlson	Ames, IA
Carol Christianson	Bismarck, ND
Raymond and Sherry Einerson	Dodgeville, WI
Rebecca Gregerson	Bagley, MN

Pat Kraft-Chapman	Coalinga, CA
Nancy Skree Ramirez	Chino Hills, CA
Leah Roering	Sauk Rapids, MN

New Telelaget Fane

Just prior to the 2013 7-Lag Stevne our new *fane* (banner) arrived. The condition of the *fane* has been deteriorating in the last years and a decision was made by the board of directors to order a new one – to be made in Telemark. We liked our old *fane* so we wanted the same design but without the painting on the back, which is seldom seen. Elaine Nordlie coordinated the project to make a new *fane*. Harald Omnes, a Telemark board liaison, helped find the artist, Birger Bergland. Birger was a perfect match because his daughter Anne has a degree in textile designing. She sewed the *fane* and attached the cording. We are very pleased with the work done by Birger and Anne. The original beautiful silk Telelag of America *fane* was hand painted by Jens Høybo, an art teacher from Notodden, Telemark. The *fane* was a gift from Telelaget of Telemark, received during the 1937 tour, which was the 100th anniversary of the first immigration from Telemark and the 30th anniversary of Telelaget of America.

The *fane* was not mentioned in any reports from that fall's convention held in Minneapolis, but it is mentioned the following year, with a picture, from the Lake Mills,

Iowa *stevne* in 1938. That was exactly 75 years ago. It was remarkable in other ways – the mass meeting was conducted for the first time in English. The 75 year old *fane* has been displayed at all *stevner* since 1938. Hopefully, Telelaget can also display this new *fane* for 75 years.

Pictured on the front of the *fane* is Gaustoppen and words from the poet Vinje: "No ser eg atter slike fjell og dalar" ("Now I see again such mountains valleys.")



Wefald Receives Viking Award

On June 20, 2013, Norway House and more than 200 people enjoyed the 10th Annual Midtsummer Celebration at Interlachen Country Club in Edina, MN. Three extraordinary Norwegian-Americans were presented with Norway House's highest honor, the Going Viking Award. It was presented to the Honorable Lorie Skjerven Gildea, Dr. Lloyd Svendsbye and Dr. Jon Wefald. Wefald is a member of Telelaget who was featured in a *Telesoga* cover story in May 2010. He is an American educational leader whose career in higher education included 23 years as president of Kansas State University.

Eielson Featured in Telesoga

The life story of Carl Ben Eielson written by Dr. Lawrence Moe will be the cover story of the November 2013 edition of *Telesoga*. Born in Hatton, ND of Telemark ancestry, Eielson was an American aviator and explorer who was a pioneer of air travel in Alaska and the polar regions. Other articles include the second part of an article by Paul Anderson and Elaine Nordlie entitled, "Immigrant Travel Routes, Part II"; "The First Norwegians to Reach the Buffalo" by Anne Sladky; "A Christmas Letter" by Beverly Webster; and "Håvard Gibøen", a great Telemark fiddler, by Carol Johnson.

Telemark and Norway House Sign Agreement



Mayor Terje Johansen, Ellen Ewald, and Governor Mark Dayton

On June 17, 2013 a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Telemark County Council and Norway House of Minneapolis. The meeting between Tarje Riis Johansen, Mayor (Governor) of Telemark County; Ellen Ewald, representing Norway House; and Mark Dayton, Governor of Minnesota, was part of a trade mission to the Scandinavian countries. The agreement committed the parties to establish cooperation on regional economic development related to business development, tourism and education. During the 2012 Telemark Tour we met with Mayor Johansen. When setting up this meeting to discuss a memorandum of understanding, Governor Dayton's office referenced Johansen's meeting with our Telelaget tour group last summer.

Membership Renewal

If the label on this issue of your *TeleNews* has a highlighted **2013** on it, this means that your Telelaget membership is expiring and that this is the last mailing of *TeleNews*. To ensure that your membership will continue, please renew before the end of the year. See page 5 for a copy of the membership application form.

