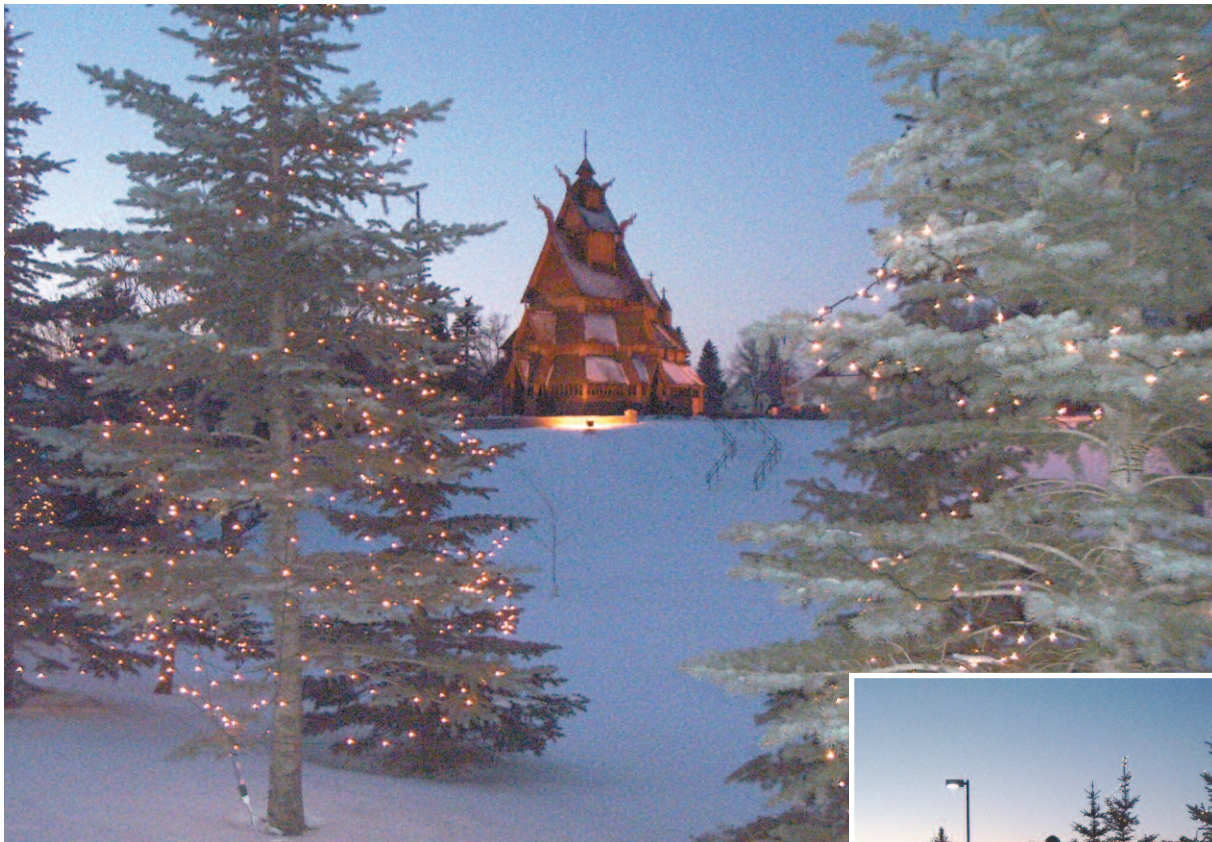


Published in the interest of  
North Americans of Scandinavian descent

# Scandinavian Heritage News

December 2007



*May your Christmas  
be merry and bright!*

Scandinavian Heritage Park becomes a sparkling wonderland with the advent of winter and the warm glow of Christmas lights. The lighting is a labor of love by the SHA "crew," consisting of Ernie Selland, John Sinn, Arne Braaten, Carroll Erickson and many other volunteers. (Photos by SHA board member Al Larson, Minot)



## WHAT'S INSIDE...



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|                                    |   |  |       |
|------------------------------------|---|--|-------|
| President's report .....           | 2 | SHA Gift Shop .....                        | 8     |
| From the office .....              | 3 | Heritage House visit .....                 | 9     |
| IN MEMORIAM:                       |   | 'Snowshoe' Thompson.....                   | 10-11 |
| • Gary Holum .....                 | 4 | Gift annuity: A gift that gives back... 12 |       |
| • Reuben Forsberg.....             | 5 | Membership form .....                      | 12    |
| 'Yule Goat' old Nordic custom..... | 6 | Scandinavian Society reports....           | 13-15 |
| Memorial gifts from members .....  | 7 | Tracing Your Scandinavian Roots... 16      |       |

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## President's MESSAGE

# All I want for Christmas...

*by Mark Anderson, president  
Scandinavian Heritage Association*

With Christmas right around the corner, my kids have been busy reviewing the weekend shopping inserts and planting seeds as to what they would like to receive for Christmas. That got me thinking about what I would like for the future of Scandinavian Heritage Association.

Over the past two years as president, I have been blessed to receive many gifts; gifts of time, talents, experience, giving and friendship. It has truly been a rewarding experience and one that I will forever cherish. The dedication and devotion that I have seen from so many volunteers, directors and the membership have been nothing short of extraordinary.

But, as with any administration, there are still things yet unfinished; there is always more work to be done in any vital, flourishing organization. And so it is with Scandinavian Heritage Association. Yes, I, too, have a list of things I would like to see come to pass for this special organization.

