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Telelaget Goals

President Marne Olson has created a list of goals for the 2024-25 year. These include...

- 2025 event support
 - Mini-*TeleStevne* (Apr)
 - 7+*Lag Stevne* (July)
 - Bicentennial of the Sloop Restauration (Oct)
- Continuous improvement of *Telelaget* website
- Increase *Telelaget* membership and community outreach
- Future Norway tours
- Telemark genealogy support

Our 2025 events are important in our efforts to enrich our organization by retaining and recruiting new members and offering genealogy research opportunities.

2025 Mini-TeleStevne

***Telelaget* of America Mini-*Stevne*
April 24 – 26, 2025
New London/Spicer, Minnesota.**



The theme is “The Patchwork of Our Ancestors’ Lives.” *Telelaget* members are encouraged to be involved. Event details are on page 8. We will keep you informed about this event on our website and look for future communications via social media and email.

2025 7+Lag Stevne



Norwegian Crossings 1825-2025

Austin, Minnesota

July 9-12 2025

at [Doubletree by Hilton](#).

Landingslag is the host lag

On July 1825, 52 Norwegians set sail from Stavanger in Norway on the sloop Restauration. They arrived in New York on October 9.

This marked the beginning of organized emigration from Norway to North America - 900,000 Norwegians would follow. In 2025 Norwegians and Norwegian-Americans are celebrating the Bicentennial of Norwegian Emigration.

The [7+Lag Stevne website](#) is your go-to source for the most up-to-date information - including travel, merchandise and planned events.



July 2024 Stevne Recap

Another successful 7+ *Lag Stevne* was held on the North Dakota State College of Science campus in Wahpeton, ND in July.

From July 18-20, the speakers and entertainers presented informative and interesting topics including Preservation of your Ancestral Records, Preserving Norwegian Heritage, Norway during WWII Occupation, Painting a *Hardanger* Fiddle on a Lefse Stick, and Homestead Records. A lesson of making a *Hardanger* Fiddle followed by listening to familiar folk tunes and a little dancing by members of the audience completed the day on Friday. ~Music by the Norwegian Bachelor Farmers capped the closing of the *Stevne* on Saturday.

For more information on this year's event, see the November 2024 *Telesoga* publication.



Gary Oistad, Telelaget member, "I truly loved the entertainers! This is Bud Larsen, and he entertained us on Friday night. Bud Larsen built his first Hardanger Fiddle when he was in the 7th grade. Over the years, Bud has made over 40 Hardanger fiddles, and has also repaired more than 100. I was astonished by Bud's artistry and craftsmanship in the fiddles that he had made and brought with him."

Telelaget Board of Directors

At the end of the July 2024 7+*Lag Stevne*, the board held election of officers. President Marne Olson moved to accept the slate of officers as presented. New directors are Lila Burmeister, Amber Walters, and Sandy Gilbert.

For a complete list of current board members and ex-officio *Telelaget* members, refer to the *Telesoga* or visit this [link](#) on our website.

Seeking New Board Members!

Being a member of *Telelaget* Board of Directors is a great way to become more involved in the organization. All of our meetings are held via Zoom, so you can live anywhere!

If you or someone you know would like to serve on the Board of Directors of *Telelaget* for a three-year term, or if you have questions about being on the board, please contact President [Marne Olson](#), or one of the board members listed on page 4 of your *Telesoga*.



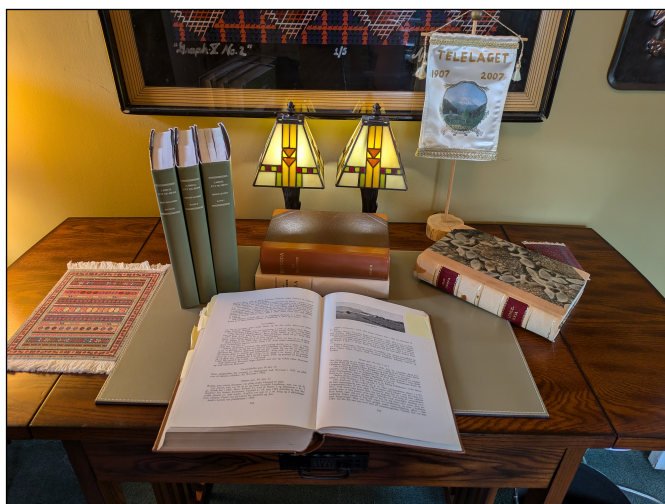
Past President, Jeff Huset, receives Achievement Award for Outstanding Contributions



Board of Directors from left to right: Sandra Gilbert, Amber Walters, Trudy Koespell, Sara Gordon, Jeff Huset (past president) Marne Olson, Doug, Framness Naomi Nowland, Wendi Storhoff, Lila Burmeister

New Home for *Telelaget Bygdebøker*

Our *Telelaget* board has decided to place 40% (approximate 50 books) of our *bygdebøker* (rural village books) in the *Bygdelag* Special Collections Room at Norway House's Haugo *Bibliotek*. This facility provides archival-grade environmentally-controlled storage for the books. The remaining collection will continue to be in the possession of our genealogy team.



