

NHOH News

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Summer 2024

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Fra Presidenten

My cousin who lives near Hamar told me that the weather for this year's Syttende Mai celebrations in Norway was the best in 50 years. We also had beautiful weather in Wisconsin in May. I didn't make it to the Syttende Mai festivities in Stoughton this year, but I

think they also had nice weather. With the good weather, the spring flowers were gorgeous this spring, the harbingers of summer.

Summer is the season of stevner. For those of us who belong to multiple lags, there are many opportunities to gather with others who share our love of genealogy and Norwegian culture at the many meetings planned throughout the summer. Most lag stevner are listed on the Bygdelagenes Fellesraad web page.

For the members of NHOH, the Flere Lag Stevne is the one to put at the top of your list to attend. This year we will meet at the Willmar Conference Center & Best Western Plus in Willmar, Minnesota from August 6 to 9. Our theme "*A Skillet in One Hand, A Hoe in the Other*" celebrates the strong Norwegian pioneer women who successfully immigrated and assimilated in a new country.

Information about the program and tour, as well as registration materials, are all in this issue. The schedule is similar to last year, running from Tuesday afternoon through Friday morning. Check the deadlines for registering for a room at the hotel to make certain to get the stevne group rate.

Things you can bring to the stevne:

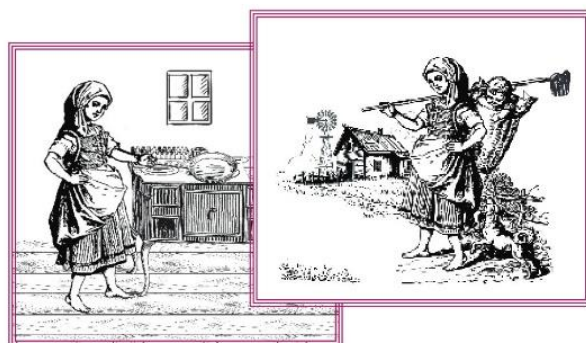
- Items to sell at the silent auction; proceeds to go to the lag designated on the sale form.
- Scandinavian treats to be shared in the hospitality room.
- Bring your bunad, festdrakt or Norwegian sweater to wear at the banquet

- Friends and relatives to share the stevne experience with you and maybe decide to come again or join our lag.

The Nord Hedmark og Hedemarken Lag will hold its annual membership meeting at the stevne on Thursday morning August 8 at 7:45.

Hilsen fra
Joy Shong

*"A Skillet in One Hand, A Hoe in the Other:
Norwegian Women Settlers"*



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WHO ARE WE?

Nord Hedmark og Hedemarken Lag includes 16 kommuner in the three districts of Nord-Østerdal, Sør-Østerdal, and Hedemarken/Hamar as follows:

District 1:

Nord-Østerdal:

Alvdal
Folldal
Os
Rendalen
Tolga
Tynset

District 2:

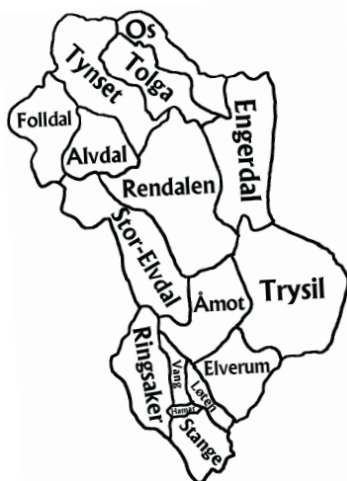
Sør-Østerdal:

Åmot
Elverum
Engerdal
Stor Elvedal
Trysil

District 3:

Hedemarken and Hamar

Furnes
Hamar
Løten
Nes
Ringsaker
Romedal
Stange
Vang



Our NHOH Purpose

The Lag is organized exclusively for educational purposes. To the extent consistent with this general purpose, the specific purposes of the Lag are to help people learn more about the history, culture, and customs of the Nord Hedmark and Hedemarken area of Norway and to aid in the preservation of that heritage; to teach and assist people in genealogy research; to gather immigration and settlement history and develop immigration data; to develop a library of resources, such as bygdebøker (farm histories) and Norwegian church, census, and probate records; and to encourage the research and writing of family, immigration, and settlement histories.

Membership

NHOH Lag members benefit from expert genealogy research assistance, receive our newsletter three times a year and are invited to participate in our annual 3-day conference.

Membership Renewal

Members need to check the year next to their name on the newsletter address label, especially on the fall newsletter.

Reminders will be sent for expired memberships early in the year following the year of expiration, with a renewal deadline of Mid-March, prior to the spring newsletter.

Members who get their newsletters via e-mail will be sent a reminder.

NHOH Website

The NHOH website can be found at: www.nhohlag.org with information on how you can become a full-fledged member of our organization.

Photos taken at previous stevner are posted on the NHOH web site. Click on the “Stevner” tab to access available photos from all past stevner. For most, you can click on the image for a larger view. And if you want to copy or save it, right click on it to use browser commands. Our newsletters, genealogy information, photos, and scholarship information are there too.

