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Since 1911



*Serving Norwegian-Americans of Sigdal, Eggedal & Krødsherad ancestry*

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**Sigdalslag 2012  
Trip to Norway  
information  
included as a  
Saga insert!**



**Rosella Goettelman**  
*2010 Stevne banquet*

## **Rosella Goettelman - Translator Extrordanaire**

*by Dianne Enger Snell, Historian*

Rosella “Rosie” Goettelman of Decorah, Iowa, a long-time member of Sigdalslag, served as the principal translator from the original Norwegian versions to English editions of the Lag’s history books - *The Sigdalslag 1914 1920* published in 1997; *The Sigdalslag 1929 1932 1941* published in 1996; and *The Sigdalslag 1949* published in 2001.

Rosie has spent a massive amount of time over the years on this monumental task and her translations have been a priceless resource for present day members to glean a better understanding of the early years of Sigdalslag and its people. In addition she has translated the Lag’s old minutes from 1911 to 1970 which were kept in the Norwegian language until 1971.

Now she has completed a new year-long adventure. In 2010 our Genealogist Emeritus Lee Rokke discovered a 90-page hand-written manuscript buried away under the heading, *"Description of the Land, Legends and Customs of Sigdal in the late 1800s and early 1900s"* in the files at the Norwegian American Historical Association (NAHA) which is housed at St. Olaf College. It turned out that this manuscript was authored by none other than our Sigdalslag Founder, Anders Braateli Pedersen!

Realizing the historic significance of this find, Lee turned the treasure over to Rosie who spent an entire year translating the pages word by word and writing it all out by hand. Her efforts so impressed the people at NAHA that Rosie was awarded an honorary membership. Rosie’s translation of the manuscript is now in the process of being typed by *Saga* editor Scott Brunner and for possible inclusion in our future lag history book.

Rosie is a 100 percent Sigdøler, as both her father, Henry Ansten, and her mother, Inga Myran, were the children of Sigdal and Eggedal immigrants. They raised their family on a farm near Decorah which Henry’s grandparents had settled in 1851.

Rosella Ansten was born in 1927, the fourth of five siblings. She was a rural school-teacher and in 1948 she married Virgil Goettelman, a World War II veteran. Rosie and Virgil had two daughters and four grandchildren. Virgil passed away in 2009 at the age of 92.

Rosie has helped with translations in the genealogy room at the 7-Lag Stevner each year for many years, and in her “spare time” she volunteers at Vesterheim Museum in Decorah. Thank you Rosie, from the bottom of our hearts, for sharing your translation skills and your labors of love with Sigdalslag members now and for future generations!

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## Fra Presidenten:

Best wishes from Sigdalslag for a prosperous and successful New Year!

The Sigdalslag Executive Board met on Saturday, January 14, 2012. This was my first winter board meeting and I continue to be amazed at the hardworking board members. They take very good care of the lag's projects and finances. There are some exciting things coming up in 2012. Many are highlighted elsewhere in the Saga, so do read about them further.

- A trip to Norway is planned beginning at the end of August in 2012. This trip will be a unique opportunity because Sigrid Kvisle, who is the former head of the Sigdal museum and guided the Norwegians to our lag in Fargo last year, will meet us in Oslo and will arrange for four nights and three days in Sigdal, Eggedal and Krødsherad. It will include home visits and some home stays so that we can really get in touch with where our family came from. Please read the information about the trip elsewhere in the newsletter.
- The 2012 Stevne will be held from July 18-22 in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin. The plans for "Christmas in July" look great! This is a nice vacation spot and the programming already looks good. Our website is a wealth of information. More items are posted frequently! Do take the opportunity to look at it often. The information on turning in your emigrant obituaries is elsewhere in this issue. That is a wonderful resource and we thank our genealogist for coordinating it.
- The 2012 Sigdalslag book for immigrant ancestors and for families in this country who have not previously been featured should make for a great book! The deadline is June 30, 2012. Help the editors out by submitting your family information early. Our editor has served us very faithfully and is now moving on to editing the Sigdalslag 2012 book. Please consider acting as editor or co-editor!
- Some lags are moving to email newsletters for everyone who has an email address. This is a request for some of you with good email access to move to email copies of the newsletters and enjoy the beautiful Norwegian colors.

Hilsen,

Jean

## Stevne 2012 - A Norwegian Christmas in July

**A Norwegian Christmas in July** is the theme for the 2012 Stevne to be held July 18 – 21 at the Olympia Resort & Conference Center in Oconomowoc, WI. This will be a great Stevne in a resort location, so start making plans not to miss it!