A few of the Telelaget bygdebøker before transferring to Norway House.

The books were written and edited by local Norwegian historians, many who have lived in the area and have personal connection with the community. So you could say, "*Bygde-*

bøker kommer rett fra hestens munn." (Village books come straight from the horse's mouth.)

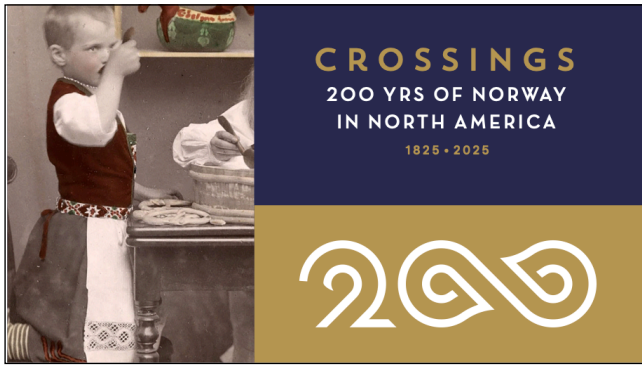
Some of the books are from the 1920s, while others are relatively more modern (1990-early 2000s).

Norway House visitors to the Haugo *Bibliotek* can view the books, but they cannot be checked out. There are no plans to digitize them at this time.

Why Might These Books be Helpful?

You might want to reference a *bygdebok* to break through some of your genealogical brick walls (those dead-end research questions). If you can't find a relative in the church records, you may find them in a *bygdebok*. A *bygdebok* contains a treasure trove of genealogical information. It is a history of a specific community, recording who lived where and when. It typically includes detailed descriptions of each farm property. Sometimes it includes descriptions of specific people and families. It may also provide histories of local industries, businesses, schools, culture and health care.

Telelaget board will continue to bring all of the *bygdebøker* to our *stevner* so that attendees can use them for family history research. *Telelaget* retains ownership of the books, so we can remove them from the Haugo *Bibliotek* whenever we need them at an event.



Welcome

New Members Since April

Amy Christianson — Oconomowoc WI
 Sarah Stumme — Oconomowoc, WI
 Astrid Gjøystdal — Rjukan, Norway
 Gwen & Jeffrey Gust — Menomonie, WI
 Judy Haccu — Santa Clara, CA
 Esther Mills — Westminster, CO
 Sara Holland — Wentzville, MO
 Keith Alekson — Manassas, VA
 Linda Nilson — Regina, Sask, Canada
 John Peterson — Jefferson City, MO
 Bodil Tveit — Drangedal, Norway
 Andrea Pipp — Billings, MT
 Christine Anderson, Vail, AZ

Crossings — the bicentennial of organized Norwegian migration to North America — takes place in 2025.

This event marks the voyage of the sloop *Restauration*, sometimes called the “Norwegian Mayflower,” which sailed from Stavanger to New York in 1825.

Since that first voyage, about 900,000 people have followed, leaving their homes in search of opportunities and a better life. While many returned to Norway, most stayed and built a new home in the New World. Today nearly five million people in North America claim Norwegian ancestry.

Resources about this Crossing, visit crossings.norwegianamerican.com.

Stay Up-to-Date At These Social Media Sites....

www.facebook.com/Restauration1825
www.instagram.com/restauration_ship/
www.youtube.com/@restauration1825

Note for new members:

If interested in viewing [old TeleNews documents](#), PDF versions can be found on *Telelaget* website.

Is Your Membership Current?

Your membership expiration date is printed on your mailing label. If your membership expired in 2023, renew today at www.telelagetofamerica.com/telelag-store

The holidays are ahead...consider a gift membership for a family member, it may enhance interest in their Norwegian heritage.

Social Media

You are welcome to post and comment on all of these sites. Click on “See Translation” in any post to instantly translate to English or Norwegian.

Facebook Groups

Access by entering the name in the search field at the top of your Facebook page.

