



SIGDALSLAG SAGA

SINCE 1911

SERVING NORWEGIAN-AMERICANS OF SIGDAL, EGGEDAL AND KRØDSHERAD ANCESTRY

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Velkommen, nye lag medlemmer!

- Debbie Gross
Hampshire, IL
- Natalie Habstritt
Roseau, MN
- Bruce Morey
Billings, Montana



Our fantastic bus driver, Bjørn



Sigrd Kvisle, our tour guide and Birger Moen from the Bygdeposten

2012 Sigdalslag Tour a Great Success

Great scenery, enlightening history, delicious food and warm, fun-filled people made the trip to Norway a very meaningful experience for all who took part in the Sigdalslag tour. I certainly was moved by the experience and feel grateful for the opportunity to connect with the rich history and culture of my Norwegian ancestors. Our thanks to the many people who made it possible.

My hope, as the new editor of the Sigdalslag Saga, is that it will remain the quality newsletter that was put out by my predecessor, Scott Brunner. I look forward to serving you all. Jean Borgerding



The 2012 Sigdalslag Tour Group

Front row, l to r: Gilmore Lee, Connor Emert, Shirley Augustine, Dianne Snell, Jean Knaak, Jean Borgerding, Betty Knutson and Suzanne Nordstrom

2nd row, l to r: Calvin Jokstad, Harold Kosbau, Daniel Emert, Betty Kosbau, Sigrd Kvisle, Tallie Habstritt, Sheila Winstead, Linda Mohn, Deborah Fey, Carol Niewinski and Beverly Emert

3rd row, l to r: Olaf Vatnås (caretaker of Vatnås church), Edwin Harp, Lila Harp, Dale Buisman, Sandra Hendrickson and Earl Knutson

Please Note!

Concerning the **Sigdalslag Centennial Scholarship Program** found on pages 10 & 11:

This year **only**, the application deadline will be November 30.

We welcome donations to the Scholarship Fund.



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Fra Presidenten,

This has been an exciting year for Sigdalslag. "Christmas in July", our Stevne, held from July 18-22 at the Olympia Resort and Conference Center in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, was a great success with interesting programming and a really nice facility and resort area. To quote a line found in old minutes of Norwegian events, "A good time was had by all".

The 2013 Stevne will be held in St. Cloud, MN from July 11-13. It already looks like a program with some new features and interesting sessions! Refer to the website **7lagstevne.com** for more information, classes, site, etc. Our website will contain additional information in the future.

The Norway trip from August 31-September 10 exceeded our expectations. The 23 attendees felt privileged to become a cohesive group that had great fun together. For many of us the highlight was the time that we spent in Sigdal. Personally, Lila Harp from the group and I found that we were fourth cousins and had the joy of meeting another fourth cousin, Eva Rolfsrud, from Sigdal; we all had coffee at Omlisetra where our mutual three great grandparents had grown up. This was a cottage that had been restored into a vacation cabin. We were told that the structure, log walls, kitchen cupboard and bunk bed likely were from the time of our great grandparents. Without the assistance of our Norway arranger and guide, Sigrid Kvisle, and our genealogist, Garth Ulrich, this would never have happened for the three of us.

We are so grateful to Sigrid Kvisle and all of the many people who helped to make our time in Sigdal and Krødsherad so very special. The hospitality was unsurpassed and the food was wonderful! We had moose, called Elg in Norwegian, on a number of occasions always accompanied by lingonberries and boiled potatoes. They had a whole variety of lefses, called kling. Waffler was very commonly served with sour cream and jam for coffee and dessert.

There was one sad note. Beverly Emert brought both son Dan and grandson Connor with on the trip to Norway and it was great to see three generations. Bev was such an enthusiastic addition to our group on her first trip out of continental North America. She anticipated returning to Norway in the future. We returned on September 10 and Bev died suddenly on the 16th. Our hearts go out to Dan, Connor and their families.

We have two new positions of service and leadership to the lag: Jean Flaten Borgerding has accepted the position of Editor and Daniel Flatin has accepted the webmaster position. Yes, they really are distant cousins dating to the Flatin farm in Eggedal! We are delighted to have them working with us and express our sincere thanks to our previous Editor, Scott Brunner and previous Webmaster, Ed Espe. They have devoted many years to the newsletter and website and we can well be very proud that both are products of our lag.