The Stevne will go all out with a **Norwegian Christmas** theme. Highlights include special classes on Lefse making and “the Seven Mandatory Cookies in a Norwegian Home at Christmas!” There will be great exhibits and several vendors will bring in Christmas related materials including hard to find cooking utensils. A professional singer from Norway will teach Norwegian Christmas Carols for a mini concert at the banquet. Ole and Sven have promised to sing their version of “I Yust Go Nuts at Christmas” plus a few other carols from Stan Boreson and Yorgi Yorgesson.

Tours include Old World Wisconsin, one of the premiere interactive open-air museums in the country; Harley-Davidson (the Museum and/or the factory); and a brewery tour.

There are many things to see in the area and the Olympia can provide discounts (20%) to more than 10 golf courses in the area

The schedule includes:

1. Informal lag get acquainted sessions from 7:30-9 p.m. on Wednesday, July 18, 2012. The genealogy room open from 6 to 8 p.m.
2. On Thursday, July 19 registration opens at 8 a.m. with the opening meeting at 9:00 a.m. The day will include classes, genealogy, and a trip to Old World Wisconsin capped by an evening session and entertainment.
3. On Friday July 20, the genealogy room will be open until 2 p.m. and there will be classes in the morning and afternoon. Tours will include Harley-Davidson and/or the Brewery tour. The day will conclude with the banquet and entertainment.

Saturday July 21 is reserved for our lag meeting at 9 a.m. and an early departure with great memories.

The resort is located in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, right in between Milwaukee and Madison. It is conveniently situated less than 2 miles off of Interstate 94. The venue is all one large building that should be easy to negotiate for those with limited mobility. All activities will be on one floor and within 300 feet of each other. The hotel rooms are located in another part of the building accessible by an elevator. The price is \$79 a night and they can accommodate up to four people. There is a large pool and garden area. For preview pictures go to [olympiaresort.com](http://olympiaresort.com). Campers are allowed to park at the edge of the parking lot and may have electricity by Stevne time.

The reservation number is 1-800-558-9573. More details will be available in the upcoming May Saga.



## Sigdal's First Immigrant to America

Marilyn Somdahl has shared the photograph to the right - the tombstone of Erick Nelson at Evergreen Cemetery in Chebanse, Illinois. He was the very first immigrant from our Sigdal area that came to America! Erik Nilson Sølund was born January 6, 1821, at the farm Mellom Sølund in Eggedal. In 1839 he and another young single man came to the United States by joining others from Numedal bound for the Fox River settlement in Illinois. (The other young man was never heard from again). Marilyn submitted a more complete history on this family for our future book: Sigdalslag 2012.





## Erik Ramstad

### A Legend in Norway and North Dakota

*by Dianne Enger Snell, Historian*

Sigdal immigrant Erik Ramstad, original owner of the land which became the town-site of Minot, North Dakota, was reportedly a legend among his neighbors in Sigdal, Norway - so much so that Andreas Mørch, the noted genealogist and author of the Sigdal-Eggedal bygdebøker, visited Minot to research him for a book in 1981.

According to an article in the Sigdalslag archives from *Minot Daily News*, June 22, 1981: "Andreas Mørch and his son Asbjorn who live at Prestfoss five miles from Erik Ramstad's birthplace, are seeking information on Ramstad's life in America. Mørch, 79, a rural school teacher in Sigdal from 1923 until 1969, worked 50 years until 1975 to complete seven volumes of a history and genealogy of people from Sigdal, Eggedal and Krødsherad. Information on Ramstad's family is included in one of the volumes."

Andreas Mørch told the *Daily News* that he knew much about Ramstad's early life in Norway before he left for America at age 20, but he knew very little about the Ramstad who became a wealthy man in America. On this trip he hoped to learn the rest of the story..

Erik Reiersen was born on January 17, 1860, at Køsshaugen (a sub-farm of Veggesrud), to Anne Ellevsdatter and Reier Pedersen, and was baptized at the Holmen Church on April 9 of that year. Erik's father Reier Pedersen was born in 1800 at Gulsvik in Flå and in 1856 married Anne Ellevsdatter, born 1822 in Eidsdalseie. In the 1865 census for Norway the family is found in Sigdal Parish on the farm Køsshaugen, as follows: Reier Pedersen, tenant farmer; Anne Ellefsdatter, his wife; Peder Reiersen, 10 (1856); Erik Reiersen, 6 (1860); and Berte Reiersdatter, 5 (1861).

