



NEWS FOR DESCENDANTS OF EMIGRANTS FROM THE TELEMAR REGION IN NORWAY

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Come to Austin, MN to the 7-Lag Stevne July 13-16, 2016

The 2016 *Sju-Lag Stevne* will be held at the Holiday Inn and Conference Center, 1701 4th Street NW, Austin, MN, July 13-16. This is the 30th year that seven *bygdelag* — Teleslag, Land, Numedalslaagen, Hadeland, Ringerike-Drammen Districts, Sigdal, and Totenlag — have met together to share fellowship as well as event costs.

The theme is *1916: The Cultural Dilemma*. Many *bygdelag* were organized during the WWI. It was important to Norwegian-Americans that their cultural identity remained intact and their strong ties to the areas where they had lived in Norway were maintained. Although the United States didn't enter WWI until 1917, its citizens were stirred by the massive food effort spearheaded by Herbert Hoover, and a wave of patriotism swept



the country. At the 2016 *stevne* we will take a look back and learn about the strong forces that created a cultural dilemma for the proud Americans who still loved being Norwegian.

Tours will be Wednesday and Friday. Thursday will begin with the Opening Session, full class schedules and genealogy. A Talent Show of *stevne* participants will be held in the evening—a first at 7 Lag! Friday will have classes, genealogy, a bus tour, and in the evening the *stevne* banquet and *bunad* parade. Saturday concludes with individual *lag* activities.

Lodging, tour and class information is inside this issue and is also available on the website www.7lagstevne.com. You can register by mail using the enclosed form, or online at the above site or at www.telelaget.com.



**ATTENTION:
Those With Talent**

At the 7-Lag Stevne we will be holding a talent show on Thursday evening July 14th.

Do you have a talent to share? This is open to all who attend the *stevne*. Simply send your name, *lag* name and your talent to Peg Schellin at pnschellin3@wi.rr.com.

Please keep your performance to no more than 10 minutes so we have time for all that wish to participate.



- Telelaget of America is a 501(c)(3) organization. Your donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. A bequest is a simple way to support Telelaget of America and ensure that the lag can continue to celebrate our Telemark Norwegian heritage.
- Consider gifting a membership in Telelaget of America as a way to introduce a friend or family member to our Lag.
- Thrivent Choice Dollars can be directed to Telelaget of America! If you're an eligible Thrivent Financial member and have Choice Dollars available to direct, call 800-847-4836 and say "Thrivent Choice" or go to www.thrivent.com and click on "Making a Difference" for more information or to direct Choice Dollars,

7-Lag Stevne Information

Speakers and Entertainment

Dr. Daran Olson, associate professor of history at Indiana University East, will present the Opening Session. His book "Vikings Across the Atlantic: Emigration and the Building of a Greater Norway, 1825-1945" was published in 2012.

Classes will include "Transplanting the Norwegian Lutheran Church in America" by Verlyn Anderson, "Norwegians in Science" and "The Good Ship Hannah Parr" by C. Marvin Lang, "From Norwegian to Norwegian-American: Acculturation and Assimilation" by Lori Ann Lahlum, "Storytelling" by Norma Knapp, "The Power of Silver: Traditional Norwegian Jewelry" by Jennifer Kovarik, "Acanthus Wood Carving" by Jack Holmen, "Newspaper Research for more than Deaths and Births" by Roger Lonning, and "Flying: Over Sands, Over Seas, Over the Poles" by Marilyn Somdahl.

Banquet Entertainment will be by "Just Friends." Their music includes spiritual, patriotic, and some barbershop music besides a variety of old favorites.

Tour I—Wednesday in Austin

A pre-stevne bus tour will leave the Holiday Inn convention hotel promptly at 12 noon Wednesday, July 13, and return at 4 PM. Have lunch before you depart. Included on this Austin tour is a NEW Spam Museum. Our *stevne*-goers will be one of the first groups to visit this facility which opens this summer. The interactive tour features audios, videos and displays depicting the rich history of Hormel Foods. It is educational and fun for all ages, and includes the gift shop.

Next, visit to Mower County Historical Society. This museum has artifacts and historical items in 16 buildings with such items as vintage firefighting equipment, horse-drawn carriages, a steam locomotive, caboose, one-room school, a Civil War flag and more. A special WWII exhibit is on display.

The bus tour concludes with a tour of the city of Austin with a step-on guide. The cost is \$25 per person and the group will gather at 11:45 AM at the entrance of the Holiday Inn.

Tour II—Friday to Albert Lea

The Tour of Albert Lea, MN, is Friday, July 15. from 8-12 noon. It will be limited to the first 45 people who register and it will include the Freeborn County Historical Museum and Pioneer Village, one of the top museums in Minnesota. The village consists of a church, school house, other stores and farm machinery. It also houses showcases two personalities: Eddie Cochran, the Rock & Roll legend, and Marion Ross, the "Mrs. Cunningham" of TV's "Happy Days."

Next is a visit to the farm and store of Alpaca of Oak Knoll Farms. You can enjoy interacting with the alpacas and Jean and Ed will give some history and tell how their wool is used.