Hilsen,

Jean

The Sigdalslag 2012 Borton tour to Norway was a great success.

Submitted by Dale R Buisman, Secretary

We left from various parts of the country and met at various legs of the tour but we were all together for the photo on page 1 which was taken by Birger Moen at the Vatnås church and appeared with an article in the Bygdposten . <http://www.bygdposten.no/>

For many folks this was a repeat trip to the homeland, but for the majority of the group it was the first in a lifetime trip to see the homeland that our ancestors had to leave behind. For Dan and Connor Emert, the return home had to have been bittersweet as Dan’s mother & Connor’s grandmother, Beverly Emert, passed away on Sunday, September 16th 2012, less than one week after the conclusion of the trip. All three are seen in the photo on page 1. Our continual condolences go out to the Emert family. A special collection is being taken up and the money will be donated in her name to the Sigdalslag Scholarship Fund.

Our tour started in Oslo, where we began our exposure to Norway. We had plenty of free time for each of us to explore the city and have our own experiences of this fine international city. Most everyone enjoyed spending some time at Vigeland park. <http://www.vigeland.museum.no/en/vigeland-park>

The highlight in many of our minds of the trip would be our 4 days and nights in Buskerud. Much of our stay was organized by Sigrid Kvisle. Not only was she able to keep track of the whole group’s schedule, for several of us she had helped make special arrangements for us to meet with our cousins. Many of us were able to connect with relatives that we previously had not known. We were able to visit several old church buildings and cemeteries where our ancestors may have worshiped and are now buried. It was quite a thrill to be able to visit some of the farms where our ancestors were born and the actual land that they too once walked. Our visit to the fylke (county) of Buskerud concluded with a dinner at the Folk Music Center in Prestfoss Buskerud. <http://www.folkemusikksenteret.no/> Some of the food we enjoyed included elg,



potatoes and lingonberry jam. Our President, Jean Knaak, presented a gift of \$1000.00 from Sigdalslag to the Folk Center Museum, a framed picture of Minnesota was given to our guide, Sigrid Kvisle, and wood carvings of trolls that were made by Lowell Torkelson of Minnesota were presented to representatives of the Mayor of Sigdal, Mary K. Ash, and Krødsherad Mayor, Olav Skinnes, both of whom were unable to attend.

On Friday, 7 September, we had to bid farewell to our homeland area and Sigrid as we made our way westward through Norway via bus, train and ship. Some of the cities we

visited on the way included Nesbyen, Flåm, Undredal and finally the city of Bergen.

At Mydal we boarded the train to Flåm and saw some of the world’s most spectacular waterfalls. Just the number of them alone is quite overwhelming, not to mention the size. In Flåm we were served a very large smørgåsbord dinner. What a treat to try many types of fish, meats, cheeses, fruits, vegetables and desserts. Many of us used some of our time here to shop for souvenirs such as real Norwegian wool sweaters. We were taken on a bus excursion to the mountain village Undredal. We were once again provided a scrumptious meal and regaled with great stories of Norwegian trolls and cheese. From Flåm we went aboard a fjord express boat. We moved along at about 36 miles per hour through the fjords of western Norway. The water was so clear, the mountains were so high, making some of the waterfalls just breathtaking.





The boat docked in the far western city of Bergen. We enjoyed a guided walking tour of this ancient city as well as ample time to explore some of the sites on our own.

On Monday morning, September 10th we had to board the plane, taking our memories, relatives' addresses and pictures with us but leaving Norway behind. The entire board should be praised for their work on this fabulous tour, but specifically the hard work and time put in by President Jean Knaak is greatly appreciated.



HISTORIC CHURCHES OF SIGDAL & KRØDSHERAD KOMMUNES

By Dianne Snell, Historian

Note: Dear Readers, Our 2012 Sigdalslag Tour of Norway included visits to several churches in Sigdal and Krødsherad Kommunes. There is such fascinating history and beauty associated with these churches that I decided to write a brief synopsis of each of them for those of you who could not be there in person.