Join Our Facebook Page

Members and non-members alike are encouraged to join our Nord Hedmark og Hedemarken Lag Facebook page and participate in the discussion. We welcome those who have an interest in and/or have ancestry in the Nord Hedmark and Hedemarken areas of Norway. You don't have to be a NHOH lag member to join our Facebook page.

New Facebook page joiners must request to join on their own (we don't accept members added by others) and new joiners must briefly answer the “why do you wish to join” security questions.

To find our page, type **Nord Hedmark og Hedemarken Lag** in the Facebook Search box.



NHOH Board Members

President: Joy Shong
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Genealogy at the Flere Lag Stevne

By Larry West - NHOH Genealogist

I hope you are all getting excited about the upcoming Flere Lag Stevne in Willmar (August 6 - 9). From a genealogical perspective the Stevne is a wonderful time to work on your family tree. You'll be able to make use of the Genealogy Lab (open most of the hours of the Stevne -- day and evening) where the five regional Lags bring their collection of Norwegian genealogy books and materials. In addition, there are a number of experienced genealogists in attendance who can assist you. The NHOH collection consists of 82 Bygdebøker, 38 other books and binders on Norwegian genealogy, over 15 detailed maps of Norway, and a select number of church records (35 binders for Romedal, Ringsaker and Stange.) Some of the other Lags at the Stevne even have a greater number of books!

We will also have internet access to online repositories such as the Norwegian Digital Archives, [Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com), [MyHeritage.com](https://www.myheritage.com), Family Search and more. In addition to the Genealogy Lab there will be an afternoon of brief genealogy demonstrations. So, when coming to the Stevne, bring your genealogy materials and questions then when you leave on Friday maybe you will not only have a smile on your face and a joy in celebrating your Norwegian heritage, but also some additions to your family tree. Hope to see you at the Stevne!



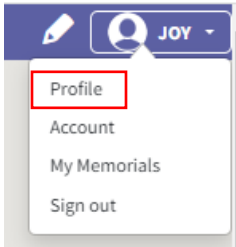
Larry West and unknown lag member in the genealogy lab at the 2023 Flere Lag Stevne

Photo courtesy of Dixie Hansen

Virtual Cemeteries in Find A Grave – Stevne Quick Demo, by Joy Shong

Virtual Cemeteries in Find A Grave can help you keep track of burial information from specific cemeteries or about groups of people you reference frequently. For example, you can select all people in one cemetery who are related or are of interest, or you can make a virtual cemetery of people from different cemeteries who are related. Create a free Find A Grave account and login.

Select your Profile in upper right corner.



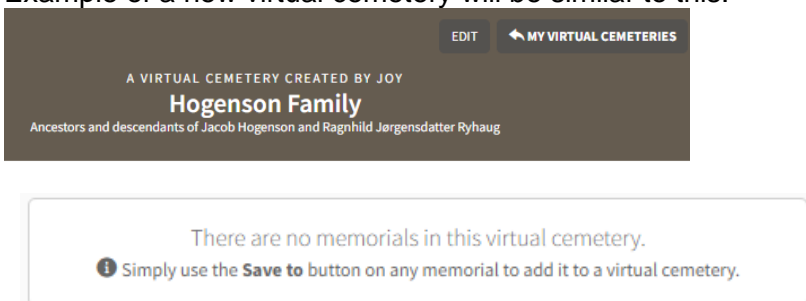
Scroll down to see My Virtual Cemeteries. Click the **Add** button.



Enter a name, description and select either public or private visibility. Select **Save**.

A screenshot of the 'Add Virtual Cemetery' form. It has a text input field for 'Virtual Cemetery Name'. Below it is a 'Description:' section with a text area and a placeholder 'Write a short description for the Virtual Cemetery.'. At the bottom, there are radio buttons for 'Cemetery Visibility': 'Public' (selected) and 'Private'. At the very bottom are three buttons: 'Back to My Virtual Cemeteries', 'Cancel', and 'Save'.

Example of a new virtual cemetery will be similar to this:



To add people to a virtual cemetery, **open** a person's memorial, click the **Save to** button and **select** a virtual cemetery you created.



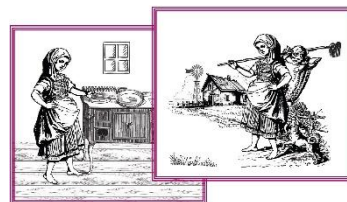
FLERE LAG STEVNE

Schedule

(tentative and subject to change)

Tuesday, 6 August 2024

"A Skillet in One Hand, A Hoe in the Other:



Norwegian Women Settlers"

Time	Event
12:00 PM - 8:00 PM	Registration Desk Open
1:00 PM - 9:00 PM	Genealogy Lab Open
1:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Silent Auction (<i>drop-off items for the auction only</i>)
1:00 PM - 9:00 PM	Vendor Displays Open (for vendors arriving Tuesday)
1:30 PM - 4:45 PM	Genealogy Research Mini-Demos (<i>every hour on the half hour</i>)
3:00 PM - 8:00 PM	Hospitality Suite Open (<i>OK to drop off items starting at 2 PM</i>)
4:00 PM - 8:00 PM	Silent Auction Open for Bidding
7:00 PM - 8:00 PM	Seminar: Beginning Genealogy — Shanna Kurth