### **Wish No. 1—**

Earlier this year, we opened a meaningful dialogue with Dr. David Fuller, president of Minot State University. In June, Dr. Fuller and a delegation of Minot State University administrators accompanied Minot's mayor and other city officials as part of a Minot-Skien sister-city delegation that visited Norway and other Scandinavian countries. In addition to participating in the sister-city delegation, Dr. Fuller had visits and discussions with Telemark University in Norway; American College of Norway in Moss; Ostfold University College in Halden, Norway; Kristianstad University in Sweden; and Aalborg University in Denmark. Discussions with the universities focused on student and faculty exchanges, study tours, study abroad and Scandinavian studies curricula.

Scandinavian Heritage Association met with Dr. Fuller and expressed an interest in establishing an ongoing relationship focused on developing

student exchanges and other cross-cultural partnerships. So first, as part of this new working relationship, I would like to see SHA develop a programs-based mission focused on the sponsoring of programs like youth language camps and student and faculty exchange programs, in partnership with Minot State University, Norsk Høstfest, and the various heritage societies.



*Mark Anderson*

### **Wish No. 2—**

Next, I'd like to see even more ways to showcase Scandinavian Heritage Park, the "Crown Jewel of Minot." One way to do this is to make it available for visitors around the world. Discussions are currently under way to produce a 30-minute DVD, showcasing the beauty of the park and capturing the history of our Scandinavian ancestors. Along with this DVD, we are discussing the production of an audio tour of the park, where visitors could enjoy a self-guided tour that would present the history and splendor of the park.

### **Wish No. 3—**

Lastly, I'd ask for a maintenance trust to be established for the park to ensure that the beauty of this living cultural museum be maintained for years to come. I would propose the creation of the John Sinn Heritage Trust, named in honor of our chief engineer and construction superintendent, John Sinn, without whose expertise and tireless effort many of the structures and splendor of the park would not have been possible. This would be a fitting and lasting tribute to John for all of his years of selfless dedication to Scandinavian Heritage Park.

And so it is—my Christmas wish list for 2007 and beyond. Oh, and that reminds me, I've got to get over to Wal-Mart to finish up my shopping; my kids just added more to their lists.

May you enjoy all of the blessings of this holiday season!

God Jul! •

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## From the OFFICE

# More history behind SHA Park

by Jeanne McNea  
SHA office manager

Christmas is near and the lights on the trees in the park are making it look like a winter wonderland. Thanks go to several volunteers who spent a few days getting the lights checked and on the trees and buildings.

This project was one of James B. "Jim" Johnson's dreams, which came true in December 1993. People look forward to seeing the lights every year from Thanksgiving until the New Year.

That first year, Dale Bakken from Northwest Music donated all the lights; Laurence and Opal Thompson donated the electric outlet pedestals. The trees were smaller and fewer, and all the board members plus some of the spouses came out to help.

Jim was our second president and served from November 1990 until December 1994. He was involved in all of the first projects in the park, but this time of each year we remember him for all the lights.

The Eternal Flame was erected and dedicated at that time in honor of Sondre Norheim, the famous skier from Norway, who settled here in North Dakota. The timing was just right, as the Winter Olympics were being held in Norway in 1994. Jim, with Dr. George Christianson and Dr. Myron Peterson, made the arrangements for the governor to bring a flame back from Norway to light ours.

When the date for the dedication and our annual banquet was set,



Jeanne McNea

there was "no room at the inns" for us, so it was arranged to have a catered banquet in the City Auditorium. It was the largest and most festive banquet SHA has ever had.

The whole auditorium and the

tables were decorated with greens, white lights and silver bows. Norsk Høstfest and the Sons of Norway Lodge joined us, and we had dignitaries from Norway, including two great-granddaughters of Sondre Norheim and other special guests. Lars Berge Haugen, a skier from Morgedal, Norway, lit the flame.

Jim said his first project was the hardest and most challenging: getting the Sigdal House over here from Norway and getting it financed. To get a loan, each of the board members took the risk of signing the papers. It took a long time to get it paid for, but a lot of lessons were learned along the way. Myron Anderson was appointed chairman for the reconstruction of the house.

Jay Anderson, professor of Utah State University, was the main speaker at the annual banquet Feb. 8, 1991, and Jim feels that the concept of the outdoor museum with the five Nordic countries represented came from that visit. It is the only museum of that type in the world.

Other projects under Jim's direc-

tion were the Flag Display, chaired by the late Cliff Bergan, and the Danish Mill, chaired by Laurence Thompson. The Icelandic Society added the statue of Lief Eiriksson, a newsletter was started, and an office was opened for the organization.

Jim felt that an office could be a communication center for the board members, a place to inform people about the organization and a meeting place for the board. At that time the board met every week. He had some space in a building that he let us use for several years, and I was asked to manage the office.

According to Jim, the highlight of his presidency was the trip to Norway with Høstfest when he started laying the groundwork for getting our Eternal Flame. Jim left his mark on this park through his leadership and hard work. Thank you, Jim. •

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community is  
reflected  
in the  
quality  
of its  
parks.*



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420 Third Avenue SW • 857-4136

## CALENDAR



### WINTER 2007-08

Dec. 25, 2007 • Merry Christmas

Jan. 1, 2008 • Happy New Year

Sat., Jan. 26, 10 a.m. • Scandinavian Heritage Association Annual Meeting, SHA headquarters building, Minot

Fri., April 4, 6:30 p.m. • Scandinavian Heritage Association Banquet, Grand International Inn, Minot

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:

Copy and pictures—Feb. 15, 2008

Printing date—March 1, 2008

## SHA Annual Meeting

SATURDAY, JAN. 26, 2008 • 10 A.M.