According to Mørch's account, Ramstad's birth home was a small log cabin on Køsshaugen and his parents were very poor. When the time came for the boy's confirmation he was unable to read or write. His parents sought help from the welfare commission to find him a place to stay in for his education, but nobody would take him because he was so mischeivous. The Lutheran Minister finally took Erik in for the next three years and taught him to read and write at the Holmen Church in Sigdal. After his confirmation Erik



worked on a farm for Steinar Ramstad for a year and took his name.

Steinar loaned Erik money when he wanted to go to America and Erik proved he was honest and sent the money back to Norway within two years. The emigration records from Sigdal show that Erik Reiersen left on July 14, 1879. His brother Peder followed him to America in 1880, and his mother and sister Berte came in 1885 after the death of Reier Pedersen in 1884. All of them took the name of Ramstad in America.

Erik Ramstad settled first at Albert Lea, Minnesota and later went to Grafton, North Dakota where he married his first wife, Oline. Erik writes of himself in the 1920 Sigdalslag: "In 1882 I was in

Grafton looking for land, but I didn't find any that I was satisfied with. In the meantime I heard from friends who were out west that the Mouse River Valley had many splendors to bid on. My brother Peder and I decided to go west. I had a good team of oxen and a couple of cows. With those animals we began our trip westward in 1883."

The brothers battled many hardships on their trip, including a "bad enemy—the familiar little fly that we call the mosquito. It was belligerent. We had to have buffalo netting around our exposed parts. We were able to tolerate it but the oxen had it worse. The mosquitos attacked them from all sides by the millions. We did our best to protect them by covering their mouths and ears with axle grease."

The trip took three weeks, and the first thing the brothers did upon arrival was look for land. There was plenty of it but since it was still unsurveyed they had to settle as squatters. Peder chose his homestead east of the Mouse River and Erik chose 80 acres where the townsite of Minot is now. Ramstad described it as as such: "There were large trees along the Mouse River in those days. We felled them, trimmed the branches and debarked them. The oxen pulled them to the building site. It didn't take long before we had birch to build with. As I was chopping and hammering, Iver Aasen's words went through my mind. 'Between hills and mountains out by the seas the Norwegian builds his house.' It wasn't Norway with it splendid mountains and light birch forest, but it seemed like it."

In his 1920 account Ramstad tells about the early days of farming and how they fashioned crude implements out of the trees in the nearby woods. He said, "I went to the woods and chopped down a big tree with many branches. I trimmed it and pulled it home with my oxen." That was his first harrow which he dragged back and forth across the land to break up and level the land. Then he sowed it by hand as they had in Norway. While waiting for the crops to grow he started thinking about how he was going to harvest them. "I didn't have any implements, but necessity made me resourceful and I made something called a 'krill' which is similar to a scythe.

The scythe worked like a charm to chop down the crop but what about threshing? Another innovation, a large tree was cut down and the top was chopped so there was a head and neck. The neck was laid between two planks which were bolted together. A threshing site was made out on the hill, a large post was driven down in the middle. The threshing machine was fastened to the post, the grain bundle was thrown on, the oxen pulled the machine and the threshing was in operation! They could roll out about 40 to 50 bushels of wheat in one day and 100 bushels of oats.

The Ramstad brothers eventually obtained a winnowing machine that was constantly on loan between the neighbors. Before the railroad era, to get the grain to market they would have to travel 140 miles to Bismark or 120 miles to Devils Lake. The trip to Devils Lake took eleven days, but, as Ramstad said, "No use to count the distance in days or miles. We proudly set off with our grain, and came home still more proudly with all kinds of good things."

In 1893 the Great Northern Railroad came to town and changed things forever. Erik deeded half of his land to James J. Hill of the Northwest Land Co. for the original town-site of Minot, the town was platted and houses were built. Ramstad gave the Soo Railroad right-of-way through his land. He erected the first building in what is now downtown Minot and made his home near the site of the Burlington Northern (formerly Great Northern) Railroad roundhouse. In 1920 Erik Ramstad was president of the Scandinavian American Bank and owner of the Great Northern Lumber Company. Truly a "rags to riches" story.

Erik's wife Oline was the first president of the Ladies Aid of the First Lutheran Church in Minot, the original congregation of Lutherans in the valley. Ramstad and Oline were divorced, and in later years he married Louise Herbranson of Norway. He had no children.

