

NHOH News

Volume 10 Number 1 Spring 2005

Published 3 times per year by: Nord Hedmark og Hedemarken Lag

Who Are We?

NHOH Lag includes the following districts and kommuner in our bygdelag:

District 1:

Nord-Østerdal:

Alvdal

Folldal

Os

Rendalen

Tolga

Tynset

District 2:

Sør-Østerdal:

Åmot

Elverum

Engerdal

Stor Elvedal

Trysil

District 3:

Hedemarken &

Hamar:

Furnes

Hamar

Løten

Nes

Ringsaker

Romedal

Stange

Vang

Hilsen Fra Presidenten:

My grandmother, Marit Streivang, from the Alvdal area of Hedmark, emigrated from Norway in May 1903 when she was 16. Exit records in Norway show that she and her mother and family of her older sister took the S.S. Montebello from Oslo to Kingston on Hull in England, and then embarked on S.S. Tunisian from Liverpool to Quebec (this 2nd leg was an 8-day voyage). Their final destination was Stanley, Wisconsin.

This winter I've been doing extensive research for friends who are Swedish and have discovered both similarities and differences in available records for Norwegian and Swedish genealogical research. One similarity are the records associated with emigration/immigration (parish records, police exit lists, and passenger lists). Even after considerable searching in a well-organized data set, I was unable to find a Swedish exit record for my friends' Grandmother, Hilda Marie Ingeborg Liljendahl who had come to U.S. as a youngster. Fortunately for us, as an adult, she had filled out the "1918 Alien Registration," (a 2-page form all Minnesotans who did not hold US citizenship were required to complete at time of WW I). On this form she had indicated she arrived in US on 14 July 1902 through the Port of "Quebeck".

Following this lead, I temporarily gave up on exit lists and arranged for an interlibrary

loan of the microfilm of Quebec Passenger Arrival lists for 1902 available from Canadian Genealogy Centre in Ottawa. They arrived in a week and I went to local library and rolled through the film of handwritten records looking for 11 year-old Hilda Liljendahl. In a couple hours, there she was!! The records revealed Hilda was traveling with her mother and older sister, just like my grandmother did later. The Liljendahl group left Liverpool on 2 July 1902 and arrived in Quebec on the 12th, destined for Brainerd, Minnesota.

And this is where serendipity comes in. I was amazed to discover that the steamship they took on the ocean crossing was the S.S. Tunisian, the same vessel that my Grandmother came on the following spring.

With 1400 souls on board, I know the chances are remote that my friends' Swedish grandmother curled up in the same bunk in steerage that my grandmother folded herself into 10 months later... but you can't convince me that it isn't true! Two young girls...headed for a new life and new adventures in America. I should have asked my grandmother about that voyage...but regretfully, I never did.

I hope you are all enjoying a winter of discovery and serendipity, as I am. And I look forward to seeing you all in Fargo on August 3-6 !!.

Dixie Hansen, Lag President

TRE LAG STEVNE 2005

The 2005 Tre Lag Stevne will be held at the Ramada Plaza Suites and Conference Center in Fargo, North Dakota, August 3-6, 2005. The theme this year will be "Fulfilling the Dream."

Tentatively, there will be a Tour/Picnic on Wednesday afternoon followed by a panel on local genealogical resources in the evening. On Thursday there will be vender displays, genealogy labs, and genealogy classes including use of computers. A visit to Hjemkost Center is being planned. Friday may include some concurrent sessions, opening ceremonies, keynote speaker talking about the Norwegians who settled in the Red River Valley, banquet and entertainment. Saturday will consist of lag annual meetings, additional speakers and a luncheon and closing ceremonies early afternoon.

The final schedule and registration materials will be sent to all members in the June NHOH NEWS. Updated information will also be available on our Lag Website: www.nhohlag.org

BOARD ACTIONS

At its meeting on March 5, 2005 the NHOH Board reviewed the Treasurer's Report with a balance of approximately \$5,800. It received several Elverum Bygdebokser, and discussed several strategies for recruiting new members and maintaining membership growth. Please see article elsewhere. It discussed and approved moving forward with development of a document, such as: "Highlights of the First Ten Years of NHOH Lag." The Madison contingent will continue to collect information and develop a format. We could use volunteers in this effort.

VELKOMMEN!!

We extend a hearty welcome to the following new members who chose to join our Nord Hedmark og Hedemarken Lag:

James & Susan Baird Clackamas, OR

Gregory A. Hanson Bloomington, MN

Please let us know how we can be of assistance to you!

MORE INFORMATION . . .

is available about our Lag on our Website at:
www.nhohlag.org

LAG OFFICERS/DIRECTORS

President: Dixie Hansen	(651)690-0872
V.Pres.: Ron Helstad	(507)895-9772
Secretary: Elaine Smiley	(608)767-2104
Treasurer: Joy Shong	(262)593-8242
Genealogist: John Reindl	(608)238-0393
NHOH Editor: Roland Krogstad	(608)238-6652
Directors: Mike Bovre	(608)277-1119
Eugene Nelson	(608)241-0251
Marilyn Sorensen	(651)633-1329
Past Pres. Gary M. Olson	(507) 282-1090



EAST WIOTA LUTHERAN CHURCH

The oldest Norwegian Lutheran Church in America still in use. Organized in 1844, building started 1847, completed 1851.