Olberg Church with Lake Krøderen in the background

Olberg Kirke

Olberg Church is located in a beautiful setting on the shores of Lake Krøderen in Krødsherad Kommune. The present church was consecrated in 1859 by Vicar Jørgen Moe on the site of an old stave church which was mentioned in parish archives dating back to 1347. The original church was closer to the lake and was torn down because it was in poor condition and it had become too small for the congregation.

The altar piece, *"The Baptism of Jesus"* was painted in 1878. In the chancel there is an older altar piece, *"The Last Supper"* from 1706, which was copied from a copper-plate engraving by the German painter Albrecht Dürer. After the old church was demolished the altar piece was stored

under poor conditions in the church attic for more than 100 years and was badly decayed but with urging from local historians it was restored in 1980 by carpenter Bjørn Tandberg and noted painter Hans Wold.

A painting, *"The Passion of the Christ"* from 1704 hangs in the chancel and nave. It was sold at auction in 1859 and returned to the church in 1983. Other priceless artifacts include a baptismal font from 1725 and a silver altar chalice from 1656. Four stained glass windows were made in 1917 by Emmanuel Vigeland, brother of famous sculptor Gustav Vigeland. At the time of the Reformation (1536) Krødsherad was made a "parish of ease" administered by Sigdal parish. In 1752 Krødsherad Parish became a chapelry, and in 1960 it was again named as a clerical district with Olberg as the main church.



Holmen Kirke



Holmen Church is the principal church for Sigdal municipality and is located in Prestfoss. Holmen was dedicated in 1853 by the Bishop of Oslo. The new church was needed as it was determined that the old church could no longer be used.

In 1845, a committee was appointed to look into the matter of needed renovation of the old church, but when the construction was checked with a plumb line, it was discovered that some of the pillars had moved one inch in only four years. Also, some of the framework had been removed during earlier renovations which left the building without proper support. It was feared that the entire structure would collapse in time. A proposal was made to tear down the old church and erect a new one at the same site but the local council decided against this. Instead it was agreed that a new church should be built just northeast of the old one but then it was discovered that the ground at the new site wasn't firm enough for a building of that size, so the new church was finally located on a nearby rocky hill.

A master builder from Drammen was hired to construct the church, including the roof, for 460 silver dollars. The carpentry cost 580 silver dollars and the exterior painting, 437 silver dollars.



In 2012, Cal Jokstad enjoyed the thrill of posing by the font where his father, Carl Johann Angel Jokstad, was baptized in 1887.

Eggedal Kirke



Eggedal Church was built in 1878 at the site of the present town center and replaced an old stave church which was torn down because of needed repairs and insufficient size for the growing congregation. Remnants of the old church are still visible on the steep hillside north of the town and from there one can look down at the valley and see the "new" church. The present church building seats 300 and there is also a separate funeral chapel behind the church and cemetery stones surrounding it.



Eggedal Kirke (cont.)



Unique to the Eggedal Kirke is the interior décor which features rather modernistic ceiling paintings depicting the symbolic representations of the four gospel writers, St. Matthew as an angel, St. Mark as a lion, St. Luke as a bull, and St. John as an eagle, and a painting of Jesus who appears to be giving a peace sign.

Vatnås Kirke



The Vatnås Church is the oldest existing church in the Sigdal Parish and located in the area known as Grenskogen (green woods) From the 12th century there has been a church at Vatnås, the present one built around 1665. It is presumed that the first church burned in the 14th century, and an old legend tells why there is a church on this spot.

When King Olav, (died in 1030 and sainted in 1031) with his army, came over the mountains they were out of water. Olav turned to God for help and promised to build a church there if water was found. A spring appeared in a nearby rock formation, and since that time has never dried up, even in dry summers. The spring is alleged to have healing powers and in days of

Vatnås Kirke (cont.)

old many people came to drink the water and get well. Valuable objects were donated by grateful visitors, for instance a large candlestick made out of brass from a family whose daughter was healed by the water.

The only artifact left from the old church is the cross. It was found on the hill where the present church stands and is thought to be from the 14th century.