Scandinavian Heritage Association Headquarters • Minot

*SHA members are invited to attend!*

## In memory of SHA's first president—

# Gary A. Holum

by Allen O. Larson

The Scandinavian Heritage Association mourns the passing of its first president, Gary A. Holum, and extends its condolences to his wife, Joan, and his family. He will be missed.

Gary was chosen to be the first president of the Scandinavian Heritage Association because of his charisma, energy and the great stature he had in the Minot community. The association needed to "hit the ground running" when it started, and Gary accepted the challenge to help it do so. When all we had was a "dream" to sell to people, credibility was very important. So with Judge Gary Holum as president and Mayor George Christenson as vice president, we felt confident that our dream could become a reality.

The Scandinavian Heritage Association was incorporated on April 18, 1988, with the following officers: Gary Holum, president; George M. Christenson, vice president; Allen O. Larson, secretary; and Russell Anderson, treasurer.

Gary Holum served as president until Nov. 2, 1990, and remained a good friend and supporter of the association until his death.

*Reprinted from the memorial program*

### **District Judge Gary A. Holum 1937 - 2007**

District Judge Gary A. Holum (retired), who lived his entire life in North Dakota, virtually all of it in Minot, died Sunday, Sept. 9, 2007, in a Minot hospital. His life has been described as one of service to his community and its residents through the many organizations in which he held membership and office. He was 70 years old.

He was born in Minot on March 19, 1937, a son of Bottolf and Mabel (Olson) Holum. He grew up in a one-

bedroom, downtown apartment on Minot's Main Street, where family life was crowded. He worked as a delivery boy for *The Minot Daily News*, and his home address earned him the Main Street route. Older residents recall the tall, skinny kid with a big, happy grin on his face, running up and down Main Street.

He attended Minot schools, held office as head of his class and played basketball at Minot High School. He was on the team that won the state championship in 1955, the year he graduated. He recently was inducted into the MHS Athletic Hall of Fame.

Joan Riebe came into his life early. They started dating in the ninth grade, and on Aug. 16, 1958, they were married in Minot. Before that, he started college, spending the 1955-56 school year at Harvard University in Cambridge, Mass. Then he returned to North Dakota and attended the University of North Dakota at Grand Forks, earning a B.S./B.A. degree there in marketing in 1960. He came back to Minot where he worked in the city assessor's office. He was assistant city assessor from 1960 to 1963 and city assessor for the next five years.

He was a member of the North Dakota National Guard from 1960 to 1967, and was on active duty in 1961-62.

One day in 1968, a friend walked into his office and said, "Let's go to law school." He thought about that for awhile. By then he and Joan had two children, and he had passed his 30th birthday. He decided to go for it, took and passed the UND law school admission test, and with his family, moved into one of the so-called tin huts that were part of the university's campus housing.

His friend decided against law school, and Holum found going back to the study grind wasn't easy. In 1971, he was awarded the juris doctor degree. After that, the family returned to Minot where Gary became a partner in the law firm of Bosard,



*Gary Holum – 1937-2007*

McCutcheon, Karien, Schmidt, Holum and Rau, a practice that included a three-year stretch, from 1973 to 1976, as Minot city attorney.

He left the law firm in 1981 to accept an appointment as Ward County Judge. He left that post to run for District Judge, a state court, in 1992. He won a second six-year term in 1998 and served until his retirement in 2004.

When he returned to Minot in 1971, he plunged into a wide range of activities in a number of organizations, including the Ward County, North Dakota and American Bar associations, retaining membership in those groups throughout his legal career. He also was a member of the North Dakota Judicial Conference, the North Dakota County Judges Association, Judicial Conduct Commission and the Judicial Performance Evaluation Commission. He was a member of the executive committee of the National Conference of Special Court Judges from 1982 until 1988.

At Minot State University, he was an adjunct instructor in the criminal justice division in 1989 and 1990, and served terms on the MSU Board of Regents and the Development Foundation Board.

Long active at First Lutheran Church of Minot, he served on the church council, the church call and nominating committees, and chaired the church centennial celebration.

When his children were in school, he was a member and past president of the Perkett and Jim Hill Parent

Teacher associations. He also was a member of the Edison PTA. He moved on to involvement with the Minot Music, Hockey and Swim club boosters, served a term on and was president of the Minot School Board.

He was a member of various Minot Area Chamber of Commerce committees, including its board of directors. He also served on the boards of Second Story, a social club for the mentally and physically challenged, and the Minot YMCA. He joined the Y's Men's Club in 1976, was on its executive committee and served as president in 1983-84. He was a member of the Minot Recreation Commission.

A longtime member of the Minot Kiwanis Club, he served on its board, was president in 1989-90 and a lieutenant governor of the Minnesota-Dakotas District of the club in 1989.

He served on the board of Trinity Medical Center from 1986 to 1990. He was a member of the Minot Elks and Moose lodges and of the Inquisitors Club of Minot.

His pride in his Norwegian her-

itage was reflected in the high profile he maintained through his work with Norsk Høstfest, as a member of its board and longtime manager of the event's general store. He also was a member of Thor Lodge of the Sons of Norway and was on the board and a former president of the Scandinavian Heritage Association.

He had traveled through all of Scandinavia. His journeys there included six trips to Norway alone. He took his family to visit his father's farmstead in Flam, Norway, and he and his wife represented Minot's Norsk Høstfest in that country, which included visits to Skein, Minot's sister city in Norway.

There were other trips through Western and Eastern Europe, England, Japan, Mexico and Canada. He treasured his family and the time he spent with them. He liked to hunt, fish, and garden. He liked people and liked working with them.