Wednesday, 7 August 2024

Time	Event
7:45 AM - 8:45 AM	Gudbrandsdalslag Annual Business Meeting
8:30 AM - 4:00 PM	Registration Desk Open
8:30 AM - 9:00 PM	Silent Auction Open for Bidding
9:15 AM - 9:45 AM	Opening Ceremony
9:45 AM - 10:45 AM	Seminar: The Place of the Church in Norwegian Immigration to America — Gracia Grindal
10:45 AM - 9:00 PM	Genealogy Lab Open
10:45 AM - 9:00 PM	Vendor Displays Open (<i>the public is welcome</i>)
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Seminar: I Couldn't Milk Another Goat / Goodbye Norway - Hello Minnesota — Paul Arneson
12:00 PM - 1:30 PM	Lunch (<i>on your own</i>)
12:30 PM - 5:00 PM	Hospitality Suite Open
1:30 PM - 2:30 PM	Seminar: The Benefits of Sharing Family Stories — Elaine Hasleton
2:30 PM - 3:00 PM	Break (<i>Visit Vendor Displays and Hospitality Suite</i>)
3:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Seminar: Antarctica Trip — Karen Weiberg
4:15 PM - 5:15 PM	Solørlag Annual Business Meeting
5:15 PM - 6:15 PM	Romerikslaget Annual Business Meeting
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	Scandinavian-Themed Movie

Thursday, 8 August 2024

Time	Event
7:45 AM - 9:00 AM	Nord Hedmark og Hedemarken Lag Annual Business Meeting
8:00 AM - 4:00 PM	Registration Desk Open
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	Vendor Displays Open
8:00 AM - 4:00 PM	Silent Auction Open for Bidding
9:00 AM - 2:00 PM	Genealogy Lab Open
9:00 AM - 2:45 PM	Hospitality Suite Open
9:15 AM - 10:15 AM	Seminar A: Sister Lumberjack: Scandinavian Women in Frontier Minnesota — Candace Simar
	Seminar B: Kandiyohi County Historical Society — Jill Wahnoutka

10:15 AM - 10:45 AM	Break – (Visit Vendor Displays and Hospitality Suite)
10:45 AM - 11:45 AM	Seminar A: Finnskog History and Research — Elaine Hasleton
	Seminar B: Spedalskhed: Leprosy in 19th Century Norway — Sandra Bestland
11:00 AM - 3:00 PM	Hospitality Area Open
11:45 AM - 1:15 PM	Lunch (<i>on your own</i>)
1:15 PM - 2:15 PM	Seminar A: Salome's Gift — Karen Mullen
	Seminar B: The Lives and Loves of Norwegian Women Immigrants: From Amsterdam to Swaziland — Sandra Bestland
2:15 PM - 2:45 PM	Break – (Visit Vendor Displays and Hospitality Room)
2:45 PM - 3:45 PM	Seminar A: Norway House and Haugo Bibliotek — Race Fisher
	Seminar B: Travels in Norway — Chris Falteisek
4:00 PM - 4:30 PM	Silent Auction - Winning Bidders: pick-up and pay for your items
5:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Social Hour with Cash Bar
5:15 PM - 6:05 PM	Lag Group Photos: Romerikslag 5:15 PM; Solørlag 5:25 PM; Trønderlag 5:35 PM; Gudbrandsdalslaget 5:45 PM; Nord Hedmark og Hedemarken Lag 5:55 PM
6:00 PM - 8:45 PM	Stevne Banquet (pre-registration required) Speaker: For the Love of Cod! Is Norway Truly the Happiest Country on Earth? — Eric Dregni Bunad Parade

Friday, 9 August 2024

Time	Event
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM	Trønderlag Annual Business Meeting
9:30 AM - 1:00 PM	Tour: (<i>pre-registration required</i>) – Vikor Church, Willmar Lutheran Church, and Kandiyohi County Historical Society Museum (<i>registration includes bus, entry fees, and lunch</i>) – <i>Note: We have arranged a space for secure storage of your luggage at the hotel during the tour.</i>
1:00 PM	Safe Travels Home! <i>Join us again next year for Flere Lag Stevne 2025 (August 5-8, 2025)</i>

Willmar Conference Center / Best Western Plus Willmar

2100 Highway 12 E, Willmar, MN

The deadline for booking at the Flere Lag Stevne rate is 6 July 2024

The Stevne will be held at the Willmar Conference Center / Best Western Plus. To book a room, call the hotel direct at 1-320-235-6060 and ask for the Flere Lag rate or book at the dedicated Flere Lag online booking link here:

https://www.bestwestern.com/en_US/book/hotel-rooms.24139.html?groupid=P371R8Q9

The Flere Lag Stevne rate is \$129.99/night + tax (*single or double – with hot breakfast included*)