Ramstad was one of the strongest advocates among the Norwegian immigrants to keep church services in the Norwegian language. In 1920 he lamented against the present pastor, Rev. Gullixson, who "conspired" with some of the older members to change the services to English. In Ramstad's words: "They were so blinded by his shining greatness that

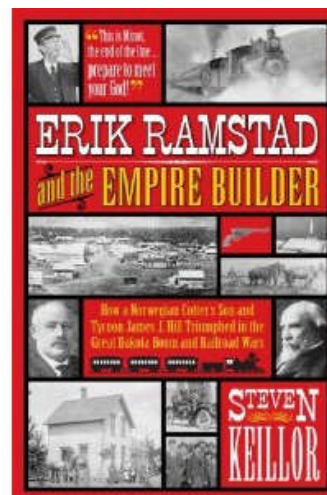
they promised to help him. When the day came, they betrayed the Norwegian language and the men who had struggled and built up both the congregation and the new area. Now I am homeless in my old church home. All the work, struggle, and expense is wasted. In Norwegian-American history Rev. Gullixson will be branded as the first traitor in this area against the Norwegian language and against the Norwegian pioneer who helped to build a pretty town and a good area in this our glorious land."

Erik Ramstad was an early member and supporter of Sigdalslag and is found on the 1914 membership list. He died at home in Minot, 614 1<sup>st</sup> St. SE, on January 21, 1951 at the age of 91.

Sources: *Minot Daily News*, July 1981; photo scanned from *Sigdalslaget 1920*, Norwegian version; *The Sigdalslag 1914-1920* translation, p. 141; *Digitalarkivet* (Digital Archives of Norway), *Sigdal-Eggedal Gard og slekt*, Bind VIII, 2007; *Find A Grave* and other internet websites.



*Erik Reiersen Ramstad 1860-1951*  
*A modest grave for a great man.*  
*First Lutheran Cemetery in Minot, North Dakota*



For further reading about our Sigdal hero, the following paperback book is available for purchase via Amazon Books at: [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

**Erik Ramstad and the Empire Builder**

by Steven J. Keillor

\$14.95 plus shipping



## Sigdalslag Norway Trip 2012

Sigdalslag is pleased to have completed the plans for the Norway visit for 2012 and it is really a great offering! Please refer to this heritage tour described in the center section insert of our newsletter for more information.

We are very excited because Sigrid Kvisle, recently retired from the museum in Sigdal, will coordinate our busing, cultural visits, local hotels or home-stays, and other special activities with our Sigdalslag relatives and old or new friends. She will meet our bus in Oslo and guide us during the time that we are in Sigdal, Eggedal and Krødsherad.

The trip includes tourist time and two nights in Oslo, four nights in Sigdal, mountain scenery, Undredal (known for its Geitost or goat cheese), the Flam railway, overnight in Flam, five hours viewing the fjords by boat, and two nights in historic Bergen.

Arrangements in Sigdal. The cost of the bus for September 3 through September 8 is estimated at \$300 or less per person depending upon the number of participants and the exchange rate of the US dollar to the Norwegian Krone. Recently the exchange rate has improved. Using a local bus is a substantial savings and Sigrid is working on the best possible rates. This is not included in the tour price, but exact prices will be available when the number of participants is known. Individuals will pay their own costs in Sigdal for local hotels and meals. Many will be utilizing home stays with relatives. We anticipate this to be a very cost effective portion of the trip.

Package and land only pricing. This flier includes both land and air and land only prices. Individuals may purchase a land only package where they will buy their own air or use miles/points. However, note that individually purchased air tickets are not cancelable if the tour is cancelled, or individuals purchase their tickets ahead of time and their plans change. There must be a group of ten people to secure the *Iceland Air* group space and special price and this will be ticketed after June 29. We currently have reserved 15 seats on *Iceland Air*, so get your reservations in early so that you do not have to alter your flights or have increased costs because the initial block is sold out.

Getting there. Using the group air package, tickets won't be issued until after final payment which is due on June 29. Please note that the Air package includes \$473.72 in air taxes and fuel surcharges. Most of the purchases for the tour are individually based, so only a minimum of 10 participants will be needed. The travel agent will assist you if you wish to add on time to your stay in Norway with both revising your reservation and booking of accommodations.

Group size and cancellation. If the group cancels, everyone gets their deposits back. Since the minimum group size is only ten, cancellation is not likely. The terms and conditions list all of the particulars.

For more information. All of the documents are posted on our website [www.sigdalslag.org](http://www.sigdalslag.org), including the brochure, registration form, terms and conditions, and travel insurance information. A "Question and Answer" document will also be posted. If you have questions, please email [president@sigdalslag.org](mailto:president@sigdalslag.org) and they can be answered or referred.