As a judge, he had to pass sentence on convicted criminals, many of them trapped in alcoholism or other drugs. Someone once told him, "You must be

under a lot of stress."

"No," he said, "I give stress."

Many of those he put in jail who were later released returned to tell him, "You saved my life."

"You couldn't have had anybody better," his wife said. "That's a pretty big blessing. He was so proud of his children, and they were proud of their dad."

Survivors include his wife, Joan; sons Thomas Glenn Holum, Bloomington, Minn., and John Gary Holum and his wife Alicia, Gig Harbor, Wash.; daughter, Jane Ann Furer and her husband Ferdinand, San Jose, Calif.; and two grandchildren, Ashley and Justin Holum, Gig Harbor.

An infant son, Robert, Gary's parents, a brother, Glenn Holum, and a sister, Carol Holum, preceded him in death.

A memorial service was held on Wednesday, Sept. 12, 2007, at 11 a.m. in First Lutheran Church, Minot.

Interment of ashes was at a private ceremony in Gethsemane Cemetery in Burt Township, Ward County, south of Minot. •

## Longtime SHA director and friend Reuben Forsberg passes away

Reuben Ellsworth Forsberg, 81, Minot, a former director and active member of the Scandinavian Heritage Association, died on Nov. 30, 2007, in his home from cancer.

Reub was born on March 18, 1926, on a farm north of Alamo, N.D., to Art and Margot (Manning) Forsberg. He was raised on the farm and graduated from Alamo High School. He served in the U.S. Navy from 1944 until 1946. Following his honorable discharge, he attended Minot State University for four years.

Reub married Ina Ruth Howe on March 25, 1951, in Minot. They made their home in Minot, where he owned and operated Reub's Minot Camera and Reub's Jet Photo for many years prior to his retirement in 1992. In addition, he had served on a regional committee of the Federal Trade Commission as an appointee of N.D. Gov. William Guy during the 1960s and was an Arthur Murray dance

instructor. Ina Ruth died on Sept. 25, 1982. Reub married Hazel Anderson Archer on Oct. 12, 1984, in Minot.

Reub was a member of First Lutheran Church, where he served as treasurer on the church council. He served on the board of directors of SHA and was a major force in securing funding for the construction of the stabbur, the first major SHA Park structure. Major donors of the project were Mr. and Mrs. Larry Anderson of Minot. Over the years Reub also took numerous photos of SHA events, which he donated to the organization.

He was a life member of the Elks Lodge, charter member of the Minot Camera Club and 50-year member of the Sons of Norway. He was a member of the Minot Gun Club, Minot Ski Club, Minot American Legion, V.F.W. and the Moose Lodge.

Reub's hobbies included photography, dancing, playing the accordion and piano, and listening to polka



Reuben  
Forsberg –  
1926-2007

music. He enjoyed skiing, snowmobiling, boating, auction sales, hunting and cooking.

Reub leaves his wife of 23 years, Hazel; children Holly (Larry) Eidsness of Minot, Randi (Michael) Rice of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and Ronald (Ann) Forsberg of Montrose, Colo.; six grandchildren; one great-grandchild; one brother, Fred; three brothers-in-law; several nieces, nephews, and cousins; and a special friend, Nels Rennerfeldt of Longmont, Colo.

Reub was preceded in death by his parents, his first wife, Ina Ruth, and a brother, Mervin.

Funeral services were held Dec. 7, 2007, at First Lutheran Church, Minot. He is interred at Rosehill Memorial Park, Minot. •



# 'Yule Goat' (Christmas goat) an old Nordic custom

Back in Old Scandinavia, they say, Father Christmas rode a goat when he delivered goodies to eager children. Or was it the goat who got the goodies? Or was the goat the gift???

In Nordic countries, tradition has it that Santa came astride a Yule Goat (*Julbock* in Swedish, *Julebuk* in Norwegian, *Julebuk* in Danish and *Joulupukki* in Finnish).

The Yule Goat is one of the oldest Scandinavian and Northern European Christmas symbols. Its origins may date back to pre-Christian times, when two goats—named *Tanngrjóstr* and *Tanngrisnir*—were said to pull the wagon of the Norse God Thor (god of thunder) across the sky.

In Finland, the Yule Goat was originally an ugly creature who frightened children and demanded gifts at Christmas. Sometime in the 1800s, its role became that of a giver of Christmas gifts. The rest of Scandinavian also adopted this more gentle version.

Up until the 20th century, the Yule Goat was said to be invisible, appearing shortly before Christmas to make sure Yule preparations were in order.

In Sweden, a custom known as *Juleoffer* (Yule Sacrifice) involved young men with grimy faces, singing and dancing.

One would dress up as the Yule Goat while the others pretended to slaughter it. (Thankfully, after it was thus ceremoniously killed, the Yule Goat always woke up again!)

Sometimes it was the Yule Goat who was the gift! In olden times, our Nordic ancestors played pranks on their neighbors by sneaking a Yule Goat into their home without their knowledge. The "tricked" family had to get rid of the goat in the same fashion.

In the Old Country as well as in Norwegian settlement areas of the U.S., young folks would dress in costume as *Julebukker* ("Christmas fools"), paying surprise visits to neighboring homes between Christmas and New Year. Their neighbors were then expected to provide them with treats of food and drink. The tradition of *julebukking* continues in some communities.