Flere Lag Stevne has blocked rooms for the nights of:

Monday 5 Aug 2024 (*for those arriving a day early*)
Tuesday 6 August 2024
Wednesday 7 August 2024
Thursday 8 August 2024 (*checking out on Friday the 9th*)

"A Skillet in One Hand, A Hoe in the Other:

Flere Lag Stevne Registration

Willmar Conference Center / Best Western Plus Willmar
2100 Highway 12 E - Willmar, Minnesota

August 6-9, 2024



Norwegian Women Settlers"

Stevne Pre-Registration is requested by 22 July 2024

Walk-in registrations are permitted if space is available. Reservations are required for tour and banquet.
Participants must make hotel reservations independently (*Book hotel by 6 July 2024 for the Flere Lag Rate*)

First and Last Name (Registrant A)

Nickname? (for nametag)

First and Last Name (Registrant B)

Nickname? (for nametag)

Street Address

City, State, Zip

E-mail Address

Phone #

Flere Lag Stevne (August 6-9, 2024)

4-Day Stevne Registration (Tuesday through Friday)

\$ Each

of Reg

Total \$

\$40.00

x

\$

or 1-Day only Stevne Registration (specify day): _____

\$20.00

x

\$

Thursday Night Banquet (Roasted Turkey or Kabeelo Lodge Walleye) *

\$38.00

x

\$

Fri Morning Tour – Vikor Church, Willmar Lutheran Church, & Kandiyohi County Historical Society Museum (includes bus, entry fees, & lunch)

\$42.00

x

\$

Total Enclosed

\$

*Banquet Meal Choice

Registrant A

Registrant B

Turkey or Walleye?: _____

Make check payable to **Flere Lag Stevne**
and send payment and registration to:

Attn: Dixie Hansen
Flere Lag Stevne Registration
1411 Osceola Ave
Saint Paul, MN 55105-2312



To reserve a hotel room at the

Best Western Plus Willmar

2100 Highway 12 E – Willmar, MN 56201

Call Hotel Direct: 1-320-235-6060 or book online:

https://www.bestwestern.com/en_US/book/hotel-rooms.24139.html?groupid=P371R8Q9

Flere Lag Room Rate: \$129.99/night + tax (single or double)
(includes breakfast)

Cut-off date for booking at the Flere Lag Rate is **6 July 2024**

Stevne Tour



Vikor Lutheran Church

Vikor Lutheran Church is one of the thousands of Norwegian Lutheran churches that dotted the Midwest countryside, it now is no longer in regular use but has been well maintained. The church will be open for viewing. Guri Endreson who was a survivor of the 1862 Dakota Conflict, is buried in the church cemetery and you will see the monument erected to her and learn her story of survival.

Calvary Lutheran Church

At Calvary Lutheran Church in Willmar you will have the opportunity to view the beautiful stained-glass windows, view a detailed carving of Peter's denial of Christ by a local renowned wood carver and view a 150-year timeline of the history of the Norwegian Lutheran Church.



Kandiyohi County Historical Society



The last stop on the tour is at the Kandiyohi Historical Society. Here you'll have lunch and have time to view the exhibits inside and outside. The main entry is the former Kandiyohi railroad station depot. The exhibit area features many different displays: military, transportation, and other exhibits that relate to Kandiyohi County history. At the Vikor Lutheran Church you will have learned about Guri Endreson and here you will be able to see Guri Endreson's cabin.

See you there!

Biography of Anna Spangborg Gunderson 1881-1973

By Kathleen Kido, great-granddaughter of Anna Gunderson

UW-Eau Claire Wisconsin History Course, 1978

Submitted by NHOH member Jan Gunderson, grandson of Anna Gunderson



Anna Spangborg
Gunderson
Photo courtesy of
Jan Gunderson

Anna Spangberg was born March 2, 1881, to Johan and Anna Olson. She spent the first three years of her life with her parents and five brothers and sisters in a dugout. The dugout, located on a farm at the base of the Chimney Rock Stone between Elva and Independence, Wisconsin, consisted of only one room and a loft. In 1884 the Olson family moved into their new frame house. The house can still be seen today. The indentation where the dugout once was can also be noted.

Anna's family hadn't always lived in the United States. Johan married Anna Jorgine Christianson in 1867. They lived in Stange, Norway where Anna's older sister Oline and her two brothers Christian and Emil were born. About 1875 they emigrated to the United States. They lived with the Mons Vefland family for one year while Johan looked for land to homestead. Mrs. Vefland was Anna's older sister. Their fourth daughter Martha was born here. A grandmother, Eli Christianson, came with them from Norway and lived with the family until she died in 1894. Anna's sister, Bertha, was the first child born on the new homestead. Her birth was followed by Anna and George.

Anna's sisters, Jennie and Nettie, and brother, Torvald, were all born in the new frame house which was built. The children all attended school under the name Johnson as was the custom in Norway. Anna finished school through the fourth grade, just enough so she could read and write. In 1900 Johan took the name Spangberg. The name Spangberg helped to eliminate all the confusion at the post office.

