

The Ager Newsletter

The Waldemar T. Ager Association

Nov. 2010-Jan. 2011

GOD JUL!



The Ager House
514 West Madison St.
P.O. Box 1742
Eau Claire, WI 54702-1742

715.834.3985
www.agerhouse.org

WINTER 2010 **CALENDAR**

Board of Directors
Mon. Nov. 14,
9:30 a.m.

Advent at the Ager
**HOLIDAY FUN FOR
THE WHOLE FAMILY!**
Sun. Dec. 12, 2010
Noon to 4 p.m.

Register for winter classes
before Jan. 30. Classes
begin Feb. 7.

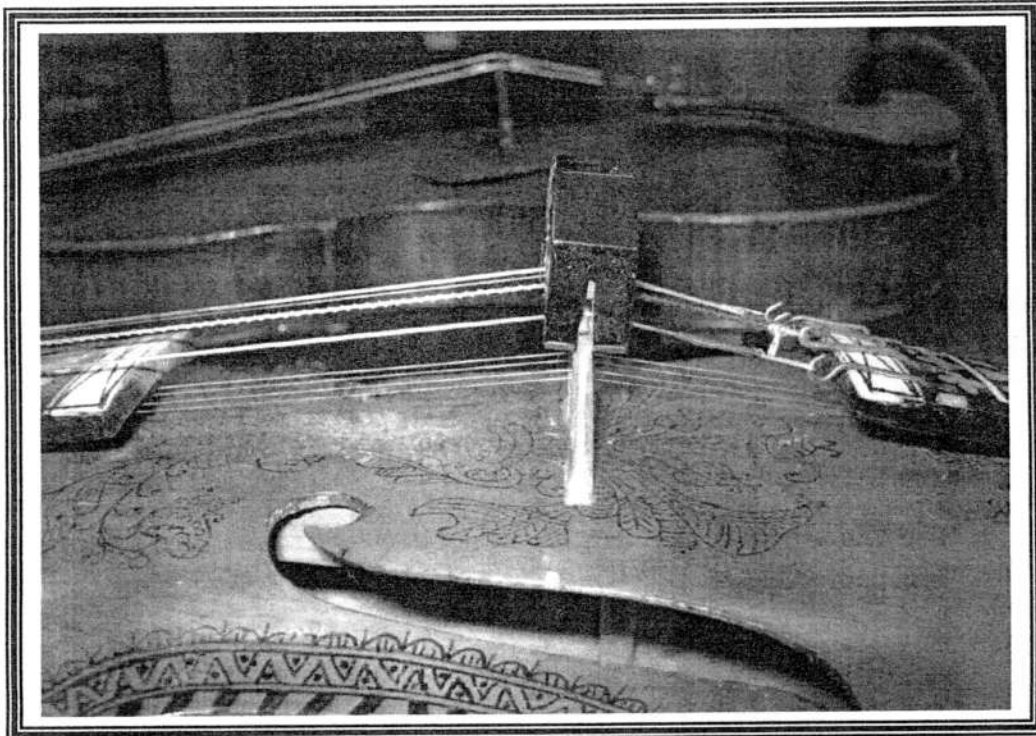
Hardanger Fiddle and Classical Violin Compared at Annual Meeting

By Jan Etnier

We knew we were in for a treat when Robin Fossum was introduced! Trained as a violinist, she has played with Tony Bennett, Lena Horne, and Perry Como shows! Not only did she bring her unique Norwegian Hardanger fiddle, but she also brought her classical violin. When she played each one, we could hear the contrast in the sound.

The Hardanger fiddle is a work of art--each one is made differently with mother of pearl and bone, creating designs down the length of the fiddle and rosing designs done with pen and ink. It has eight strings, four that are played and four under them that vibrate sympathetically and produce the unique sound of the Hardanger fiddle. So with eight strings, there are eight pegs to tune each time one plays! It has a shorter neck than a regular violin and elongated "f" holes. The flat bridge allows two notes to be played at a time. Often the top is decorated with a dragon, a lion, a female bust, or crown. Robin's fiddle is a 1929 Voss fiddle.