In modern times, a decorative goat made out of straw is often found under Scandinavian

Christmas trees. Large versions of this ornament are frequently erected in towns and cities around the holidays, then set afire before Christmas. A tinier version—a miniature straw goat—is still a popular Christmas decoration (see the picture at lower right on page 8 of this issue). •



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*Memorials gifts in honor of the following persons and the names of the donors are listed for the period from Jan. 1 through Oct. 31, 2007.*

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Vangsness, Steven & Debra

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Wahlund, Larry & Edwina

Wald, Donald & Bertha

Walker, Bruce & Diane

Wankel, Charles

Wheeler, Robert & Betty

White, Keith & Patricia









PHOTOS BY JO ANN WINSTORFER

## Heritage House ...ready for 2008

Thanks to gifts of time, money and Scandinavian-related items, the SHA Heritage House, located on the southwest corner of SHA Park, is turning into a sanctuary for treasured relics, displayed museum-style

Above, left, two sisters from Kansas visit the Saami costume display. At right, one corner of the living room contains an antique pump organ along with a lamp, Norwegian "bunad" folk costume and old-fashioned rocking chair.

Each section of the house-turned-museum contains something to interest Scandinavians, including a Viking ship replica, hardanger fiddles, and several immigrant trunks. At right, what was once a bedroom now holds bunad-clad figurines, including a child, standing guard over a spinning wheel.

The Heritage House is used as a meeting place, and come spring 2008, it will again be open for visits. Donations are welcome! •



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## The Scandinavian Heritage • 9

# 'Snowshoe' Thompson carried the mail—on skis!

by Arland Fiske

Before the Pony Express carried mail over the Sierra Nevadas, a young Norwegian from Telemark sailed on skis across 90 miles of stormy heights from Placerville, California (scene of the Gold Rush) to Carson Valley, Nevada. For 20 years, John A. Thompson, known as "Snowshoe" Thompson, carried the mail over the mountains to isolated camps, rescued lost people and helped those in need. He was a legend in his own time.

Born April 30, 1827, he emigrated to America with his mother when he was 10. After living in Illinois, Missouri and Iowa, he joined the gold-seekers in California when he was 21. He was lonesome for the mountains. Anyone who has been to Telemark knows how much mountains are a part of the people's lives.

Having moved to California, Thompson bought a ranch in the Sacramento Valley. He didn't care for a miner's life. His is believed to be the first farm owned by a Norwegian in California.



Snowshoe read about the difficulty of getting mail across the Sierras and volunteered for the job. His skis, made from oak trees on his farm, were over 10 feet long and weighed 25 pounds. People laughed at them and said they wouldn't work. Today they are in a Sacramento museum.

### Hardships along the trail

Snowshoe skied up to 45 miles a day over snowdrifts 50 feet deep with a load of 60 to 100 pounds on his back. Traveling light, he carried only some crackers and dried meats to eat. He did not use liquor, but scooped up snow to drink if no mountain stream was nearby. Wearing just a Mackinaw, he had no blanket to keep warm. More than once Thompson jiggled until morning to keep from freezing to death. Nor did he carry a weapon for protection against wolves or grizzlies. Once eight wolves blocked his path. When he didn't flinch, they let him pass. The stars and his wits were his compass.

Snow in the Sierras was deep, sometimes higher than the trees. Many mornings Snowshoe had to dig himself out of a

## 'Snowshoe' Thompson: Norwegian-American hero

The story of John A. "Snowshoe" Thompson is the stuff of legends. In the fall of 1855, the Sacramento Union newspaper carried this ad: "People lost to the world. Uncle Sam needs a mail carrier." Norwegian emigrant John Thompson, a new California resident, answered the ad, and from 1856 to 1876 he carried the mail across the Sierra Nevada Mountains between the Gold Fields of California and Carson Valley, Nevada—a 90-mile trip one way.

The book "Astri My Astri: Norwegian Heritage Stories" by author/publisher Deb Nelson Gourley contains details on Snowshoe Thompson as well as 15 other fascinating, true tales, in both English and Norsk. Nelson writes that Thompson's actual name was Jon Torsteinsson Rue, youngest son of Torstein Olsson Gollo and Gro Jonsdatter Einungbrekke (Håkaland/Rue), from Tinn, Telemark. In 1837, the widow Gro and her children, including 10-year-old Jon, immigrated to America. In 1843, the sons in the family changed their surname to "Thompson."

For more on "Astri My Astri" and other heritage-history books, including "History of the Norwegian Settlements" and "Kings of Norway" (a bilingual book-CD set), visit the following website: [www.astrimyastri.com](http://www.astrimyastri.com). •



With his mailbag on his back, Snowshoe Thompson skied across the Sierra Nevada Mountains separating California Gold Country and Carson Valley, Nevada. Although he used skis, his fellow miners called them "snowshoes." (Illustration and photo from "Astri My Astri: Norwegian Heritage Stories," courtesy of Deb Nelson Gourley)



snowbank to continue his journey. When traveling to Washington, D.C., in 1874, Snowshoe's train became stuck in snow so that four locomotives could not pull it through. He took to his skies and in two days had traveled the 56 miles to Cheyenne Wyoming. He beat the train.

What was his pay for 20 years of work? Many promises, but the government's response was, "We're sorry, but..." A later investigation into the Postmaster General's records indicate they had not even noted his name—only his route and the dates.

**Snowshoe leaves a proud heritage**

For all his fame, he was a modest man, never boasting or sitting on his haunches. He is regarded today as the most remarkable man to have ever buckled on ski straps in America. One postmaster claimed he saw Thompson jump 180 feet without a break.

When just 49, John A. Thompson died of a liver ailment on his California ranch. He is buried in Diamond Valley, 30 miles south of Carson City, beside his only son, who died at age 11.