A city of Albert Lea tour with a step-on guide will conclude this 8 AM to noon tour Friday. The cost is \$25 and the group of 45 will gather at the hotel entrance at 7:45 AM.

Reserve Austin Motels Now

Ask for "Norwegian *Stevne*" rate for motel rooms blocked for the 7-Lag *Stevne*, beginning 7/13/16.

Holiday Inn and Conference Center, 507-433-1000; 1701 - 4th St. NW, Austin, MN (freeway exit 178A)
Reserved July 13-16, \$115 +tax, per room per day; Breakfast Voucher \$10 (includes a drink); reserve by June 10.

Days Inn, 507-433-8600; 700— 16th Ave NW, (next to Holiday Inn, exit 178A)
\$73 + tax, per room per day before June 13. Includes continental breakfast

Americinn Lodge & Suites, 507-437-7337; West of Holiday Inn at exit 178A
\$100 + tax or \$90 w/AARP or AAA per room per day before June 12. Hot breakfast bar.

Rodeway Inn & Suites, 507-433-9254; 805—21st St. NE (exit 180 B, 1 mile east of Holiday Inn)
2-bed rooms @ \$75 + tax per room/per day, 1-bed rooms @ \$65 + tax per rm/per day before June 1.
Continental breakfast.

Econo Lodge, 507-437-7774; Exit 175, 2 mi W of Holiday Inn. Reserve by June 12.
Double bed rooms @\$80 + tax per room/per day, King room @\$70 +tax per room/per day. Continental breakfast.

Telelaget of America Annual Meeting along with a visit to 6 Mile Grove Church will be held on Saturday, July 16. We will be taking a field trip to the 6 Mile Grove Church near Lyle, MN, about 20 miles southeast of Austin. The church was organized on November 19, 1859 and was one of the first Scandinavian Lutheran churches in Mower County. Meet at the Conference Center at 9:00 a.m. to carpool to the church. We'll return to Austin and hold our Annual Meeting and lunch at approximately 11:30 a.m. Check the 7-Lag website or the registration table at the *stevne* for the location of the lunch and meeting. The cost for the lunch will be \$16, which will include a sandwich, two sides, dessert and a beverage. The trip, lunch and meeting will be a wonderful opportunity for members to get to know each other better. For the latest updates on the *stevne*, go to the website www.7lagstevne.com.



Telelaget of America is the host for the 2017 Sju-Lag Stevne, and plans are well underway! The theme for the *stevne* is "Sustain and Celebrate Our Legacy." We will gather on the campus of Luther College in beautiful Deborah, Iowa.

The *stevne's* success is dependent upon a network of volunteers. Please consider how you can share your talents and your time to help ensure that success.

We need volunteers in each of the following categories:

Registration — *Chair: Neil Johnson, Volunteers: Carol Johnson* — Plans location & table set-up; format registration form for newsletters and websites.

Welcome/Key-Note/Presentation Speakers — *Chair: Lila Burmeister* — Contact speakers, determine presentation needs;

Entertainment — *Chair: Jim Oftelie* — Secure entertainment typical of Norwegian culture,

secure sound equipment and other needs for performers.

Genealogy — *Chair: Carol Johnson, Volunteers: Jeff Huset, Neil Johnson* — Plan location and set up for genealogy room, determine equipment needs.

Tours — *Chair: OPEN* — Contract with possible tour venues (Vesterheim, Bily Clocks, Historic Decorah Tour, Herbjørg Gausta Tour, and/or others), set up transportation and/or provide maps as needed.

Housing — *Chair: Judy Mathison* — Contact college for dorms and townhouses, hotels and local homes for lodging prices and availability. Create list of options for newsletters and websites.

Advertising/Promotion — *Chair: OPEN* — Creatively engage in posting information and updates on websites; provide information to local area news and historically and culturally related organizations.

Banquet — *Chair: OPEN, Volunteers: Carol Johnson* — Work with staff of Luther College Catering for menu, set-up and serving. Takes care of table decorations and dining room setup.

Youth Programs and Recreation — *Chair: Elaine Nordlie, Volunteers: Anne Sladky* — Plan, organize and supply all needs for youth activities and area recreation options.

Stevne Brochure — *Chair: OPEN* — Design and produce *stevne* brochure and program.

Please consider volunteering in some capacity. If you have questions, or would like to serve on a committee, please contact Jim Oftelie, *Stevne* Chairperson, Elaine Nordlie or Lila Burmeister.

Coming Back Home

The "Coming Back Home" Project began as a way for members to connect with lost cousins in Norway prior to Telelaget's Centennial Tour to Norway in 2007.

Because of the great interest in this project, it was decided to continue to develop the database of information about the emigrants from Telemark. Through the project, members have been able to connect and share information about ancestors with long lost cousins on both sides of the ocean.

To see if your ancestors are in the database, or to submit your genealogy information to the project, go to our website www.telelaget.com and click on "Emigrant Database" in the left column. You do not need to be a member of Telelaget to submit data.