The altar and pulpit are from the 17th century as well as the carved posts of the 12 apostles which form the chancel screen. The altar piece features carvings of Moses and Aaron and a crucifix which dates back 500 years hangs on a side wall. The gilded shrine gracing the altar is copied from the original from the 1600's which was taken to Denmark during the Danish rule of Norway and is displayed in a museum in Copenhagen. The copy was presented to the Vatnås Church in 1996.

The interior of the church underwent extensive restoration, nearly total reconstruction, which began in autumn of 1947 and culminated in a huge celebration on St. Hans Day in 1948 upon completion of the project.

A quote by one of the restoration masters summed up the aura of Vatnås: *“The expectations one gets when one approaches the Vatnås Church are fully met when one enters the door. The feelings flourish and grow. Baroque and rococo unite with Grenskogen’s own beautiful forest materials;--there is a strength and peace of mind, a quiet joy that is stunning.”* (Loosely translated from Norwegian by Google.)



Sigdal historian and tour guide Sigrid Kvisle relates the history of Vatnås Church during the 2012 tour.



Haglebu Kirke



The newest church in Sigdal Kommune is the stone church on Haglebu Mountain which opened in 1980. This memorial church was built on the historic site which marks the last battle of World War II fought by the Norwegians against the Germans on 26 April, 1945. Also at the site is a stone monument in honor of the Norwegians who died in that battle.

The foundation stone of the Haglebu Church was placed in July 1978 by Bishop Dagfinn Hauge, and it was officially opened by Bishop Håkon Anderson on 24 August 1980. The site was donated by Helje Medalen and the architect was Reidar Sølvsberg.

The church building was erected with volunteer labor by residents and area chalet owners. It is now owned and run by the Haglebu Mountain Church Foundation which holds a yearly "jumble sale" for the main source of income. Anyone interested may become a member of the foundation for a yearly fee.

Services are held periodically in the winter, on Easter and at times during summer and fall. Each year is brought to a close with a New Year service.



Haglebu Memorial Monument inscribed with names of Norwegian soldiers who died in the last battle of World War II. A metal plaque on the front is engraved with gratitude to the fallen comrades.

Sigdalslag Surveys have been received from:

- 1) April Putnam on Hans Jørgen Bjørnsen Redahl
- 2) Tone Kolsrud Schulstock on Ole Sebjørnsen Kolsrud

Thank you to the following members that have recently made submissions to our Emigrant Obituaries Project: Eunice Foster, Twila Halvorson, Jim Hanson, and Cheryl Nousaine.

Thank you also to members Ivan Brattelid and Eunice Foster for sending materials that will be added to the Sigdalslag Library.

Continue to send your emigrant obituaries to Garth Ulrich, our genealogist, for posting on the website.

Member News....

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



In Memory...

Beverly Ann Emert

Pendleton – Beverly Ann Emert, beloved mother and grandmother, 70, of Pendleton died Sunday, September 16th 2012 at her home. Memorial service will be held on October 20th at 1:00pm at the First Christian Church, 215 N. Main St. Pendleton, Oregon 97801. Beverly was born September 20th 1941 in Cherokee, Iowa to Edward and Lois Mae Nelson. She graduated from Larrabee High School and received a bachelor’s degree from Western States Teacher’s College in Colorado. She married Phillip Emert in 1966 at the United Methodist Church in Salem. She taught at Athena-Weston Elementary and at Washington Elementary School in Pendleton until retirement.

Some of Beverly’s hobbies included painting, taking care of her many birds, and genealogy, as well as singing with Sisters in Song and spending time with her family. She recently had returned home from completing a lifelong dream of traveling to Norway to find her family homestead.

Beverly is survived by her children, Daniel and Lorie Emert of Pendleton, Andrew Emert and Sola Whitehead of Portland and John and Rebecca Emert-Mills from Stanfield. She is also survived by her 4 beloved grandchildren, Connor and Mason Emert of Pendleton and Alexander and Samuel Emert from Portland. She also had just become a surrogate grandmother to Geneva and Olivia Mills from Stanfield for which she was extremely excited! She is also survived by her mother Lois Mae Nelson, brothers, Jim and Gary Nelson, and sisters, Marjie Gauthier and Gail VanScoyk of Iowa.