Pictures from the 2013 Telelaget Stevne



Rachel Gorka, Telelaget Treasurer., registered stevne attendees from Telelaget of America



Dr. Verlyn Anderson, Hadeland Lag, served as master of ceremonies



Anne Sladky, 7-Lag Stevne coordinator, received certificate of appreciation



The Furulenken spel og danselag from Gran, Lunner, and Ringerike performed for stevne participants.



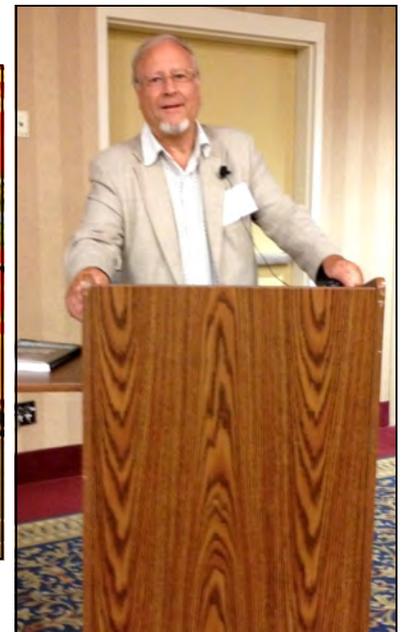
Rev. Kristin Sundt from Mindkirken Lutheran Memorial Church greeted stevne attendees



Dr. John Kirn spoke on "Origins of the Civil War"



Torbjørn Greipsland and Dr. Ham Peterson, renowned Mayo Clinic orthopedic surgeon



Torbjørn Greipsland spoke on "Norwegian-Americans in the Civil War"

Pictures from the 2013 Telelaget Annual Meeting



Elaine Nordlie received certificate of appreciation from Board



Alice Kirm gave her annual appeal for Telesoga articles



Dr. Randy and Mary Kaye Twito among annual meeting participants



Birger and Anne Bergland with the new fane that they constructed.



Fane storage box designed and constructed by Bill Hoberg



Six Telelage members who participated in the tour of Huntsinger Gardens in St. Cloud

Membership Application Form for *Telelaget of America*

Name: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Associate Member or Spouse: _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State : _____ Zip : _____

E-mail : _____ Renewal: ____ New Membership: ____

Ancestor's Family Name[s]: _____ Ancestor's Farm[s]: _____

Membership Dues For Individual or Household [January 1 to December 31]:

- One-Year Membership: ____ U.S.A. = \$12 ____ Non-U.S.A. = \$14 ____ Norway = NOK 85
- Four-year Membership: ____ U.S.A. = \$42 ____ Non-U.S.A. = \$50 ____ Norway = NOK 340
- Lifetime Membership: ____ U.S.A. = \$175 ____ Non-U.S.A. = \$180 ____ Norway = NOK 1050

Make check payable to: Telelaget of America

Mail check and completed form to: Joran Olson, P.O. Box 88645, Sioux Falls, SD 57109

Note: Use a separate sheet of paper or a photocopy if you wish to save this page.

Minutes of 2013 Telelaget Annual Meeting

The 2013 annual meeting of Telelaget of America was scheduled to begin at 12:00, 13 July 2013 at the Holiday Inn Convention Center in St. Cloud, MN. The room venue was changed at the last minute to the Heritage Room due to a scheduling conflict. A total of 47 members attended the annual meeting. All members present signed in as they enjoyed their box lunches.

Telelaget president John Haugo opened the meeting by having a show of hands of members from various towns in Telemark. He then reviewed the meeting agenda and began the meeting with a review of the Telelaget of America mission statement. He noted that all of Telelaget's programs and goals related to achieving this mission.

