



# SIGDALSLAG SAGA

SINCE 1911

SERVING NORWEGIAN-AMERICANS OF SIGDAL, EGGEDAL AND KRØDSHERAD

## Inside this issue:

<i>President's Letter</i>	2
<i>Centennial Information</i>	3
<i>Registration Forms</i>	4-5
<i>Brevig Mission</i>	6-9
<i>St. Olaf Choir in 1950s</i>	10
<i>Harold Kosbau Obituary</i>	11

## Velkommen, nye lag medlemmer!

Mary Reyerson, Northwood, IA  
David Olson, Grafton, ND  
Karin M Tomervik, St. Paul, MN

**Krødsherad Index Wanted**  
Sigdalslag would like to purchase a second copy of the *Krødsherad Index* by Lee Rokke, 1990 (blue hardcover). This book is a name and farm index to the *Krødsherad bygdebok*. Please contact our genealogist, Garth Ulrich  
[gulrich@sasktel.net](mailto:gulrich@sasktel.net)

## Sigdalslag SAGA-October 2015

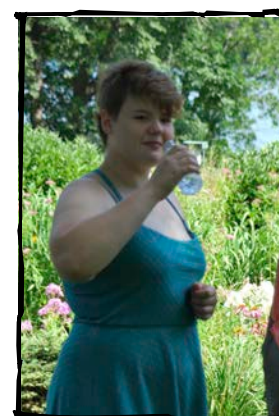
A big thank you to the Landingslag for a fantastic stevne this summer in LaCrosse, WI. There were great speakers, dining, tours and demonstrations and a very nice location for genealogy setup. We are working to get some photos and info on the Sigdalslag website. Sigdalslag will be hosting the 7-lag stevne in 2018, so start thinking of ideas to ensure that our stevne is equally informative and enjoyable.

A coming "not to miss" opportunity will be the Fellesraad Centennial Celebration in May of 2016. Our president, Jean Knaak is chairing the event and she and the committee are firming up plans for a remarkable event. Make sure to register by January 15, 2016 to take advantage of the discounted pricing.

Sigdalslag has received some very nice thank you notes from last year's scholarship winners, Katya and Vera Torkleson. It seems they really enjoyed their time at Skogfjorden Norwegian Language Camp. See the Sigdalslag website for their complete thank you notes.



Katya Torkleson



Vera Torkleson

## "Do You Have a Map That Shows My Ancestor's Farm?"

"Do you have a map that shows my ancestor's farm?" is a question commonly asked. You can find such a map on your home computer. The most common site is Google Maps, found at [www.google.com/maps](http://www.google.com/maps). Type in the farm name in the box in the upper left hand corner and then click on the magnifying glass beside it. If there is more than one place with that name, you will have to choose the correct one and click on it (hint: look for one with the address of Sigdal, Eggedal or Krødsherad). In the bottom right hand side there is a vertical bar with a + and – sign that will allow you to zoom in and out. You can also switch back and forth from map view and satellite view by clicking those options in the bottom left-hand corner. There is also a horizontal bar on the bottom right-hand corner that gives you different options for seeing real images of the location, when available.

When looking in Norway, if just looking for location, I prefer using the Kartverket site, found at [www.norgeskart.no](http://www.norgeskart.no). Again, type in the farm name in the box in the upper left-hand corner and choose the correct one. You can click the + and – signs on the vertical bar on the upper left side to zoom in and out.

With either site, if you are looking for the name of a husmannsplass (cotter's place) or a bruk (sub-farm) and nothing is found, you will have to type the name of the gaard (main farm) that it was found on.

Garth Ulrich, Genealogist



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Fra Presidenten,

We had a great time at the July Stevne in LaCrosse! Beautiful scenic location and in proximity to Norskedalen and Vesterheim!

There is an interesting article by Andrew Brevig & Victoria (Brevig) Jasper who are descendants of Tollef and Julia Brevig. When I was a child and lived in Anchorage we had speakers at our Lutheran church, prayed for and supported the Alaskan missions of Nome, Brevig Mission, Teller, and Shishmaref. The missions are still actively in existence today and listed as a part of the Seward Peninsula ministry of the ELCA.

Our next big event is a once in a lifetime opportunity -- the Bygdelagenes Fellesraad Centennial May 5-8, 2016 in Brooklyn Center, MN. There is an article about the centennial and a registration form in this issue and on line. Some lag members have asked questions about traffic issues and location. There are two maps and directions on the Sigdalslag and the Fellesraad website. This location is easier to drive to than many of the smaller cities where we have had Stevner. For anyone who is flying in, one may taxi to the hotel and there will be a free shuttle going from the hotel to the Earle Brown center on Saturday.

Please make hotel reservations early because we expect the hotel to fill before the cut-off date. There will be other hotels available when our original bloc fills. We are also pleased with the price package both at the hotel and for the conference where Fellesraad is subsidizing many of the program fees.