Grandmother Eli Christianson taught her grandchildren the alphabet and gave them catechism instruction. She instructed them in Norwegian and they also attended a Norwegian speaking school. She made up a song about her life in Norwegian, making up verses as the years went by, which she often sang to her grandchildren. Later, when Anna and her sister, Jennie, were grandmothers and great-grandmothers themselves, they still remembered scattered lines and verses:

I aten hundre of sex fik jeg lyset at se,
Den tredje maaned, den to og tyvende
Forst komende morgen de bragte mig frem,
Saa jeg fik mit navn ud I kirken med dem.

To gange gift og er enke igen
To born men der første dem har Gud gjemt
Sex med den anden som mig ei har glemt

Tre ud av mine og tre ud ave dem
Gud havet om ve sees her mere igjen.
Mig elste son's hyerte Gud aabnet nu har.
Han senge mig sente fra staden Chicago,
Til trost og til hjelp I min alderdom.

English Translation:

In eighteen hundred and six I first saw the light
The third month-the twenty second.
The next morning they brought me to baptism
So I got my name in the church with them.

Two times married and am a widow again.
Two children with my first husband, them God has taken.
Six with the second, who have not me forsaken.
Three oldest children immigrated to America.
Three of mine and three of theirs
God knows if we shall ever see each other again.

My oldest son's heart God now has touched.
He sent me money from the big city of Chicago.
For comfort and relief for my old age.

Anna's childhood was a happy one. The large family was a very close one. At the age of thirteen Anna found a special niche in this family. One Christmas Anna found out how much fun it was to create a garment from almost nothing. Money was very scarce, which made it impossible to buy new material. Her little brother needed a new suit for his Christmas program. Anna went to the attic and found an old velvet dress stored there. She tore it apart, pressed it, made a pattern out of newspaper and using this pattern, made a new little suit for her little brother.

Over seventy years later Anna still remembered this incident proudly, as she said in the Eau Claire Leader article written about her:

"All the neighbors said he was the best-dressed boy in the Christmas program," Mrs. Gunderson says, her eyes twinkling as she remembers. "The teacher thought the suit was just beautiful. I was mighty proud too, 'cause I knew it didn't cost a cent." From then on Anna took on the job of supplying the large family with economically priced and stylish clothes. "I made overall, work pants and jackets, dresses, underwear, and nightgowns. There were no pajamas in those days," Mrs. Gunderson recalls. I even made winter mackinaws and they were pretty hard to handle. One winter I made six of them for the boys.

When Anna was still a teenager, her older sister, Bertha, worked in town. She would bring home enough yard goods for two dresses. One for herself and one for Anna. Anna would then sew up the dresses in the latest style.

The farm on which Anna spent her early years has a bit of history connected with it. The farm is in the township of Chimney Rock, about seven miles south of Elva. Halfway between the Spangberg farm and the former Barney Neww farm is a hill. On the hill is a granite chimney-shaped stone and a smaller chair shaped stone on it. The township was named Chimney Rock because of this landmark.

Many Fourth of July picnics and old-time dances were held during Anna's girlhood. Large stones embedded at the bottom of the chimney made a natural dance floor. Trees growing around the spot formed a romantic bowery. This was the ideal spot for courtships to take place. Anna loved to dance and attended many dances here with her beau, Jule Gunderson. As stated in the Eau Claire Leader:

"We had many good times there," Mrs. Gunderson adds. "Anyone wishing to climb the hill on which the rock was located could see the whole countryside for miles around...Strum...Elva...and as far as Independence."

When Anna was sixteen years old, Jule Gunderson, from Chimney Rock area also, began courting her. A whole group of area young people would spend Sunday afternoon together, going on walks and picnics. Often they walked many miles to Bennett Valley, where they would spend the afternoon swinging and eating their picnic lunches.

Jule and Anna were married in 1899. They lived on the Gunder Gunderson home farm with his parents. Mr. and Mrs. Gunder Gunderson promised them the farm if they would take care of them in their old age. So, there wouldn't be any misunderstandings, Jule and Anna eventually paid each of his brothers two hundred dollars for their shares of the farm.

During the first three years of marriage Anna had two sons, who died in infancy. The first boy was stillborn and the second died several hours after birth. These deaths had a lifelong effect on Anna. Well into her nineties Anna still resented the fact Jule's old aunt smoked a dirty clay pipe in the same room as the baby. She had dirty hands with tobacco sticking in her fingernails. Sorrowfully, she remembered that they placed the premature newborn on the oven door in a box to keep it warm. It kept crying and crying. She begged them to bring him to her. Her son began to quiet down, then became very quiet, and died. Even on her death bed Anna still remembered this sad time. In her delirium she searched and searched for her lost babies. This was a sad time for Anna and Jule. Coming from large families themselves, both wanted a large family.