She was preceded in death by her father Edward and her husband Phillip.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Blue Mountain Wildlife Rescue Center and Blue Mountain Genealogical Society, also Good Samaritan Ministries. Pendleton Pioneer Chapel, Folsom-Bishop is in charge of arrangements.



Dan , Connor and Beverly Emert dining in Undredal

REMINDERS:

Family stories are still being accepted for the Sigdalslag book. If your family or parts of the family have never been included, please prepare them and send to brunner315@yahoo.com .



PRESS RELEASE:

KOMM HJEM TIL NORWAY HOUSE

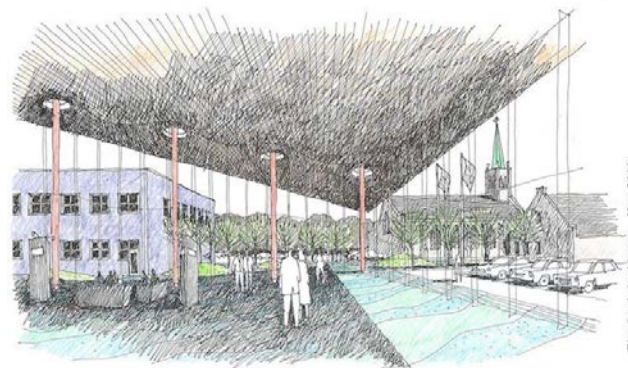
Imagine a place in Minnesota where all things Norwegian are located, embraced and cultivated. That dream began to materialize in 2004 when a group of inspired Norwegian-Americans perceived such a need and founded Norway House with a mission to partner with individuals, other organizations, and businesses in the Norwegian American community. Norway House would serve as a convener calling others together for a common goal, as a collaborator helping others achieve success, and as a platform, a multi-purpose building to serve as a place to conduct Norwegian-American activities.

Since its inception, Norway House has been a bridge between Norway and the United States through programs that preserve and promote an appreciation and understanding of the Norwegian-American experience and its relationship to modern Norway: Norway House Minnesota Peace Initiative is a program that serves as a global facilitator for dialogue and development of a road map for peace in the 21st century and features prominent speakers working for world peace; Edvard Grieg Society promotes the music of Edvard Grieg as well as other Nordic composers by presenting concerts featuring international and local artists; Midsommer Celebration is an annual tradition celebrating the “Going Viking” spirit by honoring individuals of Norwegian heritage who have distinguished themselves by their service to others.

Now a Norway House center will be built, and where better to locate than next door to Den Norske Lutherske Mindekirke – known as Mindekirken, which for 90 years has served as a spiritual center for the

Scandinavian American Community, worshipping in both Norwegian and English and providing a rich cultural experience through language, music, arts and food. Mindekirken is honored to have His Majesty King Harald V as its patron. Norway House and Mindekirken will work together as neighbors and partners to provide cultural, educational, research, commercial and global activities.

You can help build the Norway House! Donations of all levels are needed, and you can honor your family members. For additional information visit www.norwayhouse.net and see our affiliate organizations or call Jon Pederson, Capital Campaign Chair, at 612-325-3669 or Rebecca Jorgenson Sundquist, Director of Development, at 952-221-3400.



Interior Perspective

Norway House

Thorbeck Architects - May 2012

Sigdalslag Centennial Scholarship Program

Approved by the Sigdalslag Executive Board, January 14, 2012.

Authority: This program was authorized on July 17, 2011 via Standing Rule 7, which can be viewed at www.sigdalslag.org as an appendage to the Sigdalslag Bylaws,

Purpose: The purpose of this program is to financially support individuals who undertake study or work that furthers the mission of Sigdalslag as expressed in Article II of the Bylaws. In part, this article states that the purpose of Sigdalslag is:

1. To maintain and enhance fellowship among the American descendants of the emigrants from the Eggedal, Krødsherad, and Sigdal areas of Norway and to facilitate a bond between the American descendants and their relatives still living in these areas in Norway.
2. To aid in the preservation of Norwegian and Norwegian-American history, culture and heritage for coming generations by collecting and preparing historical information and data relative to immigration and settlement and to encourage research and writing of family, immigration and settlement histories.
3. To develop and maintain a library of resources for genealogical research and to provide personal assistance for this endeavor.
4. To maintain communication and develop working relationships between the members of Sigdalslag and other related organizations with Norwegian heritage.