The first Hardanger fiddle dates back to 1650 when there were a variety of violins with 5, 7, and 9 strings. Why the Hardanger fiddle survived and the others didn't is a mystery. There aren't a lot of fiddles left from the 1700's



church decided that it was the devil's instrument since it was played for dancing.

Robin played pieces that sounded rather melancholy and noted that the syncopation in one piece was unusual because the composer in northern Norway had no training in classical music.

It's remarkable that there are more Hardanger violinists in the U. S. and Japan than there are in Norway. Andrea Ean at St. Olaf College founded the Hardanger Fiddle Association of America. Now kids in Norway are beginning to pick it up. In fiddle class the instructor plays the melody, and the student plays it back much like the Suzuki method of teaching violin.

The movie industry has used the Hardanger violin. We heard the soulful sounds in *Fargo*, and there was a movie about a Voss wedding. It is Norwegian tradition that the Hardanger fiddler leads the bridal party to the church, but he can't come inside.

Robin's appreciative audience asked lots of questions and could have listened to both the Hardanger and her classical 1772 Venice violin much longer. Afterward, the group adjourned to the Ager House for conversation, coffee, and kringle.

Left: Hardanger fiddle and violin compared.
Below: Robin Fossum and her Hardanger fiddle.



**Annual Meeting Report
Oct. 10, 2010**

Following the program a brief annual meeting was held.

Ken Ziehr, outgoing president, opened the meeting.

Doug Pearson, outgoing treasurer, gave his report.

Ellie Paulson was re-elected vice president, and Stan Hillestad was elected treasurer. The motion was made and passed to give the board permission to elect a president and a secretary.

The meeting was adjourned, and everyone proceeded to the Ager House for refreshments.

Here's a list to check out. It was sent from Ager Association member Arletta Rud:

SCANDINAVIAN NEWSPAPERS ONLINE

<http://www.norwaypost.no/>

Norway Post Front Page

<http://www.hs.fi/english/>

Helsingin Sanomat International Edition

<http://icelandtoday.com/>

Scandinavian News_(WN World News Network)

<http://www.norhouse.com/>

News from Nordic Countries_(Tourist information)

<http://www.thelocal.se/>

Sweden's News in English

<http://www.norway.org/>

Norwegian embassy website

<http://www.aftenbladet.no/english/>

Stavanger Aftenblad News

<http://www.norseman.no/>

Normanns Forbundet

<http://www.norway-hei.com/>

Tourist information

THE BOOKSHELF

By Miriam Hansen

You don't have to read Norwegian, Danish, or Swedish to enjoy the Ager Resource Library. Thanks to our many donors, we have a large collection of English language materials in addition to those in Scandinavian languages. If your ancestors immigrated to the Midwest, you might like to browse through titles related to their journey and their settlements in the New World.

One of these books, ***Our Norwegian Immigrants: A Hundred-Year Saga Told in Pictures***, is packed full of wonderful photographs showing the daily lives of the immigrants. Pictured here are miners, farmers, butchers, storekeepers, lumbermen, deaconesses, and church choir members, to mention just a few. Maybe you'll find photos of one of your relatives from Antigo, Whitehall, Green Bay, Washington Island or Decorah. This book presents a selection of the photos that individuals donated for the jubilee year exhibition in 1975, which was opened by King Olav V.

One of my favorite memories of Advent was the arrival in the mail of the Christmas Annual published by Augsburg Publishing House. When we opened that large white envelope, read the stories, sang the songs, and pored over the illustrations, I knew that Christmas was not far away. At the Ager House, you'll find a large collection of these Christmas annuals dating back to the early 30's.

The following recipe for Christstollen, the special German bread served at Christmastime, is from the 43rd volume of the annual, published in 1973.