Snowshoe Thompson is still remembered by family in America. Janet Erdman of Willow City, N.D., wrote me that her grandfather, John Sanderson, was Snowshoe's nephew. Like so many children of immigrants, they're proud of their Scandinavian heritage and glad to be Americans. •

Editor's note: This column is the ninth in a series by former Minot pastor, Arland Fiske (now living in Moorhead, Minn.), retired from ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Fiske has written nine books on Scandinavian heritage. The chapter reprinted here is from his book, "The Scandinavian World."

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*Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!*

# Gift annuity: A gift that gives back

by Bruce Christenson

This is the time of year we think of giving gifts. It's also nearing the end of a tax year—the time to weigh income and expenses for tax purposes.

Did you know that you can make a substantial gift to the SHA and provide for yourself and your family at the same time? What's more, your gift can help you reduce your tax liability at income tax time.

Our gift annuity program offers you the gift that gives back. A gift annuity offers you the satisfaction of supporting

the SHA, an organization you believe in, and the chance to improve your cash flow at the same time.

With a gift annuity, you simultaneously make a charitable gift and provide guaranteed payments for life to yourself and/or another person. These payments will be made for the rest of your life. Or, you may choose an annuity that will continue as long as a spouse or other beneficiary lives.

The size of the payments depends on your age and the amount of your contribution. The older you are when the annuity starts, the larger the payments.

And those payments can never be reduced, no matter what happens to the economy or interest rates. You can choose to have payments made in annual, semi-annual or quarterly installments. The payments can be deferred, and grow tax-free.

At tax time, you receive an income tax charitable deduction in the year of your gift. And for years after, a portion of your payments will be tax-free. In certain circumstances, you may also be able to reduce gift taxes and the size of your taxable estate.

## Questions? Contact SHA

SHA will be glad to give you information about current annuity rates and explain how a gift annuity can work for you. For information, contact the SHA office at (701) 852-9161.

Merry Christmas, everyone! •

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Name on Card (please print) \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

*Please mail to Scandinavian Heritage Assn., P.O. Box 862, Minot, ND 58702. Thank You!*



# SCANDINAVIAN SOCIETY NEWS...

## Icelandic Heritage Society NEWS

### Icelandic booth a hit at Høstfest

by Ken Holand, president  
Icelandic Heritage Society Newsletter

We had a good year with the Icelandic food booth at Norsk Høstfest. A big thank you to everyone, including the daughters of Victoria Torr, for all the hard work and great job they did for the Icelandic Society.

#### Kaffee Samkoma

The Kaffee Samkoma was a great success. We had approximately 60 people at the event. George Freeman gave a talk on the Mouse River settlement. Plus, there were lots of Icelandic goodies to go with our coffee and conversation.



Three scholarships were awarded to students of Icelandic descent. We received 12 applications for the scholarships. It was a great task to decide who would be the recipients, as they were all very deserving. Thank you to Colleen Fitchner for handling the scholarship program.

We had our annual meeting on Dec. 9 at the home of my wife Evie and me in Minot. Our meeting involved where we will go with the Icelandic Society. At present there are only seven members who are involved. We need more people to participate so we can do more things. If interested in becoming involved, call me at (701) 838-8538, and I will see to it that you



Icelandic members prepare Pönnukökur, a pancake served with strawberries and whipped cream or filled with jam, for Norsk Høstfest diners. (Photo by Jo Ann Winistorfer)

are included in future projects.

We wish you a wonderful holiday season. •

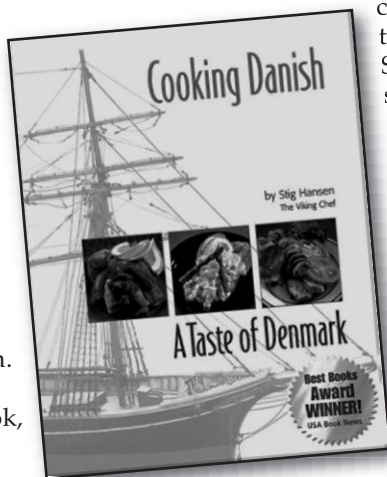
## Souris Valley Danish Society NEWS

### Danish chef/cookbook author Stig Hansen speaks at reception

by Eunice Johnson  
Souris Valley Danish Society

During Høstfest this year, the Danish Society had a small reception for Stig Hansen and his lovely wife, Sue; the Danes from Minneapolis who run the Tivoli Cafe, and others. The Elk Horn Museum people could not make it this year.

Stig is a chef from Denmark who lives in Utah. He spoke on how his "Cooking Danish" cookbook,



packed with full-color food pictures and delicious Danish-style recipes,

came about. He also talked about his life. Stig and Sue Hansen sold the cookbook at the Norsk Høstfest Bookstore. It is also available at the Scandinavian Heritage Center Gift Shop.

We also manned an information booth at Høstfest and met many wonderful people.

#### Ancestry.com available

If you would like something looked up on Ancestry.com and you do not have it (the Minot Public Library has it) ask Pam Orth, our Danish Society secretary. While she cannot do your family history, she can track your family on the U.S. census if you so wish.

Our meeting on Dec. 10 was a potluck Christmas party.

Please come to our future meetings if you are, or think you might be, interested in Danish culture.

The Souris Valley Danish Society wishes you all happy holiday! •



## Swedish Heritage Society NEWS

# Society visits Carbury's historic Stone Church

by Loren Anderson, president  
Swedish Heritage Society-NWND

The Swedish Society of NWND met Sept. 15 at the Swedish Zion Lutheran Church (SZLC), rural Souris. We invited anyone from the area who had been a member or whose family had been a member of the country stone church, one of the few stone churches remaining. Several board members from the Bottineau-Souris area joined us.