Secretary's Report: The minutes from last year's meeting were published in the September 2012 edition of *TeleNews* newsletter. John encouraged members to address questions to the new secretary, Jim Oftelie. Phil Midtvedt moved and Shelly Jerviss seconded the motion to accept the minutes as submitted. The motion passed with a voice vote.

Treasurer's report: Treasurer Rachel Gorka reported that total revenue for the fiscal period 01 July 2012 to 30 June 2013 was \$10,036 with memberships accounting for \$3,694. Operating expenses were \$10,036 for the year. Telelaget's bank accounts totaled \$24,095 with \$5,125 in checking, \$6,013 and 2,219 in two savings accounts. The CD balance is \$10,738. There is NOK 14,549.74 in the Norway account. Darrell Johnson moved to accept the report as submitted, Mary Cross seconded. The motion passed.

Membership Report: Membership Joran Olson reported that Telelaget now has 448 members, 351 family units, 44 new members and 39 who have discontinued membership. Joran asked that those with questions about their membership status to contact Jim Oftelie or Rachel Gorka.

Genealogist Report: Darrel Johnson explained for the members present the "Coming Back Home" joint project with Telemark to assist family members connecting with relatives in Telemark and elsewhere. The information link is found on the Telelaget website:

<http://www.telelaget.com/genealogy/home/index.htm>

Webmaster's Report: In the absence of webmaster Anne Sladky, President Haugo highlighted her report on Web site activity. Over the last year there has been an average of 55 unique hits per day. He noted that copies of *TeleNews* are available on the Web site. The Board of Directors decided to send a printed copy of *TeleNews* to all members as well as an email copy to those with email addresses. Of the membership present in the room, many indicated a preference for the email copy even if a printed copy was mailed.

Telesoga Report: Alice Kirn, editor of *Telesoga*, re-

quested for all members to submit stories and histories to her for publication in *Telesoga*. She said that recent cover stories about famous Norwegian-Americans such as Dr. Hamlet Peterson were especially popular.

Publications Report: Shelley Jerviss, Publications Chair, summarized the current inventory of printed material and promotional items. She stated that 66 copies of one or another of the Telemark to America Series had been sold during the past year. Our Web site contains the order form for purchase. <http://www.telelaget.com/publications/index.htm>

Nominating Committee: Joran Olson, chair of the nominating committee, introduced the nominees for open seats on the board: Carol Johnson from Madison, Wisconsin; Neil Johnson from Madison, Wisconsin (husband to Carol); and Judy Mathison from Waukasha, Wisconsin

A call for nominations from the floor was made, none were made. Joran Olson moved to accept the list of nominations and elect to the board. Rachel Gorka seconded. The motion passed.

2012 Norway Tour Elaine Nordlie reminded everyone to review the picture albums and records so beautifully compiled and displayed by Alice Kirn. Twelve of the 45 people present on the tour were hikers. Recounted for the general audience was the remarkable opportunity to sail on the replica of the 1825 sailing ship *Restauration*, which carried 50 Norwegian immigrants on a 3-month journey from Stavanger to New York.

Citations of appreciation were presented to outgoing board members Elaine Nordlie, Shelly Jerviss and Darrel Johnson. Motion to approve was made by Phil Midtvedt, seconded by Jim Skree to approve the resolutions associated with these citations. The motion passed.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Deanna Zentgraf, seconded by John Kirn. The motion passed. The meeting ended at 1:15 p.m.

Following the business meeting, Elaine Nordlie introduced to the group the new Telelaget *fane* (organization identifying banner) and told about the process of developing the *fane*. She also commended the work of Bill Hoberg in constructing a box for storage and transportation of the *fane*.

Elaine had arranged a visit to the Munsinger Gardens in St. Cloud in the afternoon following the meeting. Many of members participated in the visit to the beautiful gardens.