Their wish came true to the fullest in the years to come. Three years after their marriage, on May 11, 1901, a son, Godfred was born. Three more sons followed, Howard, January 16, 1904, Rufus, January 27, 1907, and Willard, March 29, 1909. Finally, On July 20, 1911, a daughter Inez, was born. Doris, a second daughter, was born on November 5, 1913. Two more sons followed, Donald, March 16, 1916, and Rodney, July 28, 1920. On September 19, 1922, lone was born and lastly, Eunice, October 1924. During a span of twenty-three years, six sons and four daughters were born. All the children were born with a neighbor lady acting as midwife. When Donald was born, Anna started hemorrhaging badly. Dr. Stack from Independence was called in. He left for home that evening but when he pulled into his front yard, he was still so worried about her condition that he turned around and went right back. If he hadn't gone back that same evening, Anna may have died.

These years of child raising were busy ones for Anna. Besides having ten children of her own, she raised a niece and nephew of Jule's, Lillie and George Olson. Their mother had died and their stepfather left to go west. He left his stepchildren with the Gunderson's and took his natural son with him. From that day on George and Lillie were accepted into the family as their own children by Anna and Jule. In years to come Anna and Jule did all they could for them. When Lillie was eighteen, Anna made her wedding dress and Jule built a bower in their backyard for her wedding dance. She was treated like their daughter for her entire life. The Gunderson farm was the first place George returned to after serving in World War I. Anna was proud of him and worried over him like her own sons.

The Gunderson farm was a busy place during these years. At a nearby farm lived two boys who were good friends of Anna's sons. Selmer and Bill Tweet. They didn't get along with their stepmother. They stayed at the Gunderson farm, often for months at a time. Jule always felt free to invite anyone he wanted for supper. The Gunderson farm often housed traveling ministers. At meal time large tables were set. It wouldn't be rare at all for Anna to have to cook for eighteen to twenty people. Sundays were busy indeed. Because it was the family farm, all of the Gunderson brood, their wives, husbands, and children, would come to visit for a weekend.

Clothing twelve children was a big job. This is where Anna's sewing skills were put to good use. Although the material was never new, by the time Anna was through with it, the garment looked like new. Old clothes were ripped apart. The backside of the wool looked like new. Anna was proud when people remarked that the Gunderson kids were the best dressed around. Anna's daughter, Inez, remembers the following Christmas program:

"One Christmas when I was about eight and Doris was about six, we had to sing a duet ("Onward Christian Soldiers") at the Christmas program. Ma got this old Middie dress from someone with stars on it. She made each of us a two-piece dress out of it. We stood between the organ pillars in front of the church. Candles from the Christmas tree glowed on our coal black hair. I can remember standing up there in those pleated skirts feeling so proud. Ma was pleased when people told her how cute we looked."

After chores were done at night, Anna would sit for hours by lamplight knitting socks for all her children. These were then boiled on the stove for hours in different colored dyes.

Washing clothes for his many children took several days a week. The clothes were washed on a scrubbing board with a scrub brush and home-made lye soap. They were then hung over a fence to dry. Later there was a machine on a stand. This had to be pumped and pumped. There were wooden tubs with a wringer in the middle. Anna had each child take fifty turns, up and down, up and down. During the winter the clothes would

be frozen as hard as a board after being outside. They would then have to be hung on chairs around the wood stove to melt and after dry.

Anna canned all the food for her large family. Even the meat was canned. Beef was cut in cubes and canned. A pork roast was first roasted in the oven. Several roasts were put together in five-gallon crocks. The hot grease, poured over the top, formed a seal. A cloth was then placed over the top. It was put in the cellar and when company came roasts were taken out one by one as needed.

Anna's in-laws Gunder and Mina Gunderson lived with the family for many years until their deaths. In her old age Mina had to be watched carefully. She always wore a scarf to bed. One night she was walking around in her night gown holding a lantern. The scarf dangled into the chimney and caught fire. If it weren't for some quick hands, the house might have burned down. Mina would also run away from home. She would run down the road from the farm. Anna would look out the window often and if she saw her would call, "Go turn Grandma around". So one of the children would turn her around so she was facing the house and she'd walk back. Mina's sister lived with them. She was blind in her old age. Anna or one of the children would fill her clay pipe for her, then she would fill her clay pipe for her; then she would feel it and if it wasn't full enough, they would fill it again. Gunder drowned when he went to the spring to get some milk stored there. When he failed to return, Jule went down to check on him. He found him face down in an inch of water. He often had spells and Anna and Jule thought that this was what happened to him.

In 1923 Anna's oldest son married Stella Olson. They and Anna's first grandson, Floyd, lived on the farm for two years. Howard was married in 1924 to Lulu Missel. They also lived on the farm for a short while. In 1924, Anna's last child, Eunice was born when Anna was forty-three years old.