Following a meeting and tour of the cemetery and church, we proceeded to the Del and Vi Torno cabin at Lake Metigoshe. We met with the descendants and members because one of our members, Gene Wunderlich, had written a book, "Stone Church: A Prairie Parable," and agreed to donate the proceeds of the book toward a new roof for the church.

"Stone Church" is a nonfiction account of constructing a house of worship. Details of that construction range from shaping and setting the foundation to selecting and applying wallpaper. However, the story goes far beyond building a church to building a community, a new life in a new world.

Transcending the factual account is the allegorical content of wind and stone as guiding forces in the lives

and fortunes of the Swedish homesteaders.

The story of Swedish Zion Lutheran opens with a description of its setting, the rolling prairies of North Dakota generally and the particular place of the church. Of the many unique qualities of this vast grassland, wind is highlighted as a primal feature.

Walter Prescott Webb claimed that "nowhere in the world, perhaps, has the wind done more effective work than in the Great Plains." In "Stone Church," wind achieves almost mystical status.

Stone is the other pivotal element of the story. Stone becomes counterpoint to the Swedish emigrants. Like the Swedes, the granite rocks were migrants, having traveled from the north aboard the Ice Age glaciers. They settled in the soil to compete with the farmer's plow but then eventually partnered with the Swedish builders to become the stone church.

In addition to profits from "Stone Church" book sales, a lady from near Seattle Washington, Clarise Titterud (who was Gene Wunderlich's sixth grade teacher), saw the book this past summer in the SHA Gift Shop and donated another \$5,000 toward the project.

Now it is up to the existing board of directors of the SZLC to solicit bids and complete the roofing project, hopefully before any further damage is sustained to the roof.

The book is available in the SHA Gift Shop. Or, you may contact any of our officers for a copy. The books make excellent gifts, especially now for Christmas, and the proceeds go to an excellent cause.

### News from the Net

I have been perusing SWEDEN.SE in an effort to come up with interesting articles for you this season, and I really recommend using this site for information about Sweden.



SWEDEN.SE is administered by the Swedish Institute. It is a cooperative effort by the Swedish government offices, the Swedish Trade Council, the Invest in Sweden Agency, and Visit Sweden.

Simply go to [www.sweden.se](http://www.sweden.se) and you will find several tabs to click on. This will give you information about current news in business, government, education, research, and many other topics.

Another interesting site is [www.sweden.gov.se](http://www.sweden.gov.se). This site provides a great deal of information regarding governmental offices and the various ministry officials and offices.

I have also located four websites to help you trace your Swedish genealogy:

- Swedish Church Records Online: [www.genline.se](http://www.genline.se)
- House of Genealogy: [www.house-sweden.com](http://www.house-sweden.com)
- Swedish information Service New York: [www.web.com/sis/tracing.htm](http://www.web.com/sis/tracing.htm)
- Kinship Centre (Karlsd Emigrantregistret): [www.emigrantregistret.se](http://www.emigrantregistret.se)
- Swedish Emigrant Institute: [www.swemi.nu](http://www.swemi.nu)

### Julbord celebration Dec. 21

The annual Swedish American Chamber is celebrating Julbord on Dec. 21 at the American Swedish Institute on 2600 Park Ave. in Minneapolis. If any of you are interested in attending, I can call in reservations for you. We have lowered the price this year to \$69 per person.

Of course, we present a full Sankta Lucia Pageant at this event every year. This includes glög served from 11 a.m. to 12 noon, and appetizers, snapps and dinner from noon until 3 p.m. Please contact me early if you wish to participate in this spectacular event, because I can get you reduced hotel rates. We may be able to car pool if enough people participate. Contact me, Loren Anderson, at (701) 839-3773 or at [loren.anderson@minot-stateu.edu](mailto:loren.anderson@minot-stateu.edu).

We will meet again the third Saturday in January.

God Jul och Gott Nytt År•



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## Thor Lodge Sons of Norway NEWS

# Thor Lodge making 2008 plans

by Martha Elliott, president  
Thor Lodge 4-067 Sons of Norway

Greetings to SHA members! Thor Lodge celebrated its annual Yulefest on the 17th of December. Many members came out on a winter evening and enjoyed a delicious dinner and a very good program.

We now work toward programs and cultural activities for 2008. We will offer programs in hardangersom,

knitting, the S/N reading program, the S/N music program, folk dancing, rosemaling and others. If interested in taking any of our classes, please contact me.

Thor Lodge now has a membership of about 640, and we are excited about our membership. We see many of the members at our meetings and socials.

We invite you to join us! We meet for a business session the first Monday of each month, and we have



our social on the third Monday of each month. The other Mondays we have choir and folk dancing.

On behalf of myself and all members of Thor Lodge, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy 2008. •

## Dakota Finnish Society NEWS

# Finns celebrate 'Little Christmas'



by Marion Anderson, president  
Dakota Finnish Society

The Finnish Society had another successful year at the Norsk Høstfest. Thank you to all of the workers who helped make it a success. We were presented with a plaque and \$100 from the Norsk Høstfest—thank you, Høstfest!

### Pikkujoulu well attended

We had our seventh annual Pikkujoulu (Little Christmas) celebration on Saturday, Dec. 1, 2007, at the Scandinavian Heritage Center. Approximately 65 people attended the affair. The participants came from Velva, Ruso, Wing, Washburn, Bismarck, Tioga, Coleharbor, Stanley, Rolla, Rock Lake and Minot.