Respectfully submitted,

James Oftelie

Treasurer

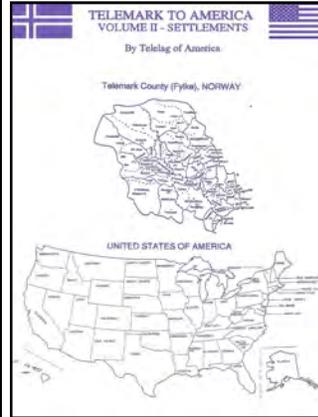
Telelaget Publications

Telemark to America, Volume I – Emigration



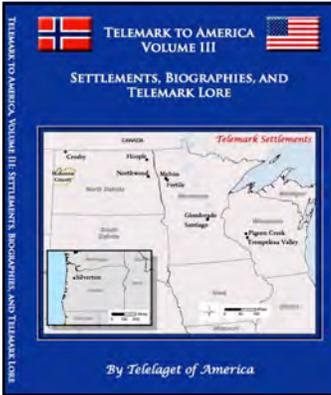
In 1837 the first Telemark emigrants set off for America beginning a stream of thousands starting a new life in a strange land. They retained a love for Telemark that has been passed down through the generations. This volume is a collection of articles written both by authors from Telemark and Americans with roots in Telemark, as well as translation of articles written long ago. It tells as complete but concise a story of Telemark emigration as possible and gives insight into the country that the immigrants left behind.

Telemark to America, Volume II—Settlements



Volume II is rich with settlement history from Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota. All the chapters are translations from the early *Telesoga* written by Torkel Oftelie. Torkel visited most of the Telemark settlements in the above mentioned states between the years of 1907 to 1926. The first issue of *Telesoga*, published in 1909, contained the first settlement history. Torkel documented not only names of those living in these settlements, but also the stories of their ancestors - the first settlers in these areas.

NEW! Telemark to America, Volume III— Settlements, Biographies, and Telemark Lore



Volume III of the *Telemark to America* series was published and released in July, 2011. The book is divided into three parts: articles on settlement history, emigrant biographies, and Telemark folklore. Much of the content was provided by Torkel Oftelie where he spent over twenty years visiting the settlements and documenting the lives of the Telemark emigrants. Torkel was concerned about the rich Telemark cultural heritage not be left behind. As with the other volumes, it is a valuable resource in searching for your Telemark ancestors, farms, and customs.

"A Year on Haugo Farm" by Ingebjorg Draugedal



This is the English version of the book in which the author - who now lives in Kviteseid, Telemark, Norway - tells of her life as a young girl in 1945, growing up under Nazi occupation on a farm in Telemark that was still as self-sufficient as those our emigrant ancestors left in the 1800's. The book recounts how they shared the work, the hardships and the pleasures of living on a close-knit family farm. It describes in detail the practical work that was done on the farm.

ORDER FORM

- ___ Copies of **Telemark to America, Volume I-Emigration**
 @ \$20.00 + \$3.00 S&H = \$23.00 or NOK 125 + NOK 102 S&H = NOK 227 _____
- ___ Copies of **Telemark to America, Volume II-Settlements**
 @ \$20.00 + \$3.00 S&H = \$23.00 or NOK 125 + NOK 102 S&H = NOK 227 _____
- ___ Copies of **Telemark to America, Volume III—Settlements, Biographies, and Lore**
 @ \$20.00 + \$3.00 S&H = \$23.00 or NOK 125 + NOK 102 S&H = NOK 227 _____
- ___ Sets of **Telemark to America, Volume I, II, and III** **SPECIAL OFFER!**
 @ \$50.00 + \$8.00 S&H = \$58.00 or NOK 250 + NOK 102 S&H = NOK 352 _____
- ___ Copies of **A year at Haugo farm** **NEW PRICE!**
 @ \$20.00 + \$2.50 S&H = \$22.50 _____

Total = _____

Name: _____
 Address: _____

Mail Order to : **Shelley Jerviss**
P.O. Box 292
Houston, MN 55943

Note: These publications, Telesoga CDs, and various Telelaget 100th Anniversary Commemorative items may also be ordered through our Web site, www.telelaget.com.

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