- *Telelaget* of America - 815 Members!
- International Telemark
- Telemark Heritage & Genealogy
- Norwegian Genealogy
- Visit Telemark
- I Love my Norwegian Heritage



Telelaget is now on **Instagram!**

[Click here.](#)

Update from Your Brand Committee

Much progress has been made since our last issue to bring a refreshed, cohesive design to our *Telelaget* marketing and communication materials - including a new logo and our publications (*TeleNews* and *Telesoga*), website and social media sites.

The new *lag* logo below was creatively designed from a number of images that the committee best represented Telemark culture and community here in America.



Website Redesign Complete

Our website content has been painstakingly researched, reviewed, edited, and updated through the work of volunteers who appreciated your feedback, corrections, and grace as we finalized all content. We hope you take some time to familiarize yourself with all the new sections and information.



Amber Walters (right) received a gift from President Marne Olsen in July for the hundreds of hours she put into our website redesign!

Website Sections & Content

Home Screen

- [Membership Information](#)
- [Events](#)

What is Telelaget

- [Telelaget Team](#)
- [How Do you Say That?](#)
- [Origins and History](#)

Bridging Past & Present

- [Stevne](#)
- [Telelaget Tours](#)
- [Telesoga](#)
- [TeleNews & Other Publications](#)
- [Recommended Reading](#)

Telemark Norway

- [Telemark Fylke](#)
- [Flowers, Fiddles & Finery](#)
- [History & Folklore](#)
- [Friluftsliv](#)

Heritage Resources

- [Bygdebøker](#)
- [Contributions & Collaboration](#)
- [Pioneer Settlements](#)
- [Library](#)

Telelaget Store

- Purchase Items for Sale
- Make a Donation to Our Organization

New Telelaget Event Banner

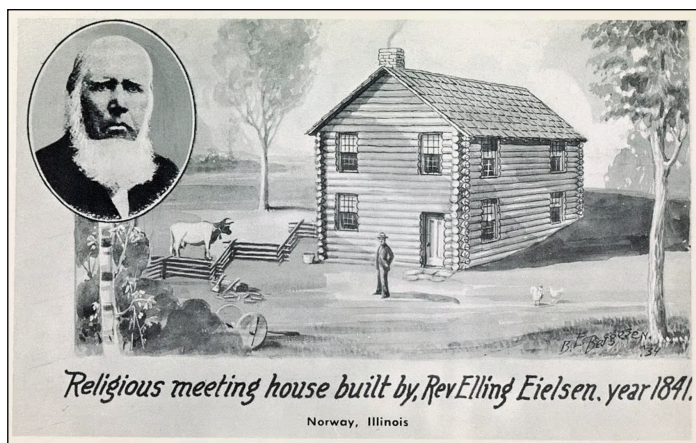


Wendi and Sharen Storhoff by our new lag banner displayed at 2024 July Wahpeton Stevne

Pioneer Settlements

Our website features a number of pioneer settlements notable for their general Norwegian American cultural significance to individual *Telelaget* members. Use these resources to help you fill in the gaps of your own family's story or to inspire you to collaborate with other *Telers* to reveal a story as yet untold.

Immigrants from Telemark can be traced to almost every major Norwegian Pioneer Settlement. From 1906-1927, *Telelaget's* first *Telesoga* editor, Torkel Oftelie, traveled by horse and buggy all over the midwest to chronicle every *Teler* settlement that came to his attention. His 53 issues of the *Telesoga* and his 128-page Yearbook for *Telelaget* were an earnest effort to record each settlement where *Telers* had put down roots in America. Despite his efforts, this task remains unfinished. The *Telesoga* continues to trace the pioneers from Telemark to this day. Our book series Telemark to America Volumes 1-3 documents settlements even further. And yet, there are still many more stories to tell.



Fox River Settlement, LaSalle County, IL

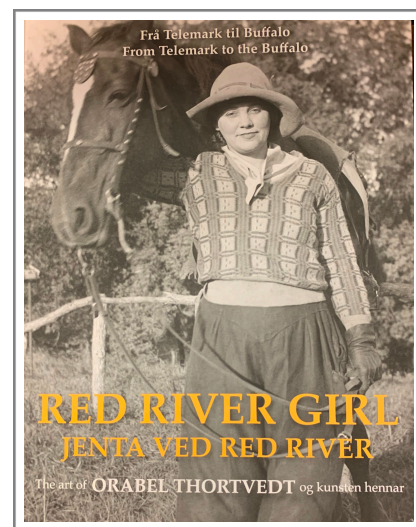
Telemark to America Series Available to Purchase from [Telelaget Store](#)

Telelaget has published a set of Norwegian-American history books. The first volume gives an overview of *Telemark* and its immigrant settlements in America. The second book in the series (which has been updated and re-published) is a collection of articles from the *Telesoga* and 1926 *Årbok* about *Teler* settlements in America. Volume three adds more about settlements, plus biographies and *Telemark* lore.