*Holmen Church in Sigdal*



*Vatnås Church in Sigdal*

## Miscellaneous News

### Sigdalslag Financial Report

Beginning Bank Balance January 1, 2011	\$ <u>18,018.27</u>
Ending Bank Balance December 31, 2011	\$ <u>18,144.78</u>

Submitted by Janice Johnson, Treasurer



### Editor or Co-editors Needed for the Saga

Sigdalslag needs an editor or co-editors. Please email current Sigdalslag President for more information at [president@sigdalslag.org](mailto:president@sigdalslag.org). This is a great opportunity to serve the lag and there are only three issues per year. The mailing out to members will be covered by a board member, so the position is to put together the newsletter using submitted information, editing as needing, and reminding those who need to have articles in of the deadlines. The lag will purchase the publisher software for use by the editor.

### E-mail Versions of the Saga

Consider receiving the Saga by email if you have the computer capability. You will be able to view the Saga in gorgeous color and you will save time, effort and money for your lag!

### Need a Password?

A password is needed to access the member's only portion of the website. If you do not have one, email Earl Knutson at [eoknut@en-tel.net](mailto:eoknut@en-tel.net).

### Emigrant Obituary Project

Sigdalslag has begun a collection of obituaries of emigrants from Sigdal, Eggedal and Krødsherad. WE NEED YOUR HELP! If you have the actual obituary of your ancestor(s) who emigrated from Sigdal, Eggedal or Krødsherad, please submit it via e-mail attachment or regular post. If you can scan the obituary digitally, please attach the scanned image to an e-mail addressed to [webmaster@sigdalslag.org](mailto:webmaster@sigdalslag.org). Or, you may send a print or photocopy version of the obituary to our genealogist: Garth Ulrich, 3099 Dunn Drive, Prince Albert, SK, S6V 6Y6, CANADA.

### Sigdalslag 2012

The next Sigdalslag book is underway. This will celebrate the centennial for Sigdalslag and include new and updated family stories. Be sure to send your own family story for emigrants who were not in the first books and their descendant stories. Some may have to write two stories: one on your emigrant ancestors and one on your own family. Because of space restrictions, you are asked to limit your stories to 1000 words or less, which is about one page. Please send pictures to use with your stories. If you choose to send pictures by email, please use jpeg format. Editors will be working on the book for most of the year, and the extended deadline for family histories is June 30 2012. It would really help the editors if you could get family stories in as soon as possible. They should be e-mailed to Scott Brunner at [scottbru@execpc.com](mailto:scottbru@execpc.com). There are models from earlier family stories available on the website.

**THE SIGDALSLAG  
2012**

# Member

## In Memory...



### Adeline Roadfeldt



Adeline Roadfeldt, age 70, died Friday, Nov. 18, 2011, at St. Mary's Hospital in Rochester, Minn. Adeline Pearl Blotter was born Feb. 19, 1941, in Underwood, N.D., to parents Emil and Evelyn. Emil, an amateur accordion player, named his first-born daughter after the 1903 ballad, "You're the Flower of My Heart, Sweet Adeline."

The Blotter family (Emil, Evelyn, Addy and Lois) moved to Bismarck in 1956 where Addy attended Bismarck High School, spent summers working at the state insurance department and the KFYZ television station as a secretary, and graduated in 1959 as the class salutatorian.

Addy left North Dakota and attended Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minn., graduating in 1963 with a nursing degree. At Gustavus, she also met future husband, William "Bill" John Roadfeldt. He

soon realized that she was not a shy wallflower, but had a great deal of spunk. The two were married in West St. Paul on March 21, 1964.

In addition to encouraging her children and her husband, Addy was a comforting nurse to thousands of patients. She worked in Minneapolis, Mankato and Findlay, Ohio, in hospitals, assisted care facilities and for public health. In 2002, Addy and Bill moved to Northfield to begin their retirement.

Addy is survived by her husband, William Roadfeldt of Northfield; daughter, Holly Roadfeldt-O'Riordan, and her husband, Kirk O'Riordan, of Easton, Penn.; son, Charles Roadfeldt, and his wife, Christi Roadfeldt, of Severn, Md.; and sister, Lois (Lotte) Bailey, of Bismarck, N.D. She was preceded in her death by her parents, Emil Blotter and Evelyn Blotter, of Bismarck, N.D.

A memorial service was held at noon Saturday, Jan. 7, 2012, at St. John's Lutheran Church in Northfield, with the Rev. Bob Iverson officiating.