Governance: The elected officers of Sigdalslag are responsible for governing all aspects of this program. However, to assist in this responsibility, the elected officers of Sigdalslag shall appoint a manager for the program, with status and term of service equivalent to the newsletter editor, genealogist, and webmaster. The manager shall solicit, collect and collate applications for financial support, and ensure that the eligibility criteria are met. However, the selection shall be made by the elected officers.

The Fund: The monies that underwrite this program shall be kept as a separate and distinct line in Sigdalslag's financial report. From its initial value of \$6,000, Sigdalslag's Board of Directors shall make reasonable efforts to increase the fund balance by at least 10% each year, principally by soliciting donations directed to the Fund. Any interest earned from the fund shall be credited to the fund.

Eligibility Criteria: To be eligible, applicants must be a current Sigdalslag member who has been a member for at least two previous years, or the son, daughter, grandson or granddaughter of such a person.

Grant Amounts: The annual amount dispersed will be up to, but not exceeding 5% of the principal, except that if less than 5% is awarded one year, it can be carried over to the next. Based on the initial size of the principal, grants will be awarded in \$100 - \$300 amounts, with a combined annual total of \$300 per year. The amount dispersed per year will vary depending on size of the principal on December 31 of the previous year.

Schedule: Applications are due before October 31 of each year, and the results of the review process will be announced by the following January 31st. Two-thirds of the grant amount will be awarded immediately, and the remaining 1/3 will be awarded at a later time as specified by the elected officers of Sigdalslag.

Application Formalities: Application shall be by letter addressed to the President of Sigdalslag, at the address found in the newsletter *Saga*. This letter shall state the planned activity that merits financial support, explain how this activity supports Sigdalslag's mission, and give the starting and ending dates. Example activities that qualify are:

- ⤴ study of the Norwegian language, either at a language camp or online;
- ⤴ a visit to Norway that includes at least three days tour of Sigdal and Krødsherad Kommunes;
- ⤴ study of the history of emigration from Sigdal, Eggedal or Krødsherad;
- ⤴ a study of contemporary life in Sigdal and Krødsherad Kommunes, as it compares to contemporary life of descendants in the US and Canada;
- ⤴ lessons in the music that is characteristic of Sigdal, Eggedal and Krødsherad, as guided by the curator of the Sigdal Folkmusiksentrum;

Ideally, the letter should also commit to sharing, by a date certain, the information or insight gained, via an article prepared for the *Saga* or the web site, by a presentation at a stevne, or other means.



The beautiful Oslo Opera House in Oslo Harbor

Some final, fond memories of the tour



An occasional surprise. Åke, the alpaca, on our bus!



One of the many, finely detailed homes on display at the Norsk Folkemuseum in Oslo



We were blessed with beautiful music on the tour, never knowing when it would pop up, thanks to the talents of Gilmore Lee and Dan Emert.



SIGDALSLAG 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: sigdalslagsaga@yahoo.com, or contact the editor (see Pg. 2).

Changed your mailing or e-mail address?

Don't miss an issue! Please contact Earl Knutson at: 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.

Consider receiving your newsletter by e-mail!

You will enjoy full color and save your lag leadership time and help the lag finances. Some lags are moving to e-mail newsletters for everyone who has an e-mail address. Sigdalslag wants to be certain that our newsletter is available to all members. E-mail Earl Knutson at eoknut@en-tel.net if you are willing to change to e-mail delivery. Remember that members can always access all issues of the Saga through our "members only" section on the website.

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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 **Sigdalslag** and mail to :
EARL KNUTSON
722 Second Street SW
Willmar, MN 56201

Residents of **CANADA** should make check payable to
GARTH ULRICH and mail application to:
GARTH ULRICH
3099 Dunn Drive
Prince Albert, SK
S6V 6Y6 CANADA

Write "Sigdalslag dues (3 yr or 1 yr)" on the memo line of the check. Dues in Canadian dollars should be made in the amount equivalent to \$10 US (1 year) or \$25 US (3 years) on the date written.