Entertainment was provided by

John Halone and Alfred Juntunen of Rolla, and Carl Kannianen of Stanley. They also accompanied George and Velma Raasakka of Rolla, who led the group in singing Christmas carols in Finnish. Maila Zitelli, an instructor at Minot State University, recited a Finnish poem. She is from Estonia and attended school in Finland for three years.

A silent auction was held and a total of \$267 was received for the auction. The auction proceeds were all donated to the Salvation Army.

Thank you to all who attended and participated to make this another successful event.

Finland's Independence Day is Dec. 6. This year Finland celebrated 90 years of independence.

### FinnFest, anyone?

Plans are also under way to attend the FinnFest in Duluth in July of 2008. Anyone interested in attending this event, please contact Bruce Carlson at (701) 338-2152 or Marion Anderson at 838-8677. Housing and event registration should be in by the beginning of 2008.

One of the highlights of the FinnFest in Duluth will be a performance by the Minnesota Orchestra; the director is from Finland. Many other entertainers from Finland will also be performing.




Tasha Swanson, Minot, winner of a \$500 Icelandic Scholarship.

### Scholarship awarded

A scholarship of \$500 was presented to Tasha Swanson. She is the granddaughter of Finnish Society members Don and Sylvia Swanson. Tasha attends Minot State University and is majoring in addiction counseling. She wants to remain in North Dakota after she completes her studies.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, everyone! •

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## Tracing your Scandinavian ROOTS • 20

# Mapping your genealogy

by Jo Ann Winistorfer

There's just something about maps that fascinates me. And that's a good thing, for someone who's into genealogy. Indeed, maps can be a valuable aid for family history seekers.

In genealogy, three keys can help you unlock your family's history: names, dates and places. The places your ancestors came from are some of the most valuable clues to researching them. You need to know where to look for records!

The following information on maps may aid you in your search:

First, you need to be aware of the many varieties of maps out there! You'll find antique maps, old railroad maps, topography maps, plat maps, closeup maps—and even satellite maps offering images of the entire planet via the Internet.

Antique maps are not only fun to look at, they can give you a glimpse of the area where your ancestors once lived! Look for a map printed around the time of your family's residence in that area.

Keep in mind that place names and borders often changed over time. That's another reason you should check a map of the appropriate time period. An old map can often help you find locations of what are now ghost towns, which may no longer be listed on modern-day maps.

Regional history books (city, county or township books) often contain plat maps of townships, containing names of land-

owners in each section. If you need the legal description of the land of your ancestors settled on so you can retrieve your "homestead packet" papers from the National Archives, this is one way to get that information—especially if your family was living in the area at the time the map was created.

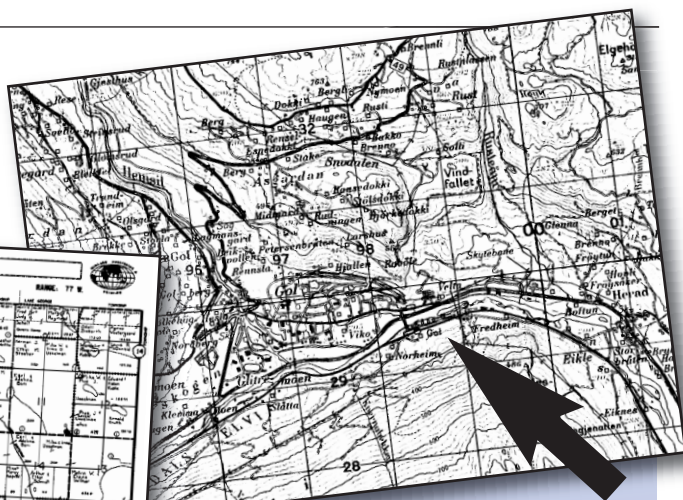
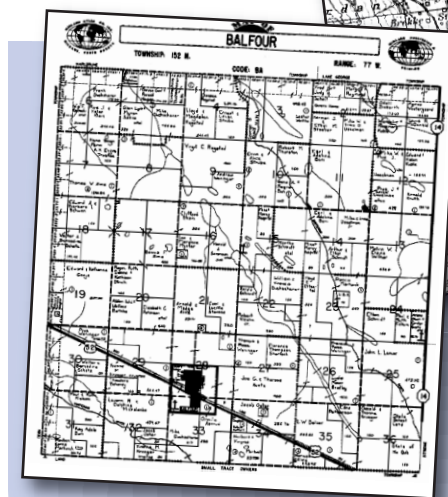
The North Dakota State Archives and Historical Research Library, located in the Heritage Center in Bismarck has collections of early atlases and county plat books, with maps showing land ownership by township. Some have been micro-filmed. Also check area libraries, state historical societies, county histories and old atlases for historical maps.

Closeup maps are especially valuable

and can give you an in-depth perspective of your family's community. When my brother and I traveled by car in Norway some years ago, we took our maps along and were able to locate the farms of our ancestors, since farm names are listed!

For details, visit Travel Genie Maps on the Web at [www.travelgenie.com](http://www.travelgenie.com). Click on Norway, Sweden and/or Denmark for available closeup maps. The most detailed maps are at 1:50 000 scale. You'll find a map grid showing section numbers of areas depicted on each map. (The Norway maps are called Statens Kartverk Series M711 maps.) These maps are \$14.95 each. To order, list the appropriate section number.

Good luck in your quest for maps, and have a wonderful holiday season! •



At left: A plat map of Balfour Township from an area history book. Above: Closeup map of the area around Gol, Hallingdal, Norway, former home of the original Gol Stave Church (relocated in Bygdøy Park near Oslo). A replica of this church serves as the crown jewel of Scandinavian Heritage Park, Minot.

# Scandinavian Heritage Association

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