### Howard H. Berg



(Howard was an active member of Sigdalslag and family historian. At every stevne he added material to the book that he contributed to our library: The Berg-Brevik History)

Howard H. Berg passed away Sunday, September 18, 2011, at the age of 80. Survived by Ruth, his beloved wife of 38 years; sister-in-law, Phyllis Berg and many nieces and nephews. Preceded in death by parents, Carl C. and Mable Berg; sister Clara Johansen; brother C. H. Berg; brother Donald R. Berg and his wife Shirley Berg. Howard was born in Starbuck, Minnesota, on October 4, 1930. He served in the Korean War from April 13, 1951, to April 2, 1953. He farmed and worked as a carpenter until he started his own general contracting business as The RuHow Company. He was a member of Westwood Lutheran Church in St. Louis Park. Interment at Fort Snelling National Cemetery.

### Howard Skjervem



Howard Milton Skjervem, 81, Grand Forks, ND, passed away October 18, 2011, at Altru Hospital, Grand Forks. His memorial service was October 24 at Dahlen Lutheran Church,

Dahlen, ND, where he lived and worked most of his life. Burial was nearby at Zion Cemetery.

Howard and his siblings have been Sigdal Lag members. He is survived by a sister, Arlene Skjervem, Grand Forks; nephews James Skjervem, Sierra Vista, AZ, and Mark (Janie) Skjervem of Los Angeles, CA; two great-nephews, Ian and Samuel, of Los Angeles. He was preceded in death by his parents, a brother, Carmen and his first wife, Shirley, and second wife, Carlene, of Cheyenne, WY.

Born July 24, 1930, at Dahlen, North Dakota, to Henry and Marie (Olsen) Skjervem, Howard was baptized by his grandfather, Rev. Hans Christian Olsen, at Middle Forest River Church. He attended school in Dahlen and was active in sports. He was confirmed by Rev. Lars A. Haatvedt at Dahlen Lutheran Church and graduated from high school in 1948.

After two years service in the US Army, he was discharged in September 1954 and later purchased the Dahlen Auto and Machine Company from his father. He lived in the family home and cared for both parents in their declining years so that they could remain in their own home. He excelled at bowling and golf. He retired in 1994 and then moved to Grand Forks.

### Harold Medalen

Harold Medalen, born Harald Medalen passed away at home on July 10, 2011, surrounded by the family he loved. He was born on July 13, 1926, to Helge

Please share with us your families news of marriages, graduations, long term anniversaries, significant milestones, and the passing of loved ones.





and Jøran (Stavn) Medalen in Eggedal, in the mountains of southern Norway. He grew up on the family farm and has many fond memories of skiing and logging with horses in the winter, log drives on the river in the spring, fishing trout in the lakes, hiking and hunting in the mountains, and harvesting oats and hay with a scythe.

A formative event in his life was the German invasion of Norway in 1940. The Medalen family chose to fight the invaders rather than collaborate. They were actively involved in the resistance movement throughout the war. In the

spring of 1945, Harold was wounded in action in a battle with German and Norwegian Nazi troops. After a narrow escape over the mountains into Hallingdal by ski and sled to receive medical care, he was able to avoid capture and survive until the war ended. The experience left him with a partially disabled right arm and a dim view of any country invading another.

After the war, there was a great deal of work to be done to get the farm back in shape and to replace buildings burned by the invaders. By 1950 this was largely completed, but the Norwegian economy was still struggling with the aftermath of the war. Like many before him, he emigrated to the United States in search of a better life. He first came to Barton, North Dakota, where his cousin Chris Medalen had a farm. While there he met his future wife and the love of his life, Sigrid Dokken, who was teaching at the nearby country school house. In 1951 he got the

opportunity to go to Petersburg, Alaska. His first job was at a local sawmill but he quickly decided commercial fishing was the work for him. He married Sigrid in 1955 and brought her to Petersburg where they made their home.

Harold was a hard worker and always liked to keep busy. For many years he fished on the "Zarembo" with Pete Sather. In 1964 he began gillnetting with a Bristol Bay powerboat that he put a pilot house and deck on himself. He then had the first "Provider" built so he could fish halibut. In 1976 it was replaced with a larger boat of the same name, and in 1982 he got the "Vixen" for gillnetting. He kept busy in the off season, working as a pilebuck in marine construction and later as a shipwright for many years at Mitkof Marine Ways. He slowly retired from fishing through the early 1990s but kept his hand in boating with frequent trips to the

family cabin at Portage Bay.