This will be a complete program beginning with the Thursday night reception on May 5 and ending with an invitation to Mindekirken on Sunday, May 8. For people who cannot attend during the day on Friday there are different registration options. Meal functions include a Friday luncheon, Conference Reception, Saturday luncheon and banquet. A Sigdalslag display will be a part of the displays planned for Saturday and the committee has worked thoughtfully on it. Program information and the schedule will be posted as it is confirmed.

We are looking for direct descendants of charter members which will usually be grandparents or great-grandparents. They will be listed and recognized at a meal function.

We need volunteers to assist at registration, hospitality, and jobs that help the conference run smoothly. If you can volunteer for a short while at the conference, please email your name, address, email and phone to me at [knaak002@gmail.com](mailto:knaak002@gmail.com).

Hilsen,

Jean

## Centennial Celebration May 5-8-, 2016

Many of you may remember the 1999 Centennial celebrating the organization of the first Bygdelag. It was a great occasion with 1000 attendees. It showed our allegiance to our Norwegian heritage as expressed by feelings for our "home areas" and therefore belonging to Bygdelags. Now it is time for another big celebration!

We are celebrating 100 years of the Fellesraad, established in 1916. The 1999 all lag Stevne was held so every lag could participate together in recognizing the organization of all the bygdelag from various parts of Norway. At the beginning of the lags there was a concept that an umbrella organization should also be established. The first lag began in 1899 and there were attempts over several years to establish the umbrella organization, brought to fruition in 1916. The Fellesraad

serves as a coordinating body for all the bygdelag.

Plans for the centennial are to recognize threads of culture that remain in our society partially due to the bygdelag movement. One of them is supporting our ethnic traditions and another is encouraging Norwegian Family history. Initially the lags existed to provide fellowship for our immigrant ancestors to visit with friends, enjoy cultural activities, share ethnic foods, and visit in their own dialect. This was an invigorating time for them each summer when they met at a Stevne.

As the members grew older and their offspring began to join lags, it seemed that the purpose would end as folk had become Americans. Then family history started to become more important. Our immigrants knew their history when they emigrated, but their offspring did not. Hence the emphasis changed where bygdelag became a major genealogy "help" to members and developed extensive resources and data bases. Today the bygdelag emphasize culture, fellowship, ethnic foods, folk art, music, Norway travel, and literature along with a strong emphasis on tracing family history.

The centennial will begin with a reception on Thursday evening welcoming participants that wish

to attend the Friday Seminars. There will be two seminars. One will address Norwegian-ness: Past, Present and Future. This seminar will look at our ancestor's ability to move from one country to another using their own strength, talents and skills to become successful and provide a future for their children and grandchildren. Another Friday seminar will address Twenty-First Century Norwegian Family History. It will look at the location of material identifying how research tools have changed but also remained the same. Both seminars will have a combination of speakers from Norway and North America and registrants may attend joint and separate presentations.

Friday evening will begin the Centennial Celebration for the Fellesraad and all the Bygdelag. There will be lag exhibits about their history and activities today, many special vendors and special presentations about our Norwegian background. On Saturday there will be celebration festivities, special speakers, the Fellesraad Annual Meeting, a special luncheon, festive banquet, special recognitions, special activities for children, demonstrations of folk dancing, displays of folk art, Norwegian gift ideas and many other ethnic items.

Sunday is an invitation to visit Norway House and Mindekirken, the Norwegian Memorial Church, a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The Fellesraad website will feature schedules as they are updated and special information for potential attendees. Also, look at Facebook by googling Fellesraad.

Registration forms are available from lag presidents and on the Fellesraad website both for downloading and registering on line.

The hotel is the Doubletree by Hilton in Brooklyn Center where Thursday and Friday activities will be held. Saturday activities will be across the road at the Earle Brown Center. Please make hotel reservations early as it is expected that the hotel will be filled prior to the published closing date for reservations. Locations were selected that are friendly to those with mobility issues.

The Fellesraad Board is making a considerable contribution to the celebration, so the registration fees are greatly reduced for lag members who register by January 15, 2016.





## A Century of Norwegian Heritage

### Bygdelagenes Fellesraad Centennial Celebration - May 5 - 8, 2016

--- Events Registration Form (see [fellesraad.com/centennial](http://fellesraad.com/centennial) for online registration)

**Registrations must be entered or postmarked before 04/15/2016.**

**Refunds are subject to handling fee.**

**No Refund after 04/30/2016.**

**Print Names of Adults for Centennial Badges:**

Street \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail please! \_\_\_\_\_

→ → **Please Complete!** → → I / we are current members of all checked bygdelag for 2016. ↓ ☐ None

#### Form Instructions and Notes:

Discounted rates are available for a current lag member who registers before Jan. 15, 2016!