Norwegian-Americans by state

The 10 states with the most Norwegians:

1. Minnesota - 851,000
2. Wisconsin - 456,000
3. California - 436,000
4. Washington state - 368,000
5. North Dakota - 193,000
6. Illinois - 179,000
7. Iowa - 167,000
8. Oregon - 147,000
9. Texas - 119,000
10. South Dakota - 115,000

The 10 states with the top percentages of Norwegians:

1. North Dakota - 33% of the state's white population is of Norwegian ancestry
2. Minnesota - 20%
3. South Dakota - 17%
4. Montana - 12%
5. Wisconsin - 10%
6. Washington state - 8%
7. Iowa - 6%
8. Alaska - 6%
9. Oregon - 5%
10. Wyoming - 5%

Source: Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

From the Desk of the Genealogist

More donations

The lag is fortunate to have had several new donations. At last year's stevne, an attendee – who didn't give me his name – donated a disk of Rendal burials, for the period of 1829 –1900, prepared by the Registreringssentral for historiske data, Universitetet i Tromsø. We now have it available as a Microsoft Access database, with nearly 2,400 listings. Lag members, if you are looking for burial data for Rendal from 1829 to 1900, send me a note and I will be glad to look up the information !

A second donation to the lag was the *Årbok for Nord-Østerdalen 2004*. It was generously sent to us from Nordøsterdalsmuseet in Tynset. They have a great web page at <http://www.nordosterdalsmuseet.no> (in Norwegian only), showing a gallery of historical and genealogical photos, with links to photo collections. The museum has over 130,000 photos in their collection.

The Lag also received two donations from Shirley Schoenfeld for the Bardu kommune in Troms fylke. Shirley notes and many people from Tynset and Alvdal emigrated to Bardu and she donated both the *Jubilumsskrift, 1791-1991* and *Bardu. Et Tilbakeblik*, by P. M. Hasvold, published in 1924.

New web based sources of assistance

The Internet is becoming more and more valuable all the time for doing genealogy, and in this issue we focus on two pages that might be useful to you.

First is a web page that lists volunteers who own various bygdebøker and are willing to do searches for Norwegian ancestors. On the web at <http://www.rootsweb.com/~wgnorway/lookups.html>, there are listings for 13 volunteers for Hedmark, with bygdebøker for the following NHOH areas:

Brøttum
Engerdal
Romedal
Sollia
Stor-Elvdal
Tolga
Trysil
Tynset
Vang
Ytre Rendal

Øvre Rendal

Another new web page focuses on the US and Canadian homes of Norwegian emigrants from the 1800's. At <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~maggiebakke/ulvestad.html>, this site provides a translation of major sections of the first volume of *Nordmændene i Amerika*, which was published in 1907 by Martin Ulvestad and is 502 pages long, plus containing a map of early Norwegian settlements.

The translations are listed by state and Canadian provinces, and, for those states with large settlements, including individual descriptions of each county. The Minnesota write-up is nearly 60 pages long, with Wisconsin covering some 40 pages, followed by the Dakotas at 20 pages each.

Are you interested in finding cousins?

One of the things that the lag tries to highlight in our genealogical services is to find common ancestors for members through our cousin-finding database. But, this effort is only as good as the willingness of members to send in their family trees. So far, we have found nearly a dozen matches, but I am sure that we can find a lot more ! If you haven't done so already, won't you take a few minutes to either copy your existing family tree sheets or put one together and send it to me? We will both enter the information in our computer database as well as in our cousin-finding folders for use at the stevne this summer. To date, the database has about 2,400 ancestors from 100 members.

Med beste hilsen,

John Reindl, Lag Genealogist
4514 Gregg Road
Madison, WI 53705
reindl@chorus.net

From: NYHETER, Numendalslagen, February 2005

Ole was staggering home one night after spending the night in the local tavern. A minister saw him and offered to help him get home safely.

As they approached the house Ole asked him to step inside for a moment. He explained "I vant Lena to see who I been out with!"

GENEALOGICAL RESOURCES IN FARGO/MOORHEAD AREAS

By Blaine Hedberg

There are many genealogical ties between Hedmark and the Fargo/Moorhead areas. For those of you wishing to learn more about the genealogical resources available in Fargo and the surrounding area, there are several excellent collections you will want to pursue. The Institute for Regional Studies located at North Dakota State University in Fargo has an excellent collection. The Institute for Regional Studies was founded at the ND State University in 1950. The library is located in the Skills & Technology Training Center, Rm. 117, 1305 19th Avenue North in Fargo. Their summer hours are 7:30 am to 4:00 pm, Monday-Friday. (701) 231-8914 or < archives @ www.lib.ndsu.nodak.edu>. An appointment is needed to access the collection. Their genealogical collection includes the World War I Draft Registration Cards for North Dakota; Works Progress Administration Biography Files; Andrew A. Rowberg obituary file (microfiche copy from the Norwegian-American Historical Association); North Dakota Federal and Territorial Census records; Cass County, ND, probate record databases; Cass County marriage license database; Fargo obituary database; Dakota Territory 1885 census database; North Dakota naturalization record database.