When Eunice was one and a half years old, the family farm was lost. Jule and Anna had taken a mortgage out on the farm to build a tobacco shed, through Sprecker Lumber Company of Independence. There were forty acres of clover which Jule depended on for a cash crop. The family had it all threshed and Jule went to Independence to sell the clover. He came back without a cent. Sprecker Lumber got all the cash. They later foreclosed on the mortgage. Jule and Anna always regretted that they weren't given an opportunity to get the tobacco crop in to help pay the mortgage. They were one of six area farms taken over by Sprecker Lumber Company. Everything they owned was sold at a public auction to help pay off their debts. They were left with a balance of slightly under one thousand dollars.

The Gunderson family then packed up all their belongings and moved to Strum. They lived in what now (1978) is the present Alton Hagen home for several years. By this time the two oldest sons and their wives had homes of their own. Jule never had a steady job in the years to come. He picked up odd jobs whenever he could find work. Jule helped at neighboring farms, dehorned cattle, and broke in oxen teams. Anna's abilities as a dressmaker helped out the family immensely in the years to come. She was very much in demand in the town of Strum.

Jule and Anna bought the present (as of 1978) Harry Jacobson house in the years before the depression with enough money left after selling the farm and paying their debts for the down payment. Hard times followed. At the onset of the depression, Jule and Anna lost this house also. The family then moved out on the prairie east of Strum. They rented a small farm there.

Anna never felt comfortable in this house. One evening when Jule was particularly late coming home Anna blew out all the kerosene lamps. She sat huddled on the sofa, with all the children around her, waiting for his arrival. Even when she was an old woman, Anna still remarked about how she hated living there.

The land on the prairie was very sandy. The Gunderson family had a hard time making a go of it. Fortunately, they were able to raise enough food to survive. Anna raised incubator chicks. She kept them in her bedroom closet, where there was just enough room to slide the tray in. The eggs had to be turned over daily and moistened with water. The family had one milk cow. Anna would shake up the cream in a fruit jar to make butter for the family. The family always had a garden and raised vegetables to eat. Although times were hard, they managed to enjoy their holidays. One Thanksgiving their oldest son Godfred and his wife Stella sent a

message by relay from Chimney Rock telling them to come to Thanksgiving dinner. They had raised turkeys and had a turkey, but needed potatoes if they had any.

During the winter months Jule and Anna hooked up a pot belly stove in an old Watkin's Wagon they had purchased. There were seats along both sides. Jule would give the children rides to and from school, picking up neighbor children along the way. As a special treat Anna would send along hot chocolate for the return ride.

After two years on the farm, the family moved into town once again. Anna was happy to be living close to her sister, Jennie. They lived in the present Carl Berg home and Jennie lived several houses down the block. The Spangberg family had always been a close one. The first evening in the new house Jule stoked up the fire as he always did before going out to milk the cow. There was so much soot in the old chimney that a fire started, flames shot five to six feet in the air. Down the road Jennie was standing at her window peeling potatoes for lefse and saw the flames. She came running down the road carrying the wet potato peelings with her. She threw these on the fire in the stove and smothered the flames. The chimney fire had to burn itself out.

Anna's family was slowly getting smaller. Rufus had married Viola Amundson in 1930, Doris married Alvin Semington in 1931, and Inez married George Samuelson in 1932. The family indeed seemed small with only four children left in the house. During the depression years cutting cardboard to cover the holes in the children's shoes was a morning ritual for Anna. If she wanted the patch to last longer, Anna would cut strips of linoleum to cover up the holes or make a new sole. A sock was made whole again by cutting out the worn bottom, making a slit up the back, and sewing it together to fashion a new foot. The socks would be much shorter, but at least they were whole.

Jule and Anna were eligible for surplus commodities from the government. Everything was bran...bran cereal, bran bread, bran crackers and so on. Anna tried the best she could to vary the diet of the family. A wealthy neighbor lady, Louise Mattieson, (husband Joe owned Mattieson's Store in Strum, later Hulberg's Store) would have Anna do her baking for her. In exchange for making one pie, Anna would sometimes be able to make a second pie for the family or would get ten cents for making one pie. Anna would sometimes be able to make a second pie and still earn the dime! To keep the fire going in the cook stove, Anna would send her children to the mill to collect corn cobs to burn.

During the Roosevelt administration Jule began work for the W. P. A. (Work Projects Administration), building the dam in Strum and clearing out the underbrush below it. His wages were 22 cents per hour as an unskilled workman. From this day Anna was a dedicated Democrat. She was a staunch supporter of Roosevelt. For over thirty years one of her daughters-in-law never spoke to her, although her son visited often. Anna felt badly about this. She couldn't remember at all where the bad feelings had come from. Looking back the only argument she could remember was over Roosevelt. Anna was happy Jule had a job and thanked Roosevelt for it.

Anna continued to bring in extra money through her sewing skills. She remade old clothes for people all during the depression. She tore apart old clothes, made a pattern from newspaper, then sewed a new garment. Anna was always redoing things. Her customers would bring in catalogue pictures and Anna would copy the pattern. One winter she remade seventeen men's Mackinaws (heavy winter jackets).