Seating for the closing banquet will be assigned according to the date registration forms are received. To be seated as a group you must send in the registration forms as a group.

A special program for youth (18 years and under) will be available on Saturday. Please enter the names and ages of any youth attending in the space provided on page 2.

The conference hotel is The DoubleTree by Hilton. We have reserved a block of rooms at the special rate of \$95.00 per room per day (+ taxes) which includes two buffet breakfasts per day. Room sizes are king and double-double. Please ask for the Fellesraad Conference Rate when calling 763-566-8000. If there is a problem, contact the Event Coordinator at 651-357-6139 or [knaak002@gmail.com](mailto:knaak002@gmail.com). When the initial block is filled we will try to enlarge it or look to other area hotels for special conference rates. All Thursday and Friday conference events take place at this hotel.

A Friday evening buffet at the dining room in the hotel will be available for purchase by those who wish to eat there. Other restaurants and fast food places are available nearby.

**(Hotel Planning Info Only)** I am interested in purchasing \_\_\_\_\_ buffet evening meal/s at the Hotel on Friday

#### Sunday Activities (On your own!)

☐ Check this box to indicate your interest in attending a Sunday May 8<sup>th</sup> service at 'The Norwegian Lutheran Memorial Church of Minneapolis' better known as Mindekirken, (9 am in English, 11 am på Norsk). (Driving directions to be provided.)

A Church Coffee (light lunch) will be available downstairs following the second service.

Please indicate the number of persons \_\_\_\_\_ interested in attending the Church Coffee. (Suggested \$5 free-will donation to the church at time of the Church Coffee.)

Tours of 'Norway House' located next to the church, will be available from 9 am to 1 pm.

- ☐ Gudbrandsdalslaget
- ☐ Hadeland
- ☐ Hallinglag
- ☐ Hardanger
- ☐ Landingslag
- ☐ Lappmark
- ☐ Møre og Romsdalslag
- ☐ Nord Hedmark og Hedemarken
- ☐ Nordfjord Wisconsin
- ☐ Nordfjordlag
- ☐ Nordhordland
- ☐ Nordlandslag
- ☐ Numedalslågen Lag
- ☐ Opdalslag
- ☐ Ringerike-Drammen Districts
- ☐ Rogalandslag
- ☐ Romerikslag
- ☐ Sigdalslag
- ☐ Sognalag
- ☐ Sognefjord
- ☐ Soler
- ☐ Sunnfjord
- ☐ Sunnhordland
- ☐ Telemag
- ☐ Totenlag
- ☐ Trønderslag
- ☐ Valdres Samband
- ☐ Vestlandslag
- ☐ Vosselag

See [fellesraad.com](http://fellesraad.com) for more information about these lags!

Doubletree by Hilton Hotel  
2200 Freeway Blvd  
Brooklyn Center, MN 55430  
Phone: (763) 566 - 8000

Earle Brown Heritage Center  
6115 Earle Brown Dr  
Brooklyn Center, MN 55430  
Phone: (763) 569 6300

Mindekirken  
924 E 21<sup>st</sup> St,  
Minneapolis, MN 55404  
Phone: (612) 874-0716

Event Coordinator  
Jean Knaak  
Phone: (651) 357-6139  
EM: [knaak002@gmail.com](mailto:knaak002@gmail.com)

## Bygdelaenes Fellesraad Centennial Celebration - May 5 - 8, 2016

Registrations must be entered or postmarked before 04/15/2016.

Refunds are subject to handling fee. No Refund after 04/30/2016.

### **A Complete Celebration Package** Thursday evening at hotel through Saturday evening at Earle Brown Center.

Includes: Thursday: May 5<sup>th</sup> Evening kick-off & reception at hotel, and  
Friday: May 6<sup>th</sup> Seminars, coffee breaks, lunch, and evening reception all at hotel, and  
Saturday: May 7<sup>th</sup> Annual meeting, conferences, coffee breaks, lunch, and banquet all at Earle Brown.

**Registration** \_\_\_\_\_ persons x \$150 each \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Lag members who pay before Jan. 15, 2016** \_\_\_\_\_ persons x \$135 each \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### **B Conference Package** Friday evening at hotel through Saturday evening at Earle Brown Center.

Includes: Friday: May 6<sup>th</sup> Evening reception at hotel, and  
Saturday: May 7<sup>th</sup> Annual meeting, conferences, coffee breaks, lunch, and banquet all at Earle Brown.

**Registration** \_\_\_\_\_ persons x \$90 each \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Lag members who pay before Jan. 15, 2016** \_\_\_\_\_ persons x \$80 each \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Youth Registration (18 & under)** \_\_\_\_\_ persons x \$60 each \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Includes: Friday evening reception and Saturday, activity materials, snack breaks, lunch and banquet.  
Please list names and ages of youth. (Include contact info if different than that listed on page 1!)