The Red River Valley Genealogical Society was organized in 1968. Their extensive research library and collection numbers over 3,000 books. The Red River Valley Genealogical Society is located at 112 N. University Drive, Suite L116, in Fargo and is open for research Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday afternoons from 11am-3pm. Visitors are encouraged to call the library (701) 239-4129 and set up a research appointment. One of the genealogical society's most popular resources is their extensive collection of cemetery transcripts of the Red River Valley of North Dakota and Minnesota. Membership in the Red River Valley Genealogical Society is \$15/year and includes their quarterly newsletter. Write to: RRVGS, P.O. Box 9284, Fargo, ND 58106.

The Richland County Historical Society is also worth a visit. The research collection, located at 11- 7th Avenue North in Wahpeton includes a collection of family histories, township histories, North Dakota county histories, plat map books, church histories. The 1880's country school museum includes period rooms and artifacts from the area. An appointment is recommended to use the research collection and may be made by telephoning (701) 642-3075.

The Cass County Historical Society collects and interprets articles relating to Cass County and the Red River Valley. Organized in 1954 in a basement room at the North Dakota State University in Fargo, but in the 1960's moved to a site in West Fargo, today the historical society's museum, *Bonanzaville USA* includes more than 400,000 artifacts from the upper Midwest arranged throughout forty buildings. Named after the Bonanza Farms that had been found in this region in the late nineteenth century, these showcase farms of 1000 acres or more, advertised the economic potential of farming in the Red River Valley. The fifteen acre museum complex, located just off I-94 is convenient to the West Fargo-Fargo-Moorhead area. Group tours are available for a small admission fee.

Moorhead, Minnesota is noted for its unique *Heritage Hjemkomst Interpretive Center*. Norwegian for "Homecoming" the Heritage Hjemkomst Interpretive Center is operated by the City of Moorhead under a division of their Parks and Recreation Department. This facility, home to the *Hjemkomst Viking Ship*, *Hopperstad Stave Church Replica* and *Red River Valley Exhibition*, is a must stop in Moorhead. The Hjemkomst Viking Ship was built by Robert Asp and his family and sailed to Norway in 1984. The Hopperstad Stave church replica, built by Guy Paulson, is a full scale replica of the Hopperstad Church in Vik, Sogn og Fjordane, Norway.

The Hjemkomst facility is also home to the Clay County Museum and the Red River Historical Society. The Clay County Historical Society contains an extensive archive of thousands of photos, books and manuscripts relating to Clay County's past. The Clay County Historical Society Archives is open Monday-Friday from 10am-5pm and Tuesday until 9pm. An appointment is suggested and may be made by telephoning (218) 299-5520. Their collection includes transcribed death records from Clay County for the years 1872-1932. They also have a large collection of Clay County newspapers from Barnesville, Glyndon, Hawley, Hitterdal, Moorhead and Ulen; Clay

(Resources Continued)

County tax records; Clay County state and federal census records for the years 1870, 1875, 1880, 1885, 1895, 1900, 1905, 1910, 1920; Clay County marriage record indexes 1872-1982; Clay County draft registration cards, World War I; naturalization records; plat books and many other sources. Their large collection of photographs includes over 12,500 glass negatives from Moorhead and Hawley, Minnesota, including many identified studio portraits of individuals. The Hjemkomst facility is a true community resource and serves the 150,000 residents in the Fargo-Moorhead area as well as over 40,000 visitors each year.

Moorhead is also home to Concordia College, a private liberal arts college. The Carl B. Ylvisaker Library at Concordia includes an impressive collection of Norwegian bygdebøker and Norwegian related family histories. A much larger collection of Norwegian bygdebøker may be found at the Chester Fritz Library at the University of Grand Forks. The link <<http://www.library.und.edu/Collections/Famhist/bygdebok.html>> provides a listing of their non-circulating Norwegian local histories.

As one would expect, Dakota in the 1870's and 1880's was a rugged territory and had only recently been opened up to homesteaders. Countless Norwegians began settling this area, including many from Hedmark. One of the first homesteaders, west of the Missouri River in Dakota Territory (North Dakota) was Christ Nordstrom, son of Ole Halvorsen Strandvold and Gullaug Sletten. Nordstrom was born in Trysil, Hedmark. Nordstrom served as a US Army Scout in 1876, and following the Battle of Little Big Horn, helped to escort an army unit in pursuit of Chief Sitting Bull. Eventually Nordstrom returned to Fort Lincoln, North Dakota and began to look over the Dakota lands as he planned to homestead. Nordstrom helped to establish the town of Mandan, North Dakota. He was married to Maria Olsdatter Strandvold and they eventually moved to Victoria in British Columbia, Canada. Christ Nordstrom died in 1918. Others from Hedmark in the general area of eastern North Dakota and western Minnesota, we can easily identify include: Mathilda and Gina Taugbol from Eidskog who settled in Grand Forks. In Cass County, John O. Hernes from Elverum; in Fargo, K.M. Hagen of Elverum operated a shoe store. The Paulsen brothers, Simon & Ole, from Furnes operated a clothing business in Grand Forks. From Grue, many settled in the area including Carl Anderson of Sharon; Jacob N. Gaard in Fargo; Arne O. Busletten of Hatton and Ole L. Byrødegard of Buxton. West of Fargo in the area of Valley City, the Theodor Meldahl family from Grue resided as well as Løten immigrant, Edward Ingstad.