Red River Girl — our Most Popular Book

The text is both in Norwegian and English. Orabel Thortvedt, granddaughter of pioneer Olav G. Geitestad/Thortvedt, devoted much of her life exploring and depicting her story. She was a trained artist, loved animals and was inordinately interested in local history. This beautiful, coffee table style, book portrays the work of this fascinating artist, while at the same time telling a touching family saga.

To see where Orabell lived, and hear of her life in Houston County, visit the display at the Houston County Historical Society. Available to purchase from the [Telelaget Store](#).



Future *Telelaget* Tours

Another *Telelaget* goal in the next few years is a new Tour of Norway. Jeff Huset, our new Tour Director, has extensive knowledge of Norway and Scandinavia.

Contact Jeff or any of the board members about what you would like to see or experience on a future tour. On past tours, *Telelaget* members have had opportunities to visit family farms and meet distant relatives.

Telemark Genealogy Help?

Continuing to assist members with their family history research is always a goal of *Telelaget* of America. With new technologies this is easier than ever. Contact *Telelaget's* Genealogist Darrel Johnson if you need help with your family history.

Do you possess genealogy research skills and a desire to help others discover more about their ancestors? You are welcome to join *Telelag's* Genealogy Team. Contact Darrel for more information.

Any Historical Stories You Want to Share?

The *Telesoga* is written by you — the members of *Telelaget* of America. We welcome your stories telling us what you have found out about your family members who have connections to Telemark.

If you would like to write about one or more of the topics below, please contact our editor, Lila Burmeister, at lilajsb@gmail.com. There is no monetary payment for your writing, but you will receive five copies of the *Telesoga* to share with family and friends.

New Board Member Goal!

We are exploring new ideas to make your experience with *Telelaget* more interesting.

Would you like to participate in online membership meetings, language learning or Norwegian cultural programs?

Please contact any board member to discuss what you would like to get involved or learn more about as a member of *Telelaget* of America

The Patchwork of our Ancestors' Lives

A *Telelag Stevne* for our Members

April 24 - 26 2025

Grand Stay Hotel, New London/Spicer, MN
Green Lake Bible Camp Chapel *Stavkirken* for the *Revv*

Member Participation Will Enhance This Event!

Do you have anything else you would like to share --
a speaking topic, a suggestion for speakers, vendors, craftspeople, etc.?
Would you like to help with the planning or help at the *Stevne*?

Please contact one of the committee members listed below.

Naomi Nowland — nowland.naomi@gmail.com

Marne Olson — marne.olson@sonoma.edu

Sara Gordon — ssgordon@mac.com

Sandy Gilbert — sandyfgilbert@gmail.com

Elaine Nordlie — enordlie1946@gmail.com

Lila Burmeister — lilajsb@gmail.com

2025 *Telelag* Mini-Stevne



What can you expect at the Mini-Stevne?

- Genealogy help available
- Time for meeting and getting to know each other
- Classes (see below for possible topics)
- Question & Answer session with a panel of *Telelaget* “Experts”
- *Revy** at Green Lake Bible Camp stave chapel. Public will be invited
- *Bunad* & Norwegian sweater parade
- Possible field trip depending on weather and availability of sites
- Breakfast at Grand Stay Hotel (included with the room)
- All Lunches and Dinners all meals catered by Max’s Restaurant

Suggested Classes and Activities

Farm equipment & tools • Farm buildings of immigrants • Settlers’ church experiences
Bunads & Jewelry • Immigrants’ kitchen utensils • Telemark’s musical instruments
Quilting • Carving • Slide show of photos taken in Telemark on our tours et al.
Video of Tinn Folk Dancers • Video of the Rui Sisters’ farm in Dalen
Sharing by attendees of quilts, rosemaling, textiles, etc. • Vendors

Financial Note: Costs of the *stevne* will be defrayed with Thrivent Choice dollars directed to *Telelaget* by our members and by a Thrivent Action Team Grant.

***What is a *Revy*?** (pronounced Rev’ee)? It is a type of variety show that can include vocal and instrumental music, Norwegian dancing, dramatic readings, and maybe even a sing-a-long. If you have a talent that you would like to share in a two to three minute presentation, please contact Elaine Nordlie by phone (320-296-2955) or email enordlie1946@gmail.com.

A detailed schedule and registration form will be sent via email in early January.

**Information and registration will be posted on our [website](#),
Facebook and Instagram**