### **C Conference Individual Event Pricing**

Registration Includes: Saturday: May 7<sup>th</sup> Annual meeting, conferences, & coffee breaks plus other items purchased.

**Reception** Fri. evening at hotel \_\_\_\_\_ persons x \$10 each \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Registration** Sat. (required for all attendees) \_\_\_\_\_ persons x \$35 each \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Luncheon** Sat. at noon \_\_\_\_\_ persons x \$25 each \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Banquet** Sat. evening \_\_\_\_\_ persons x \$35 each \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Banquet Only (Guests of registered members)** \_\_\_\_\_ persons x \$45 each \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### **D Cultural & Heritage Day Only** Thursday evening through Friday evening all at hotel.

Includes: Thursday: May 5<sup>th</sup> Evening kick-off & reception, and  
Friday: May 6<sup>th</sup> Seminars, coffee breaks, noon lunch, and Friday evening reception.

**Registration** \_\_\_\_\_ persons x \$70 each \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Lag members who pay before Jan. 15, 2016** \_\_\_\_\_ persons x \$65 each \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total:** Send payment and forms to Dixie Hansen at address below: **Total \$** \_\_\_\_\_

→ **Have questions or Special Food Needs?** Please contact Jean Knaak (see contact info below)

→ Did you: fill in your contact information, indicate your options under notes, and check your lag affiliations on page 1?

Make payment to **Fellesraad** at:  
Fellesraad c/o Dixie Hansen  
1411 Osceola Ave  
St. Paul, MN 55105

Event Coordinator  
Jean Knaak  
Phone: (651) 357-6139  
EM: [knaak002@gmail.com](mailto:knaak002@gmail.com)

Need to explain something about your registration? Use this space:

## **Brevig Mission, Alaska**

Andrew Brevig & Victoria (Brevig) Jasper

The information presented is a combination of known family history and information taken from the book, *Apaurak in Alaska* by J Walter Johnshoy.

Tollef L. Brevig was born August 16, 1857, to his parents Lars Anderson Brevig and Anna Olesdotter Velstad.

He was the 5<sup>th</sup> child in a family of 8 children. The family left Brevig farm in Sigdal on April 3, 1867, except Joran, the oldest daughter. She married Cornelius Alfaberget on July 26, 1867 and left Norway for America on June 4, 1869.

The family left on a sailing ship that took 6 weeks to reach America.

Joran & Cornelius travelled by steamship that took just one month to reach Chicago.

The family lived in Clayton County Iowa until they homesteaded in Pope County, Minnesota. They travelled by oxen and wagon from Iowa and arrived at the homestead on November 15, 1870. They dug a cellar and made sod houses that they lived in for 5 years. The Brevig family were charter members of Immanuel Lutheran Church, established in 1872 (Walden Township, Pope County).

Tollef left Starbuck to further his education and it was said he walked to St. Cloud to get transportation to school at college and seminary.

Tollef married Julia Johnson from Hudson, Wisconsin in 1891. Tollef was once a traveling correspondent for Amerika, Decorah Posten & Skandinavian.

### **Reindeer in Alaska and Laplanders:**

There was a need for a new source of food for native Alaskans due to loss of abundant game due to hunting with the introduction of firearms. Reindeer herds in Siberia were the source of the herds in Alaska. Icelandic moss was present in Alaska which is the main food for the reindeer. The first reindeer were imported in 1890. The last reindeer from Siberia were imported in 1906.

The Norwegian Lapps were selected to teach Eskimos to raise reindeer in 1894. The Siberian herdsmen proved to be unsatisfactory. Five families, one man and a youth 18 years old were willing to come to Alaska with the condition that they have a Norwegian Lutheran pastor. The Federal government had asked for a clergyman to serve as pastor to the Lapps and also qualified to superintend

and teach in the government school. Rev. H.A. Preus contacted T.L. Brevig since he had taught in state schools in Minnesota for about 12 years before studying theology and entering the ministry. Rev. Brevig answered the call. At this time, Tollef was fluent in Norwegian and English, and would learn the Eskimo language with the help of an interpreter.

### **The Brevig Children:**

Carl Brevig was the first child of Tollef and Julia. He was born in Minnesota about 1892. He was taken sick March 1, 1896 and died in convulsions March 2 at 2 a.m. Since there was no doctor available, the cause of death was not determined. The native population up to this time did not touch or view the dead but were assured of resurrection at Carl's funeral.

Dagney Alaska Brevig was born April 17, 1896. The natives called her Oblomit "Dawn". All the children were fluent in the Eskimo language as well as Norwegian and English.