An 1850 Grue immigrant, Ole Paulsen, served as a Norwegian Lutheran pastor at several congregations in the Fargo area just after the turn of the century. A businessman in Hillsboro was John E. Paulsen Vaalberget from Grue. Just southwest of Fargo, in Liberty Twp., Ransom County, we find the first Norwegian settler there was Erik Gunderson Moe, born in Grue, May 28, 1844. He came to America in 1861; later to Mitchell Co. Iowa; 1870 to Chippewa Co., MN, and by 1878 to Cass County, Dakota Territory. Gunderson was a successful farmer and in 1894 was elected to the North Dakota State Legislature. Gunderson died in 1916 and many of his descendants still live in the eastern part of North Dakota. Many immigrants from Hof settled around Reynolds and Northwood, North Dakota including Amund N. Botten and Peter N. Korsmo. Korsmo went on to serve a term in the North Dakota State Legislature. Near the community of Ottofy in Nelson County, Arnt O. Rønning and Oscar Rønning from Hof both farmed. Near Hatton in Traill County, Gunerius Johnsen Dunerholen from Hof lived. Just south of Fargo near Kindred, Hof immigrant, Carl M. Strand resided. A Hoff Lutheran Church was organized in Clara Township, Nelson County. Many immigrants from Nes settled in this area of North Dakota. South of Fargo in Richland County near Dwight, we find Peter Magnussen and family. Magnussen served as an early Richland County commissioner. A prominent Nes immigrant in Richland County was Andrew Slotten. Slotten was born in Nes in 1840, and served as a delegate to the North Dakota state constitutional convention in 1889. Near the area of Homestead in Richland County we find Nes immigrants, Tingval P. Berg and Johannes Berg. To the north, in Traill County, living near Galesburg we find Johannes Heggerud and family. Near Northwood, in Grand Forks County, the John J. Aske family of Nes resided. To the east near Hendrum in Norman County, Minnesota, the Nes immigrant, Mathias Knudsen Evenstad farmed. Mathias immigrated to America in 1882. His wife, Oline Olsdatter and children, Ole, Amalia and Haakon followed two years later.

One of the most famous of those from Hedmark who lived briefly in this area during the 1950's was Peter A. Munch, born in Nes, Hedmark, December 19, 1908. In 1937, Munch joined the Norwegian Scientific Expedition to Tristan da Cunha, a tiny island in the South Atlantic. Munch, a descendant of the Norwegian historian with the same

(Resources Continued)

name is also related to Ole Bull and artist Edvard Munch. As a Doctor of Philosophy, he studied at Oxford and Halle in Wittenberg. During World War II, he was imprisoned in the German concentration camp, Grini, near Oslo. Following the war he moved to Madison, Wisconsin, and became a research associate in rural sociology at the University of Wisconsin; later teaching at St. Olaf and during the years 1951-1957, serving as head of the department of Sociology and anthropology at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks. Munch first went to Tristan da Cunha in 1937 and was deeply moved by the islanders. He collected and wrote about this tiny island covering the time period from its discovery in the sixteenth century to 1984. During a volcanic eruption in 1961, Tristan da Cunha was evacuated, and Munch spent time with the exiled islanders in England. He returned to a resettled Tristan in 1964, having become so involved with those islanders. Many of you may be most familiar with Munch from his Norwegian-American research. In 1970, he and his wife, Helene Munch, published *The Strange American Way*, based on their translations of the letters of his grandmother, Caja Munch, and on excerpts from the autobiography of the Reverend Johan Storm Munch, who had served parishes at Wiota, Wisconsin, and the surrounding area during the years 1855-1859. Peter A. Munch died in 1984 at his home in Tennessee. Many immigrants from Ringsaker settled this area including Ole L. Bolstad, an 1880 immigrant who settled near Colfax and Walcott in Richland County; A.L. Lien, an 1878 immigrant from Ringsaker, settled near Hillsboro, where he became a well-known druggist. Near Northwood, the Ringsaker immigrant, Johan Pedersen Skjønberg resided. In 1872, Peder Olsen Ingberg emigrated from Ringsaker, settling near Hendrum in Norman Co., Minnesota. An 1867 immigrant from Ringsaker, Karoline Ellingsdatter Nordhaugen, was married to Jacob Hansen Schieslien of Søndre Land. They farmed near Hillsboro in Traill County before moving to Saskatchewan in 1906. A Ringsaker Lutheran church was organized in Barnes County, North Dakota in 1881.