•**Telelaget of America** -- news and pictures related to Telemark and Telelaget

•**International Telemark** -- news about contemporary Telemark

•**Telemark Heritage & Genealogy** -- information on our heritage and genealogy.

You can access these sites by entering the name in the search field at the top of your Facebook page



Torkel Oftelie, co-funder of Telelaget and first editor of *Telesoga*, traveled throughout the Midwest documenting the lives of emigrants from Telemark. Since those beginnings, 8 others have edited the *Telesoga*, including Alice Kirm who retired from her position following the November 2015 issue. With this issue of the *TeleNews* and *Telesoga*, Lila Burmeister has taken over as editor. In the spirit of Torkel and those who followed him, we are intent in keeping the memory of our Telemark ancestry and heritage alive with submissions to the *Telesoga* from our members. Please submit your Telemark-related story! We are especially interested in the stories/history/reminiscences/achievements in the generations that have followed.

Basics for submitting an article are:

- Articles can be of any length but with a Telemark connection
- Submission deadlines are mid-March for the May issue and mid-September for the November issue
- Email the editor with your story or send it through the postal service. Don't forget pictures.
- If you have a story to tell, but aren't sure you have the skills to tell it very well, just write it up as best you can. We have several members in our lag who will help you "polish it."



Houston Stone Church Sesquicentennial

Cross of Christ Congregation will be celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the completion of their Pioneer Stone Church in rural Houston, Minnesota this summer.

The majority of the early membership was from West Telemark, primarily Vraadal, Friesdal, Mo, and Skafsaa. This little known architectural treasure is one of the few pioneer churches left in southeast Minnesota.

Celebrate with us on Sunday, August 28. For more information contact Shelley Jerviss at smjerv@goacentek.net



Herbjørn Gausta Exhibit in Harmony, MN

A display of paintings and drawings from the famed Telemark artist, Herbjørn Gausta are featured along with commentary from Gausta Historians are on display at the Harmony Visitor Center. The painting above is one of Gausta's entitled "Grace Before the Meal."

Gausta paintings are prominently displayed in many churches around southern Minnesota and northern Iowa. The Gausta family lived near Harmony and are buried in the Greenfield Cemetery. A tall *bautestein* (memorial stone) was erected at his grave by the Telelag.

A Gausta event is being planned for 2017. The Harmony Visitor Center is open 10 a.m.-4 p.m. (11-3 Sundays) More information is available on their website www.harmonymnhistory.org

Another UNESCO World Heritage Award for Norway

(written by David Nikel, used with permission)



The Rjukan/Notodden Industrial Heritage Site has been awarded UNESCO World Heritage status. The site includes hydroelectric power plants powered by the powerful natural waterfalls of the area, along with the transmission lines, factories, transport systems and towns.

Altogether the site demonstrates an outstanding record of life in the early 1900s: including technological, economic, social, aesthetic and cultural factors. The area is also home to the Vemork plant, which produced the heavy water that Hitler planned to use to develop a nuclear bomb during World War II.

The Rjukan/Notodden Industrial Heritage Site becomes the 8th Norwegian entry on the UNESCO list, and the 7th in the cultural category.



Welcome to these new members who have joined Telelaget since November 2015

- Gary Whitford Holey, Mnps. MN
- Kathy Mathiason, Milbank SD
- Janice Olson, Milbank SD
- William Allan & Karen Anderson
Maple Plain MN
- Kyler Glinz, Jamestown ND
- Eileen & Wayne Grundstrom,
White Bear Lake MN
- Delores (Dee) Christensen,
Somerset WI
- Carolyn Burkhart, Myrtle Creek OR
- Debby Hoppe, Falls Church VA
- Linda Kjerland, Mnpls. MN
- Lowell Lykken, Westlake Village CA
- Joann Ronningen, Pine Island MN
- David & Linda Thompson,
New Richmond WI
- Roger Thorstenson, Herndon VA
- Craig & Barb Kay, Dassel MN
- Edith Syftestad, Richland Cntr. WI
- Ramona Rayle, Ashburn VA
- Anne Budlong, Edina MN
- Scott Eastvold, Buffalo MN
- Terry Gustafson, Mnpls. MN
- Patricia Lehne, Bethel MN
- Elin Helene Normann,
Høydalsmo, Telemark
- Tara Wroblewski, St. Paul MN
- Candace Christianson, Bismark ND
- Trudy Loepsell, Apple Valley MN
- Christopher Lindell, Marion IA
- Kimberly Jordan, Springfield VA
- Audrey Severson, Ellsworth, WI
- John Bestul, Coleman WI
- Corinne Anderson Engstrand
Bloomington MN
- Carolyn A Johnson, Kiel WI
- Phil Strand, DeSoto TX
- James & Lesley Tilley, Moraga CA
- Cal Keesey, Carrollton TX



Do you receive emails from Telelaget? If not, perhaps

we don't have your correct email address! If you haven't given us your email, or it has recently changed, please contact our membership Chairperson, Judy Mathison at jmathison@sbcglob