In July 1913, Dagney returned with Tollef and Dagney was appointed to teach at the government school. Reverend T.L. Brevig and Dagney left the mission for the last time in September 1917. Dagney married Donald Nimmo November 24, 1920 and died January 20, 1987.

Lenora Brevig was born October 3, 1898 and died March 22, 1976.

Thelma Maria Brevig was born March 25, 1901 and was married to William C. Sherman. Thelma died December 23, 1962.

Alf Otis Brevig was born November 1, 1902. He enlisted in the Navy where he made his career. He died November 22, 1973.

Borghild Constance Brevig was born January 29, 1905 and died January 9, 1907.

Mrs. T.L. Brevig died March 10, 1908.

Reverend Tollef Larson Brevig died on October 14, 1935.

### **Alaska Chronology:**

1894: The party of 16 Lapps, the Kjellman family (who was the first supervisor of the reindeer herd), Tollef, his wife Julia, and their only child Carl, left St. Paul on May 19, 1894. They encountered floods in the West along their train ride. They finally arrived in San Francisco on June 7, 1894. By the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, they were 100 miles from Honolulu. They encountered fog near the Aleutian Islands which caused them to drift idly for a week, nearly crashing





into St. Lawrence Island. They finally arrived at the mission site on August 1, 1894. The first worship service was held August 5, 1894.

Their accommodations were a barracks building that was constructed two years prior to their arrival. It was 20' x 60' with 8' studs. It was built as headquarters for the reindeer industry. The roof was constructed from framework and sail cloth. The building was built for California weather – not Alaska weather. The Brevig family took the east end, and Kjellman's family the west end. The room in the middle was used as a classroom. Brevig's end was 20x25 partitioned into a living room and bedroom. The kitchen was in an adjoining warehouse. They lined the interior of their living quarters with cotton cloth and painted it. This helped keep the wind out.

Sunday morning services were in Norwegian for Lapps; afternoon services in English for Americans and interpreted in Eskimo for the natives.

Fifty children attended school the first day! The teacher did not understand the children, the children did not understand the teacher. This barrier was broken by pointing to various objects. The children learned the English word and the teacher learned the corresponding Eskimo word.

Sept, 1894 – the steamship Bear stopped in the harbor and took the mail. That would be the last they would see the ship until late June 1895.

October, 1894 - Pastor Brevig and 5 companions were out in a small whale boat and got caught in a storm. They landed the boat and had to camp overnight. They fashioned a tent from the sails and oars. Pastor Brevig didn't have a sleeping bag so he slept between his companions, who had brought sleeping bags. They had been traveling to a "nearby" settlement to perform a wedding. It took 2 days to get there – the return trip was 12 hours.

November, 1894 – Pastor Brevig had been out grouse hunting and accidentally disturbed a native Great Spirit festival. As a result, the witch doctors cast a spell on Pastor Brevig. When they came by to ask if his eyesight was growing weaker and limbs stiff, and they weren't, they decided the evil spirits were unable to harm the white teacher and was respected by them. The Eskimo lived in fear of evil spirits so this was very important to his respect in the community.

Cleanliness was not an Eskimo virtue. Body sores were common to all, due to lack of bathing, and stinky clothes. In winter, when the schoolroom needed to be heated and the door closed, the air

became dense from the stench from the Eskimo's coats. Mrs. Brevig would plug her nose if she had to walk through the schoolroom. Lice were very common. The Brevigs kept their rooms closed off and if a native had reason to have entered, they would clean thoroughly afterward. Pastor Brevig came home once from a 3-day journey, left his outer garments in the woodshed, and their Eskimo maid started counting the frozen lice in his clothing. She was unable to continue after 250, due to her lack of knowledge of numbers.

Reindeer herdsman attended school in the evening along with older Eskimo boys from a nearby village.

December 21, 1894 – a white woman gave birth to a boy that died shortly after – as an ordained minister, Pastor Brevig was able to consecrate ground for a cemetery.

Christmas 1894 – day break is at 10 a.m., and dark falls at 2 p.m. A birch tree was retrieved from 70 miles away as their first Christmas tree. The Eskimos were very attentive to hearing the story of Christmas and the festivities that went with the celebration.

January, 1895 – the Eskimos held their large and important annual festival dance – 82 sleighs arrived.

April 16, 1895 – Brevigs set off on a trip to visit another missionary family – the Lapps – a journey of 65 miles – only one village on the way. Mrs. Brevig & 18-month old Carl were placed on the sleigh. The trip encountered drifting snow by a northerly wind. They lunched at noon along the route. At 6 p.m. they arrived at the village – the Brevigs' lunch kit was lost. Because of the lack of food, the journey had to continue. Julia and Carl were strapped to the sleigh. It tipped over 16 times. They arrived at 2 a.m. and were able to eat before going to bed.