Near Portland in Traill County, farmer, Ole Paulsen Arstad from Stange resided. West of Fargo in Barnes County, near the small community of Fingal, lived the farmer Ole E. Maasjø and businessman, Knut Syversen Ramsett from Stange. Maasjø immigrated in 1867 and settled in Dakota about 1881. Ramsett is said to have immigrated around 1850, with his father, Syver and family. Knut Ramsett served a term in the North Dakota state legislature. Near Grand Forks, the Vold and Fenton families have roots in Stange descending from John Vold, an 1874 immigrant. Vold and his wife, Martha settled near Black River Falls, Wisconsin. Their son, John Johnsen Vold, moved to Grand Forks around the turn of the century where he was a successful druggist. John Vold's sister married a Fenton and descendants still live in North Dakota. A 1905 immigrant from Stor-Elvdal, Erik Eriksen Rasten, died in Cass County in 1949. Living southwest of Fargo near Litchville, lived the Tolga immigrant, Esten A. Aas and family. The B.J. Ostby family from Hatton in Traill County originated in Trysil. A large settlement of immigrants from Trysil organized the Trysil Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church, near Gardner in Cass County. In 1883 the congregation name was changed to Nora, to include people from other parts of Norway. Several Trysil immigrants in Cass County include Paul and Lars Mortenson; Knute Lee and Johan Grambo. Many immigrants from Vang settled in the Red River Valley including John Monsen in Walcott and C.B. Wold near Fort Ransom. Around the turn of the century, C.H. Opsahl of Vang operated a clothing store in Grand Forks. The Vinger immigrant, Jørgen Andersen Holer, operated a furniture business in Fargo. Northeast of Fargo in Polk County, Minnesota, the community of "Winger" was established after Vinger in Hedmark. One of the earliest settlers was Ingebret Messelt who settled there about 1885. Northwest of Fargo in Griggs County, many immigrants from Åmot settled, including John Elsaas, Martinius H. Stramstad and Peder Knudsen, farmers near Cooperstown; near Binford, Ludvig Amundsen of Åmot settled. A large settlement of immigrants from Åsnes settled northwest of Fargo in Nelson County. Among those to mention is Guttorm Guttormsen Anseth. Guttorm and his brother-in-law, Martin Berg settled first near Hillsboro in 1881; later moving to Nelson County. Immigrants, Iver M. Johnson of East Grand Forks, Minnesota, and Karl Madsen, of Fargo, both emigrated from Åsnes. The Enoch Evenson family near Bocket, is said to have emigrated from Hedmark. A 1904 immigrant from Hedmark, Even Pedersen Olson, born 1887, worked first for his uncle Nils Bjørge, before marrying and raising his family. Even is buried at the Hoff Cemetery in Nelson County. For those who wish to visit some historic cemeteries and churches with roots in Hedmark, you will want to start with the North Ringsaker Cemetery, located in Section 9 of Belmont Township in Traill County. The Østerdalen Lutheran Church, near Harwood in Cass County was built around 1895. About three years ago the church closed and the contents were auctioned. A large cemetery with many from Hedmark will be found there. Another Ringsaker Lutheran Church will be along the banks of the Red River near Buxton in Traill County. Plan to join us in Fargo-Moorhead. Page 6

WIOTA—A WISCONSIN NORWEGIAN SETTLEMENT

From four sources: *The Promise of America* by Odd S. Lovoll; *Wiota, William S. Hamilton Diggings, 1828-1995* by Lucile Bisegger, et.al., 1993; *Stage Coach and Tavern Tales of the Old Northwest*, 1930 by Harry Ellsworth Cole; and *The History of LaFayette County*, Wisconsin, Published by Western Historical Company, Chicago, 1881. Compiled by Roland Krogstad

Although situated in a driftless area in LaFayette County of southwestern Wisconsin, Wiota Village lies among rolling hills and broad valleys of fertile farmland. Lead-mining, however, is what attracted early pioneers to the area. Wiota was an historical locale because it served as a stepping stone for settlers in opening the Northwest Territory during westward expansion in the United States. The first settlement in the area was made by William Henry and S.P.B. Gratiot during the year 1824 in the (then) Michigan Territory. It gradually evolved into one of the early Norwegian Settlements in the United States. Another early white comer was Col. William S. Hamilton, adventurous son of Alexander Hamilton, first Secretary of the Treasury under President Washington. William Hamilton was involved in politics and in the founding of Wiota. He staked a claim and developed a lead mining business known as "Hamilton's Diggings" near the center of Wiota Township. Indians were the first lead miners in the area, having left evidence of old log furnaces used for melting the lead away from its ore (smelting). Lead was exchanged for clothing, iron tools, beads, and other supplies. Lead was used in ammunition for hunting and by the military. During the 1820s and 1830s, this area was an almost uninhabited wilderness and clumsy ox-drawn carts with solid wooden wheels hauled the lead ore or bars over Indian trails through the wilderness to Galena smelters, bringing needed supplies on the return trip. The lead was shipped down the Mississippi River where ocean ships carried the ore to New York and Baltimore.