The Gunderson home was always open to returning family members. In 1942, Anna youngest daughter married Cyrus Nelson. Both Cyrus and John Radcliffe, lone's husband, were in the service in World War II. Eunice and lone lived with Jule and Anna during this time. The house they lived in for almost twenty years was sold and they rented an apartment upstairs of the locker plant. Doris and Eunice each had daughters who lived with Jule and Anna. Anna enjoyed having babies in her house again. There was always an ever ready big jar of white sugar cookies for other grandchildren.

In 1948 their son Willard bought an old chicken coop and remodeled it into a little house for them on Hawthorne Street in Strum. One year later they celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary. Jule lived his remaining ten years here with Anna until he died on February 1, 1958. The last few years of Jule's life were hard ones for Anna. He had "hardening of the arteries" and grew senile. Every evening before they went to bed Anna had to walk with him around the house to make sure there weren't any boyfriends waiting for her. He also searched under the bed before going to sleep. Before he died, he was blind from cataracts. For the first time in her seventy-seven years Anna was alone at night. For six weeks she stayed at her daughter Eunice's house next door during the evening. At the end of this time Anna said, "Enough of this foolishness!" and stayed home alone.



Jule and Anna Gunderson on their
50th Wedding Anniversary
Photo courtesy of Jan Gunderson

Anna was surrounded by her large family. All of the sons and daughters lived within a twenty-mile radius of her. Not a day went by without one of them visiting her. Besides having many grandchildren, she also had many great-grandchildren. She was happiest with a house full of people around her. Many of Anna's grandchildren and great-grandchildren lived on the same street as she did. She had many small feet tracking in and out of her house all day long.

Anna continued to sew, knit and crochet for family and neighbors for the next fifteen years. In 1965 the Eau Claire Leader published an article on her. At that time, she had made over 300 smocked pillows in two years. For Christmas 1965 she made enough potholders, shaped like men's shirts with fancy ties, for the milkman to give as gifts to all his patrons. At the age of 81 Anna had a cataract removed from one eye and two years later, at the age of 83, had the second eye done. After

the operations were completed, Anna was so happy because she could thread a needle again.

Anna was active and alert well though her nineties. In 1973 Anna proudly attended her son's fiftieth wedding anniversary. Not too many mothers have that opportunity! Anna loved to read and watch television, besides doing all her sewing. Anna was a strong Democrat and kept up on each election and all the current events. She loved to talk about the past, as older people do but was up on everything happening in the community and around the world.

The little green house on Hawthorn Street was a busy one on Sundays as children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren filed in and out. Anna kept her cookie jar full and made her own brown sugar cubes for coffee, which were usually eaten as candy. Anna forgot just who spoke Norwegian and who didn't, sometimes lapsing into Norwegian at the wrong times. Her favorite expressions were "namen" and "ufta." Although the younger children didn't understand, the expression used and the twinkle of her eyes conveyed much meaning. Anna remembered the names of over one hundred grandchildren and great-grandchildren (and even two great-great-grandchildren) or at least who they belonged to. She was proud of everyone and would often remark, "Look what Jule and I started."

When Anna died in 1973 at the age of ninety-three, she didn't leave behind priceless antiques, a large bank account, or an oversized mansion for her children and grandchildren, but in each of the afghans, smocked pillows, slippers, potholders, and doll clothes she gave them is sewn a lot of love and caring. As her daughter Inez said, "Ma had to give, give, give. She never wanted but always gave." What could be a more perfect epitaph?

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NHOH TREASURER'S REPORT

January 1 – April 30, 2024

BALANCE 1/1/2024		\$8,055.53
Income		
Interest	\$10.69	
Donations - Genealogy	\$100.00	
Donations - Unrestricted	\$50.00	
Membership Dues	\$211.00	
		\$371.69
		\$8,427.22
Disbursements		
Newsletter	-\$357.78	
Fees	-\$50.00	
Bygdebøker-Genealogy	-\$161.14	
		-\$568.92
BALANCE 04/30/2024		\$7,858.30

NHOH Newsletter

The newsletter is published three times each year – Winter, Summer and Fall

Members are encouraged to submit to the newsletter. Articles, photos and graphics relating to Norwegian history, culture, emigration and Lag activities, especially those with ties to the NHOH geographical area are invited. Articles may be historical in nature or may highlight current resources available to help members research their heritage. Articles about Norwegian/American community events of interest to our members are welcome.

Send your contributions to the Newsletter Editor: Julie Glowka: julieg0503@gmail.com

Policy on advertising in the newsletter: The Board approved that the newsletter editor will accept advertising related to Norwegian culture, heritage and genealogy. Eighth and quarter page ads will be sold for \$15 and \$25, with funds to help offset the cost of producing the newsletter.



Nord Hedmark og Hedemarken Lag News

Julie Anderson Glowka, Editor

2330 Hillside Ave. St, Paul, MN 55108



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☐ Rendalen ☐ Ringsaker ☐ Romedal ☐ Stange ☐ Stor-Elvdal ☐ Tolga ☐ Trysil ☐ Tynset ☐ Vang

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