The ice in the bay at the mission broke in June. Mail finally arrived by ship on July 2<sup>nd</sup>. Their outgoing mail wouldn't go until September. TL (Pastor Brevig) received daily St. Paul Pioneer Press papers and would arrange them so he would read one a day – exactly a year later.

July 20, 1895 – Bear brought 100 reindeer.

Winter 1895 – 96 was long – 78 days the temperature was 4 to -35 degrees. There was so much snow only the gable & chimneys of the station could be seen.



March, 1896 – Carl became ill and died by 2 a.m. from convulsions. He was buried March 3<sup>rd</sup> – they never knew what the sickness was.

April 17, 1896, Dagny Alaska Brevig was born. Eskimos referred to her as Oblomit “Dawn”. She was born without a midwife. The nearest Dr. was 2,000 miles away. They felt this was a clear sign of the Lord’s protecting hand.

July 10, 1896 – ice out. 13 months since the last mail.

The original reindeer superintendent and other station personnel had moved on. Pastor Brevig was appointed superintendent of the reindeer herd at their station in 1898.

March, 1898 – it was a severe winter and food was scarce. The government stored 2 tons of bran at the station to feed the reindeer but the reindeer wouldn’t eat it so Pastor Brevig distributed it to the natives and saved their lives until the fish returned in April. A little flour was given to the weakest. The government demanded payment for the bran – nothing could be given away without Congressional action. \$5 paid the bill, which Pastor Brevig paid.

It was very important to clear snow from windows and doors and dig tunnels in front of openings when snow was too deep.

August, 1898 -the Brevigs set out on their first furlough home. It was a 21-day journey to Seattle. Dagny was 2-1/2 years old. Pastor Brevig travelled Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa & South Dakota from October to May giving lectures on the mission.

October 3, 1898 - Lenora was born.

May, 1899 - Pastor Brevig returned alone to Alaska. These were the gold rush years.

Fall, 1899 he returned to the states and lectured through Spring, 1900. He received promise of \$1,000 per year from the church council. He returned in May 1900 to Seattle to purchase equipment. Ships were full and tickets were expensive - \$1,200 was paid in freight and travel expenses. They mortgaged their farm in Stanwood, WA to continue the mission. When they finally reached the mission, the houses had been occupied by gold diggers. Pastor Brevig moved his family in after they had been evacuated.

1900 – Pastor Brevig was appointed U.S. Postmaster at Teller – he held the position for 4 years. He was also appointed U.S. Commissioner for

the entire district north of Nome – later just within the reservation of the reindeer station.

July 13 to August 23, 1900 - there was a measles outbreak. 2 sailors aboard a whaler had them and were put to shore among the Eskimos at Nome, and the disease spread up and down the coast. This is when the orphanage was started as families in the area would bring children to the mission that had lost their parents to the illness.

Pastor Brevig helped the needy – in September 1900, a boy had accidentally shot himself in the arm taking his rifle from the boat. Pastor Brevig treated the wound. 3 weeks later a Dr. passed by and wanted to amputate. The arm had improved so the patient and Pastor Brevig did not agree to amputate. Though the arm was stiff, the patient was still able to chop wood.

October 30, 1900 - three men staggered into camp – Pastor Brevig was thinking at first they were drunk, but when they got closer, they were covered with ice. It was -10 degrees, their boat had turned over. The man in the middle was being carried because he wore hip boots and the water in the boots was frozen solid. Pastor Brevig treated the man.

January 20, 1901 - five white men attempted to travel to Teller – there was blinding snow and darkness separated them into two parties. 2 of them reached the station by following the sound of the 9 p.m. curfew bell.

January 29, 1901 - a squaw-man brought in a year-old half-breed girl – found in little clothing near her dead mother’s body.

February 18, 1901 – first overland mail was received. It took 60 days from Seattle.

March 20, 1901 – whooping cough outbreak

March 25, 1901 – Thelma was born

May 31, 1901- mail was received Nome over land.

June 23, 1901 – last ice crossing that season

July 2, 1901 – a steamship fastened heavy timbers to her prow, used heavy chains, broke through a two-mile belt of ice which had barred entrance to the bay.

August 29, 1901 - Siberian reindeer arrived by ship – approximately 500. It was thought that the larger Siberian reindeer bred with the Alaskan reindeer would produce a stronger herd. This was largely successful.

November 28, 1901 – there was a large celebration for the Brevigs’ 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary.





November 1, 1902 - Alf was born. The ship Bear had stayed close so the ship's Dr. could be available for the birth. They ran a risk of being frozen in.

July, 1903 - Mrs. Brevig and 4 children left for Mt. Vernon, WA to visit family. Pastor Brevig was to follow when his relief arrived at the mission. There was no word of relief as of late September. Mrs. Brevig suggested she would return with the baby if no relief was assigned. In October there was a scare when a small sloop was missing with two women and a small child aboard. It was found that this was not Mrs. Brevig. One of the women was a nurse and could see that Pastor Brevig's nerves were such that she suggested he leave without relief arriving. He set sail for the states on October 16<sup>th</sup> and landed in Seattle October 27<sup>th</sup>.