During the first 50 years of the 1800s, travel was by canals, Great Lakes, rivers, horseback, covered wagons, and stagecoaches. Travel was slow, uncomfortable, and often dangerous. Travel was further delayed by swollen streams, sinkholes, muddy roads and breakdowns. After completion of the Erie Canal in 1825, ships could reach Milwaukee and Chicago. Instead of going from Wiota to Galena the lead-laden wagons began taking their smelted lead through Gratiot and Wiota to connect with the road out of Mineral Point to Milwaukee. On the return trip the wagons were laden with merchandise and immigrants destined to the fast growing Wiota and surrounding areas. They always traveled in trains for company, safety, and mutual assistance. Most every house along the way was considered a tavern or stopping place for the night. The host never knew how many, drinking and gambling often led to fights and shootings. The women were placed upstairs behind a screen while the men slept on the floor with their own blanket. Early Indian paths and crude trails slashed through the wilderness were not easy to follow. Conditions worsened during wet spells and turned the best of roads into wagon-eating quagmires as wagons became bogged down in a sea of mud.

This slow and hazardous travel gave rise to the building of plank roads and the use of covered wagons and stagecoaches. Plank roads, constructed with 3 inch thick oak planks about 8 feet long set on stringers anchored in the earth, were the answer. They were chartered by the government and built by private enterprise which could charge toll (such as 66 cents from Milwaukee to Watertown, completed in 1853). They enabled faster travel and heavier loads. By 1860 plank roads radiated outward from Milwaukee in all directions. There were many stagecoach lines into and out of Milwaukee and Chicago. A stagecoach was a horse-drawn coach which was used to carry passengers, mail, and sometimes freight, on a regular route. The first one set out from Chicago in 1836. Several routes were scheduled on a regular basis, such as, Milwaukee to Galena which took three days. Stopping places and lodging included Janesville, Wiota, Mineral Point, Madison, Fort Atkinson, Dodgeville, and other points. Plank roads deteriorated over time when planks rotted or floated away. At times wild animals and robbers were a hazard. Stage routes between Wiota and Monroe discontinued in 1861. Railroads started to take over during the 1860s, going through Wiota Township but not through Wiota village.

As the news of lead mining spread, miners from miles around made their way to the area to seek their fortunes. Although many miners came to the Wiota area, they tended to be migratory depending on the success they had in mining. As the price of lead declined or the available ore dwindled or became more difficult to mine in certain areas, many miners moved west to mine silver or gold. Hence, Wiota was a stepping stone for them. Those that stayed, needed food which immediately drew farmers to till the fertile soil. At times, if there was lead easily mined on their land, some farmers mined for extra income. European-born immigrants began arriving during the 1840s and Wisconsin became the main region for Norwegian Settlement, such as at Muskego, Koshkonong, Blue Mounds, Wiota and other areas. So by

(Wiota continued)

1860, Norway and Ireland were both represented in Wiota Township. The Norwegian immigrants, several from the Land area, spoke the dialects of the Scandinavian language, but they also sought to become Americanized.

Differences between the Indians and the whites occurred periodically. In the spring of 1832 Chief Black Hawk with over 1,000 men, women, and children of his Sauk and Fox tribes crossed the Mississippi River from Iowa and headed toward their old planting grounds along the Rock River in Illinois. This was a mistake in violation of an agreement made in 1831 promising they would not come back to Illinois to live. The governor of Illinois called out the militia. William Hamilton built a fort including a stockade and two houses. A fierce battle ensued, but General Henry Dodge prevailed. Subsequent to the Black Hawk War saw the most rapid settlement in this area in U.S. history. Settlements grew rapidly, and soon the hills and valleys were covered with cabins, dugouts, and lean-tos. Later, farmers built homes, cleared the land and grew grain and hay for the livestock.

Many Norwegians came directly from Norway, some had lived at Koshonong and other nearby settlements before settling in the Wiota area. Most of them became farmers, but many became businessmen, and were elected to government jobs at the town, county and even state levels beginning in 1848.

As early as 1840 we find two Norwegians working in the lead mines, namely, brothers Andreas and John Week, both from Eidfjord, in Hardanger. They seemed to have been two of a party of about 40 from Hardanger, who emigrated in 1839. In 1844 John Week moved to Dodgeville in Iowa County and established a shoe store in company with John Lee from Numedal. Andreas went to Marathon County some years later where he built a saw mill and later joined the California gold-seekers. In the spring of 1842 Lars Davidson Reque from Voss came to Wiota for about one year to earn some money; he had previously purchased land in Deerfield Township in Dane County in December 1840, and returned to take possession of it in the summer of 1842. In 1841 the first permanent Norwegian settlers arrived; these were Per Unde from Vik Parish, Sogn, Per Davidson Skjerveim Sjur Ulven and Arne Anderson Vinje, from Voss; Per Unde remained in Chicago the first year and a half. Ulven and Skjerveim had come from Norway in 1840. Arne Vinje (born 1820) came to Chicago in September 1840, after having been five months on the journey. He had left Norway April 16 with his wife (Martha Gulliksdtr Kindem) and a party of 20 from Voss. The following spring Vinje and Skjerveim, having decided to go to the mines in Wisconsin, each secured their yoke of oxen, and drove overland, arriving at Wiota on July 7, after five days of difficult travel; Unde and Ulven came at the same time. All three built a house.