He was a capable handyman, carpenter, gardener and outdoorsman, and an avid reader in history and current events. He liked people and particularly enjoyed visitors from Norway. He and Sigrid traveled to the old country many times, and in 1995, he was honored by an audience with the King. His last trip home was in 2010, to attend the 65th year reunion of Haglebu Company, his old resistance unit.

He is survived by his wife Sigrid; his sister Mari Froyse of Eggedal Norway; children Karen Olsen, Harold Medalen, Mike Medalen and Kirsten Dupree; grandchildren Ken Thynes, Trent Thynes, Karsten Olsen, Eva Rodriguez, Samantha Medalen, Clara Medalen, Stuart Medalen, Jennifer Dupree, Paul Dupree and great grandson Sajjon White.

## New Member Spotlight!

*My name is Lori Giordano and I live in Springfield, Illinois. Although my mother and her parents were born here in the U.S., she is a full blooded Norwegian and very proud of her heritage. I have always been very interested in genealogy and while working on my grad degree in history, I learned the basics of research for a couple of papers. Most of my mother's family had already been very well documented by Rolf Erickson and Audrey Berner White in a book entitled, "Nævra-Erickson: A Sigdal Family", but her mother's parents weren't included. Because there has been a lot of interest from the family over the years about finding out more about them, I began to do some research to see what I could come up with. Of course, Norwegian genealogy can be challenging, especially for someone who doesn't speak or write the language, and I began searching around online for some help and*

*found this group. Because so many of my grandfather's family came from Sigdal (and I have now discovered that my maternal great-grandmother also came from the area, thanks to this group), I decided to become a member, and perhaps meet some distant relatives.*

Lori Giordano  
lorelei1973@msn.com  
5841 N. Walnut Street Rd.  
Springfield, IL 62707

Farm names: Øverby, Nævra



## A Really Royal Event! October 13, 2011

*by Irene Navarre*

An invitation to be one of the honored guests to welcome their majesties King Harold and Queen Sonja of Norway to Vesterheim Museum? Having served for thirteen years on the Board of Trustees at Vesterheim, would I decline? I accepted. Along with other former Trustees. Arriving from a ceremony at Luther College at about 3:30 p.m., their majesties entered the Museum.

For a gift package for the royals, The Scandinavian Club of Albuquerque contributed a hand painted condolence card (so soon after the tragic massacre in Norway). I contributed informal photos I snapped of King Olaf on his visit to Dallas, Texas, in 1982 (King Harald's father), and a new book "Bedtime and Other Stories from the Presidents' Guesthouse" 2011, by the Danish-American author, Benedicte Valentiner. For security reasons, no wrapping. Gifts were to be visible.

Vesterheim's gift to the royal couple was a plate with rosemaling and a portrait of the Royal Couple painted by a Vesterheim Gold Medalist, Norma Wangess of Decorah, who has roots in Sigdal! There were many welcomes, flowers and speeches. Outside, the Nordic Dancers defied the stiff wind and danced; the Luren Singing Society braved the gusts and sang, and Queen Sonja, safe inside, cut the ribbon for a new exhibit of bronzes by a Norwegian-American sculptor, Asbjorsen, from Chicago. Another new exhibit was a group of painted Norwegian furniture, a gift from Mrs. Norman Vincent Peale. Awesome! Fortunately the trustees were positioned inside the Museum! After a public press conference moderated by the Royal Palace Communications Personnel, heavy security whisked away the King and Queen amidst the cheering and waving crowds of people. Yes, the wind was still blowing!

Retreating to the home of our delightful hostess, Marion Rude (the widow of a deceased cousin, Leslie Rude, a Hadeland descendant who had taught at Luther College), if only to comb our hair, my nephew James Jones escorted me to dinner with the other honored trustees, to regale ourselves in lively conversation, good food, and the aftermath of a regal event.

This was an official visit, unlike the informal visit to Vesterheim 15 years ago when the Board of Trustees entertained the much younger Royal Couple. This visit, revealed the striking similarity between the now older King Harald and his father King Olaf.



*Photos of the  
Royal Couple in  
Northfield, MN  
taken by  
Dale Buisman*



### TV News Clip:

Sigdalslag members celebrated the visit of King Harald and Queen Sonja to Minnesota, including Marilyn Somdahl. She was featured on Twin Cities television station KSTP. The news clip is available for viewing on our Sigdalslag website.