1903 and 1904 he spent time traveling and lecturing on the mission. In March, 1904, the Norwegian Lutheran Synod agreed to make the mission an official institution of the church – it had been part private, part synodical. Pastor Brevig searched for a young married couple to take over the mission – to no avail. Mr. Ludvig Larson from Parkland, WA agreed to fill a caretaker position. Pastor Brevig returned to instruct him and remained through summer. He returned to Stanwood, WA in September, 1904.

January 29, 1905 - Borghild was born in Washington.

July 8, 1905 - the Brevigs left Seattle to return to the mission. They encountered storms so stayed with friends in Teller. They arrived at the mission July 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Christmas 1905 - Pastor Brevig baptized 90 souls and served communion to 40.

July, 1906 - they marked 134 fawns. They had been authorized to build a new schoolhouse and the government was building another new building.

January 9, 1907 - Borghild died from whooping cough.

February, 1907 - Pastor Brevig got pneumonia but a native man was dying and wanted communion. Pastor Brevig got out of bed and travelled to him. He felt it was God's will if he was to reach the man and survive the sickness.

February 21 – March 7, 1907 - Mrs. Brevig was sick with pneumonia.

January, 1908 was a bitterly cold month.

February 29, 1908 – a fire broke out in the boys' room. This information was not shared with Mrs. Brevig, as she was in very fragile health.

March 9, 1908 – Mrs. Brevig broke out in convulsions – there was no doctor available. She died March 10 at 8 p.m. and due to weather wasn't buried until March 17<sup>th</sup>.

July 13, 1908 - there was a chickenpox outbreak.

July 18, 1908 - a successor arrives. By this time Dagny was 12, Lenora 10, Thelma 7, and Alf 5. They returned to live on the farm in Stanwood and subsequently moved to Parkland for better school opportunities.

April, 1913 – Dagny suggested to her father that they accept the call in Alaska again. Alf and Thelma were sent to Mrs. C.A. Berg in Starbuck and Lenora went to Normal School at Sioux Falls.

September, 1917 - Dagny and Pastor Brevig left the Alaska mission for the last time.



*The Brevig Family - Courtesy of the Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum*





## The St. Olaf Choir in Hollywood in the 1950s

by Irene O'Connor Navarre

After a friendly phone call from Fred Schmidt, the current business manager of the St. Olaf College Choir in Northfield, Minnesota, I was excited to learn that the student choir was not only scheduled to perform in Los Angeles but it was to experience a recording session at a recording studio in Hollywood.



*Fred & Lenore Schmidt*

Fred and his wife, Lenore, were long-time friends when we were neighbors in New Richmond, Wisconsin. He was teaching music in the high school in New Richmond before the outbreak of World War II.

Fred enquired if I could be available to chauffeur the conductor of the choir, Olaf Christensen, and himself to various addresses necessary in their tightly scheduled tour. How could one refuse an old friend? And it promised to be an adventure for the "chauffeur". I was the proud owner of a 1955 Fairlane Ford with a Thunderbird engine in which to navigate them through the speedy traffic for which California has a notorious reputation.

As soon as possible, I made arrangements to reschedule my dental hygiene patients at Dr. Fred Olds' office to be available for several days of the concert tour. It was exciting to conjecture what a Hollywood recording session would be like...plus the privilege of hearing the wonderful A Capella choir, which has been internationally recognized as the best!

Soon, thereafter, the tour personnel arrived and I began my "official duty" as a chauffeur. Early on, I learned that my Minnesota passengers were extremely doubtful about the traffic rules in California, especially about pedestrian right of way... they were amazed that I was required by law to apply my brakes and come to a complete stop. This allowed pedestrians to cross safely in the clearly marked space in front of all the halted cars.

They commented that the rules appeared to be strictly observed. However, venturing out into the

crosswalk themselves was a test of faith and courage. "Are you sure those speedy cars will stop for us?" was a frequent question. It was not long before their trepidation vanished and they looked like "locals" crossing streets in busy traffic.

After several concerts, especially in Lutheran churches, the Student Choir proceeded to the recording studio for their recording. With much technical equipment and countless technicians all appeared to go smoothly.

The next day I called for my passengers at their hotel and back to Hollywood we went. In the recording studio's plushy office, we were greeted by an effusive and energetic executive who exclaimed that the recording was excellent; his attitude indicated that he envisioned great sales of this splendid record! With great flair he seated us and proceeded to play the prototype record (78?). It was beautiful...I remember listening with tears in my eyes to the Choir's concluding renditions of F. Melius Christensen's composition of "Beautiful Saviour". I also remember the pleased and eager expression on the executive's face as he leaned forward toward Olaf and Fred, expecting congratulations and applause. Not to be!