According to Arne Vinje, the following 21 persons came from Voss that spring: Torstein Saue, his wife and son Gulleik, Lars Saue and wife, Klaus Grimestad and wife, Arne Anderson and wife and infant son Andrew, Knudt Hylle, Ole S Gilberhus, Knudt Rokne, Mads Sonve, Baar Lawson Boe (a brother of Iver Lawson), Lars Rothe, Brynnel Ronve, two young ladies from Saue, one from Ronve and one from Gilderhus. Vinje said part of the old timbers on the ship sustaining the upper berths gave way, and the screams and cries almost created a panic on board. Even Hegg, and others from "Ostlandet" who came with the ship from Drammen stopped in Milwaukee, while others from Voss came on to Chicago, where my wife and I were received into the home of Sjur Ulven and family, Mrs Ulven being my wife's cousin. Knudt Hylle and myself began our first work on the Chicago streets handling a heavy plank scraper drawn by a yoke of oxen and used to scrape the sod from the sides of the road into the center.

In the spring of 1841 Peder Skjerveim, who had come from Norway in 1837, having lived in Chicago in the interval, drove from Chicago up to Hamilton Diggings to explore the region. Upon his return he reported that there was government land for sale there, and Vinje and he had decided to move hither. Peder Iverson Unde and family and Sjur Ulven went to the "Diggings" at the same time. They reported a tiresome journey of 5 days. We progressed with some difficulty as our wagon broke down twice during the journey. The second of these accidents occurred near Rockford toward evening when the axle gave way; but Peder Skjerveim with only an axe and augur went into the woods, cut down a tree and made a new axle that night. We proceeded safely on our way the next morning. There being no bridges, we forded the rivers at Rockford and Freeport. There was then not a house where Rockford now stands and only one small grocery store at Freeport. There were no Norwegians in or around Wiota, and the nearest Norwegian settlement was at Rock Run, Illinois. Peder Skjerveim and I each bought 40 acres of government land in the Township of Wiota, upon which we built a log cabin and began other improvements. Andres Braekke also bought 40 acres but soon sold it.

In 1842 there came to our neighborhood three young people from Voss; David Larson Fenne and wife, and his brother Nils Fenne, Per Fenne and wife Martha. In 1843 there came some families from Vik in Sogn, and settled near by: Ole Iverson Unde and wife Britha, and his brother Erik's family. Erik died before reaching America, but his wife and children settled down here. Likewise, Erik Engebret Hove, Ole Anderson and Sjur Tallakson Bruuvold; Nils Sunve and wife Maline, and Ivar Fenne came at the same time. From other areas in Norway came Isak Johnson from Skien, Helge Melan and wife from Telemarken, Tore

(Wiota continued)

Thompson from Tindal, and Ashley Gunderson from Numedal; and Charles Hendrickson from Lier, Norway. The latter however moved to Primrose Township in Dane County in 1846; Sjur Bruavolden in 1845, and Erik E. Hove in 1847; Ingebrigt Fuglegjaerdet from Vik Sogn in 1844; Syver Johnson (Smed or Smedhogen from Land in 1844. Reverend J.W.C. Dietrichson speaking at the Wiota Settlement in 1844 said there had been a congregation of about 100 members from Voss organized in 1843.

Other Norwegian immigrants included: Andrew J. Anderson born Nov 1837 in Norway, parents came 1851, father was farmer had large family Andrew became judge married Lucinda 1873, Lars E. Johnson came from Bergen lived in Koshonong before coming to Wiota; Andrew Olson Skindrud from Sondre Land, became Wiota shoemaker; Minnie Houg Tollakson from Norway in 1853; John Berget Norway to Wiota in 1869; Elif Johnson came to America in 1848, settled in Wiota wife Anna Saeven; Ole Nilson 1853 to Wiota; Andrew Anderson, Judge, married wife from Wiota; Dr. C.A. Hansen physician from Kongsberg to Wiota; and Michael Michaelson Norway to Wiota. In 1857, Karine Erickson Rood, who arrived in Wiota from Norway with her family at age nine had seen some changes during her 79 years of living in the area. But the change that struck her the most forcibly and that she regretted the most, was the converting of beautiful timber stands to bare hillsides. She missed the birds that used to inhabit the trees, and the streams that were always babbling and full of fish in the ravines.

Additional Norwegian immigrants:

Carl Aas 1876 wife Louesa Rockstad, Charles Anderson, Gilma Anderson, Ole Anderson, Cecil Benson, Genevieve Berget, John Berget, Bronson, Rev Clauson, Minic Engebretson, J. Everson, Gilbertson, Grathaug, Hanson, Harrison, Halverson, Andrew Gunderson, Ole C., Lars E., Clarence, and Robert Johnson; Kammerud, Kamprood, Thomas Knewstubb, Larson, Anton Olson, John Olson, Peterson, Rygh, Kristen and Olava Rood from Dokka 1851 their son married Karine, Ericksen 1856 Quebec to Chicago to Monroe to Wiota by oxen. Bernt J. Ommodt 1880 from Vardal wife born in Hadeland, Hans Overby 1891, Ole Franzen Shager 1852 cabinetmaker, Lars Nielsen Roste Land 1891, Ward E.Skaugstad, Betsy Svenstad, Ole Haug, Minnie Haug Tollakson, W. Thompson, and A. Thompson.