## Surveys & library Contributions

### *Sigdalslag Surveys have been received from:*

- Vickie Storlie on the family of **KNUD KNUDSEN KILLAND & ANNA OLSDATTER KOLORAD**

### *Sigdalslag Web News:*

- Recap and over 100 miscellaneous pictures of our Centennial Celebration are available. From July 2011 in Fargo, North Dakota.
- Photographs with history have been posted on all the churches of the region: Haglebu Fjelkirke, Eggedal Kirke, Veikåker Kapell, Olberg Kirke, Glesne Kapell, Holmen Kirke, Vatnås Kirke, Solumsmoen Kapell.
- Information and forms are present on a planned 2012 Sigdalslag Trip to Norway.
- Our farm photo project continues, listed under the title "Ancestral Homes". The following farms have recently been added:
  1. Skavredalen (Bergli) Sigdal submitted by Garth Ulrich
  2. Nedre Grønhovd Eggedal submitted by Rebecca Hanna
  3. Grensplassen (Gren Mellom) Sigdal submitted by Garth Ulrich
  4. Foss Eggedal submitted by Rebecca Hanna
- History article with photographs of our historic Sigdalslag Banner are present.
- Emigrant Obituary Project has begun. So far 28 death notices have been submitted.
- Old photograph of a Sigdalslag Meeting taken in 1950 at Grand Forks, North Dakota.
- 1911-2011 Sigdalslag History, PDF version of a power point presentation prepared for our Centennial by Dianne Snell, Sigdalslag Historian.
- Article posted from the periodical, *Norwegian-American Weekly*. This article interviewed our former Sigdalslag President, Judy Sosted, about our Lag Centennial Celebration and Lag history. It included a photo of some Lag officers.

Thank you to our above contributors. You can send your digital farm or obituary pictures to our Sigdalslag Webmaster, Ed Espe, at [webmaster@sigdalslag.org](mailto:webmaster@sigdalslag.org).

## Correction

From the October 2011 Saga:

1. Page 4 of the newsletter says that Olaf Turmo carried the banner box to America. Rather, the box was mailed to Lars N. Mohagen in Fargo. The box is currently being stored by Allan Turmo at his home in Fargo.
2. Page 11 of the newsletter says that a gift of \$685 was given by Linda Turmo to be used for scanning the flag. It was not given by one, but by a number of people, most whom were descendants of Olaf Turmo.

**Congratulations and best wishes to Sigrid Kvisle on her retirement from the Sigdal Museum. We thank her for all her years of helpful information to our Lag and its membership!**

### *Velkommen, nye lag medlemmer!*

- **LYLE ENDERUD**  
Bella Coola, British Columbia
- **CHRISTIE NICHOLS**  
Moscow, Idaho
- **NEIL NYSTROM**  
Colorado City, Colorado
- **OLAUG K. FINSRUD**  
Skotterud, Norway
- **LORI GIORDANO**  
Springfield, Illinois
- **PETER LEE**  
Eagan, Minnesota



# Sigdal'slag Saga

Serving Norwegian-Americans of Sigdal,  
Eggedal & Krødsherad ancestry



FIRST CLASS MAIL

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**Comments? Suggestions?** SAGA solicits feature articles, news, pictures & obituaries from members. E-mail [sigdal'slagsaga@yahoo.com](mailto:sigdal'slagsaga@yahoo.com), or contact the editor (see Pg. 2).

Next deadline: April 15, 2012

**Changed your mailing or e-mail address?**

Don't miss an issue! Please contact Earl Knutson at [eoknut@en-tel.net](mailto:eoknut@en-tel.net)

NOTE: the YEAR shown on the mailing label next to your name indicates that your membership is paid thru DECEMBER of that year.



Two portrait photos were taken by a professional photographer the day of our Centennial Celebration. One group photo is of our Sigdal'slag members, and the second photo is of the Norwegian stevne attendees. These photos are now available to order. Prices are \$15 for each 8x10 inch portrait, then add \$4 mailing cost for the order. Other photo sizes are available. Contact information is as follows:  
Searle Swedlund, P.O. Box 786, Moorhead, MN 56561.  
Phone number (701) 306-6255.

Both photos are also available for free download on our website with a release form, so you can make your own prints!

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BUSKERUD Family Origin in (circle one) - SIGDAL EGGEDAL KRØDSHERAD

Emigrant Ancestor's name \_\_\_\_\_

Farm name \_\_\_\_\_ Year Emigrated \_\_\_\_\_

2012 Dues: **USA and CANADA** \$10/YR or \$25/3 YR, in US dollars  
**ELSEWHERE** \$12/YR or \$30/3 YR, in US dollars

Make check payable to **Sigdal'slag** and mail to:

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