As many of you know, Norwegians are not famous for exuberant facial response and expressive body language. What did the executive get? A quiet nod and "It is good" from the conductor. How the business deal went from there I do not know. I do know that vinyl recordings were purchased.

Sometime later, I received a complimentary record from the efficient business manager, Fred Schmidt.

I forgot to tell you that the fathers of Olaf and Fred preceded them as conductor and business manager of the famous St. Olaf College Choir!



*Irene and her 1955 Fairlane Ford*

*In Memory...***Harold Lawrence  
Kosbau**

Harold Lawrence Kosbau, 82, of Grand Rapids, MN and San Benito, TX passed away on January 15, 2015 at Valley Baptist Hospital in Harlingen, TX. He was born on December 12, 1932 in Kelliher, MN to Frank and Elizabeth (Thompson) Kosbau. Harold grew up on a farm in Waskish, MN, attended Kelliher High School, and then joined the Navy in 1950. He married Betty Louise Averill on June 2, 1956 in International Falls, MN. He graduated from Bemidji State University in 1958 and then received his Master's Degree in Business from St. Cloud State University in 1962. He taught high school and college business courses from 1961 to 1970 in Woodville, WI, Aurora, MN and Grand Rapids, MN. In 1970 he retired as the Head of the Business Department at Itasca Community College to go into wild rice farming with his brother, Franklin Kosbau in Waskish, MN. He worked in agriculture in the family farming business, Kosbau Bros. Inc., along with his brother and their families. He was a pioneer in the domestication of wild rice growing, processing and marketing. He retired from farming in 1997. He and his wife, Betty, began spending winters in Texas and spent the last 19 years playing in the sun, traveling, and spending summers in their northern home in Grand Rapids, MN. Harold was a loving, hard-working, sensitive and generous husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother, uncle and friend. He was a man of strong faith and beliefs and was completely dedicated to God and to his family. He loved to laugh and had a smile that could fill the room. He was ambitious in business and a leader in the church and in the farming community. He loved fishing, woodworking, music, keeping up with technology and working in his garden. He is preceded in death by his son, Hal Kosbau, his parents Frank and Elizabeth Kosbau, brothers Earl Kosbau, Franklin Kosbau, and Tony Okerlund, his sisters Eleanor Grant and Lillian Davis. He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Betty Kosbau, daughters Cathe (Rob) Dahline, Tammy Andrews, son Greg (Susan) Kosbau, daughter-in-law Judi Kosbau, 8 grandchildren Joe (Crystal) Doyle, Jena (Chris) Madison, Jessica (Mark) Sylvester, Jared (Grace) Dahline, Nathan Kosbau, Jeremy (Holly) Lehman, Kimberly Hanna, and Krista Kosbau, and 14 great-grandchildren, his sister Fran Renner, and many nieces, nephews, and cousins. Visitation at Andrews-Libbey Funeral Home in Grand

Rapids, MN on Friday, January 23rd from 6-8 p.m. Funeral service at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Cohasset, MN on Saturday, January 24th at 11:00 AM, followed by military honors. Obituary from Andrews-Libbey Funeral Home.

Harold's emigrant ancestors were Ole Torstensen Omnan & Helge Jonsdatter Bergseie (aka Ole Torstensen Moen & Helge Jonsdatter Elvom)

Please share with us your families' news of marriages, graduations, long term anniversaries, significant milestones, and the passing of loved ones. Send info to the Saga Editor:

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***Donations to the Sigdalslag Library***

*Berg, Della (Feak) and Prucha, Christine (Berg). We Remember: An Oral History of the Feak and Jensen Families. (Includes information on the Braaten family, originally Skasetbråten). Gift of the author.*

*Aase Haugen Senior Services. 100 Years of Aase Haugen Senior Services. Gift of Paul Larson.*

***Sigdalslag Family History Surveys***

Genealogical Survey received from Donald Rorvig on emigrants Asle Gunbjornsen Flatin & Turi Ellingsdatter Gunnerud

If you have not yet submitted a Family History Survey, the link can be found under the Genealogy section of our website. For members without internet access, a copy may be requested from our Genealogist, Garth Ulrich (see page 2 for contact information).

***Emigrant Obituary Project***

*-submitted by Garth Ulrich, Genealogist*

*Thank you to Sheila Winstead and Dianne Snell for recent submissions to the Emigrant Obituary Project. To date, 272 emigrant obituaries are available on our webpage. Although we are pleased with this amount, it does represent only approximately five percent of the emigrants from Sigdal, Eggedal and Krødsherad. Please consider submitting the obituaries to our genealogist or webmaster via either email or post. (Their contact information can be found on page 2 of the Saga).*



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