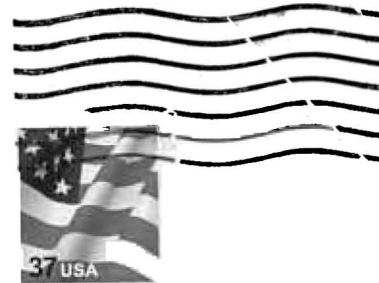
Many of the farmers tended to occupy their farms a long time, sometimes several generations. If the farm remained in the same family for 100 years or more, it qualified as a Century Farm. An examples was: Andreas & Ingeborg Johnsdtr Pederson, married in Norway, 1st son born at sea, arrived Wiota 1850, bought 80 acres in 1852. It became a Century Farm. Century Farms of Wiota Township in 1992 were acquired at least 100 years previously by: Sever Anderson, John Berget, Peter Brenum, Simon Harker, J.Eastwood, Chris Gierhart, P. H. Houg, Andrew Hansen, H. J. Hansen, Harry Johnson, C. Johnson, James Kemp, John Mason, J. F. McDonald, Christian Hanson Moe, Andreas Pederson, William Reardon, Kristen Rood (Rudd), Ever Saalsa, G. N. Seffrood, N. Seffrood, O. F. Shager, O. H. Shager, A. E. Stephenson, P. Larson, Sever Tollackson, and A. Winn. Some farms are no longer owned by original family members, but at one time qualified as century farms.

Wiota settlers Churches of about five different faiths were built around the mid-1800s, such as the Lutheran Church in 1851, Pastor J.S. Munch came from Norway in 1855; second (West) Lutheran Church built in 1889. The East Wiota Lutheran Church, the oldest Norwegian Lutheran Church in America was organized in 1844, built in 1851, is still in use. A Baptist Church in 1856, St. Philomena Catholic Church in 1870, United Brethren Church in 1874, Union Church in 1875, The Old Rock Church south of Lamont was for many years the center of religious life in the neighborhood, the Church was crowded night after night, and was later donated to the Methodist Episcopal Church.

In 1870, lead mining was dwindling in the Wiota area, and agriculture became the important occupation with cows producing milk, cream, meat, butter, and chickens producing eggs and meat. As time moved on, the grain-cradle gave way to the horse-drawn reaper, the flail gave way to the horse-powered threshing machine. Grist mills and cheese factories were built. Sorghum evaporators produced 1,800 gallons of syrup in one season. Roads were improved and telephone lines were installed.

The first school opened in Wiota in 1833. As population grew, 14 one-room schools dotted the countryside. In 1880, the population of Wiota Township was varied: In the southwest part, the people were principally Irish, while in the southeast portion they were mostly Norwegians. The population of the Township hovered around 1,500 from 1830 to 1910, when it started to decline to 1,000 in 1980. It slipped to 945 in 1990. It is said that in its heyday the village of Wiota had a population of about 800 people. Today, it is only about 100 people. Wiota (originally known as Hamilton) played an important role in the westward expansion in the United States. Such settlements, as Wiota, were fixed points to settlers in opening the NW Territory.

Nord Hedmark og Hedemarken Lag News
Roland Krogstad, Editor
2718 Regent St.
Madison, WI 53705-3714



2005 DUES DUE !!

If your mailing label has 2004 on the top line, it means your **Lag Dues expired** on December 31, 2004 and are **now due** for the calendar year January 1 to December 31, 2005. When paying dues it is a good time to update addresses, apprise us of moves, etc., as indicated on the **DUES RENEWAL FORM**. Make checks payable to NHOH and mail to Joy Shong, Treasurer, N4695 Highland Drive, Sullivan, WI 53178-9705

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DUES RENEWAL FORM

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Dues: 1yr=\$10; 2yr=\$18; 3yrs=\$25	\$	
TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$		

INTERESTED IN MEETING MORE NORWEGIANS?

Membership development is an important function for any organization's survival and it should be continuous to replace members who chose not to renew their membership for various reasons, such as, becoming deceased, completing their genealogy, joining another bygdelaag or Norwegian group, etc.

We lose about 14-15 members per year. Our Lag membership has declined from about 225 households in 1999 to 185 in March, 2005. Your NHOH Board is concerned about the need to recruiting new members and maintaining steady Lag membership. Would you be willing to serve as an ambassador for our Lag and help us in this effort? Such as:

1. Identify prospective new members, contact them, and invite them to attend a Tre Lag Stevne, and/or invite them to join our Lag.
2. Set up exhibits and/or give presentations in your area with Norway photos, brochures and maps at Norwegian festivals or gatherings, lutefisk dinners, Sons of Norway activities, Norwegian Studies Dept. at university, etc.
3. Provide gift memberships to your children, grandchildren, or friends.
4. Perhaps you have other suggestions to help us in this effort.

If you would like a supply of Membership Application Forms, or Stevne Information or Registration Materials, or wish to request the NHOH editor to mail Stevne materials to someone, please contact: Roland Krogstad, 2718 Regent Street, Madison, WI 53705. Phone (608)238-6652. Membership Lists are available on request from our Treasurer, Joy Shong, N4695 Highland Dr., Sullivan, WI 53178-9705, E-Mail: shongfam@cedar.net

A tusen takk for your help.