Christstollen

Stir until dissolved:

- 2 packages dry yeast
- 1 ¼ cup lukewarm water

Add: 1 cup sifted flour

Permit this to rise in a warm place until doubled.

Combine in a small paper bag and shake until coated:

- 1 cup raisins
- 8 oz. slivered toasted almonds
- 3 Tbsp. flour.

Beat until fluffy:

- 1 ½ cups butter

Add gradually:

- 1 cup sugar
- ¾ tsp. salt

Beat in, one at a time:

- 3 large eggs

Combine all these ingredients in a large bowl with:

- 5 cups flour

Turn onto lightly floured board and knead until elastic and smooth. Permit it to rise until double in bulk. Punch down. Divide into two or three portions and shape into round loaves. Brush with melted butter and allow it to rise, covered, until almost double in bulk. Bake at 350 degrees until well browned – about 45 minutes. Cool on a wire rack and while still warm, brush with lemon glaze.

Lemon Glaze

Mix together:

- 1 ¼ cups sifted powdered sugar
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- 1 tsp. grated yellow lemon rind

Winter 2011 Language and Folk Art Classes

Beginning, Intermediate, and Continuing Norwegian: Eldbjorg Tobin, Instructor: Please note this change to our usual Norwegian class schedule. After a successful Norwegian Fall 2010 class schedule, Eldbjorg and her students have concluded that they prefer the fall sessions to the winter sessions, so watch for information on Fall 2011 Norwegian classes.

German I: Angela Gunn, Instructor (715.552.4437): A 1-½ hour 8-week class on Monday evenings from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM beginning on February 8th and continuing through March 29th. Minimum class size is 12 students. No prerequisite. Fee is \$70.00 for the 8 week session + cost of book or materials. Estimated cost of the book "*Your First 100 Words in German: German for total Beginners Through Puzzles and Games*", by Jane Wightwick and materials is between \$15.00 and \$18.00, payable at the first class.

German II: Angela Gunn, Instructor (715.552.4437): A 1-½ hour 8-week class on Tuesday evenings from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM beginning February 9th continuing through March 30th. Minimum class size is 12 students. Prerequisite is German I. Fee is \$70.00 for the 8 week session + cost of book or materials. Estimated cost of the book "*German Made Simple: Learn to Speak and Understand German Quickly and Easily*", by Arnold Leitner and materials is between \$14.00 and \$17.00, payable at the first class.

Swedish: Leon Salander, Instructor (715.839.0102): A one hour 12-week class on Monday evenings from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM beginning February 8th continuing through March 26th. The fee is \$38.00.

Chipcarving: Virginia Van Vuren Instructor (715.834.3937): A six-week class on Thursday mornings from 9:00 AM to noon beginning on February 10th continuing through March 17th. Limited to 12 students. The fee is \$38.00.

Hardanger embroidery: Louise Koxlien, Instructor (715.522.3873): A five-week class on Thursday afternoons, from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM beginning on February 10th continuing through March 10th. Limited to twelve students. The fee is \$38.00.

Rug Hooking: Dorothy Huse, Instructor (715.723.1455): Classes will meet from 1:00 to 4:00 PM for six weeks beginning on Monday February 7th continuing through March 14th. A complete kit, not including the background material, will be provided to complete your class project. The fee for class and materials is \$38.00.

Please call the instructor if interested or for additional information on any classes.

Drop-in rosemaling: Drop in each Friday of the week from 10:30AM to 4:00PM to join other rosemalers from beginners to gold medallists to work on your rosemaling project and enjoy the camaraderie of others. No formal instruction, but receive help and support from others experienced in this folk art. Suggested donation is \$5.00 per day for each time you attend.

***Call Mary Beth Wold at 715.456.5219 or 715.835.7410 for additional information
on drop-in rosemaling.***

All classes are held at the Ager House, 514 West Madison Street, Eau Claire.

Send Registration and Fees to:

Registration, Waldemar Ager Association

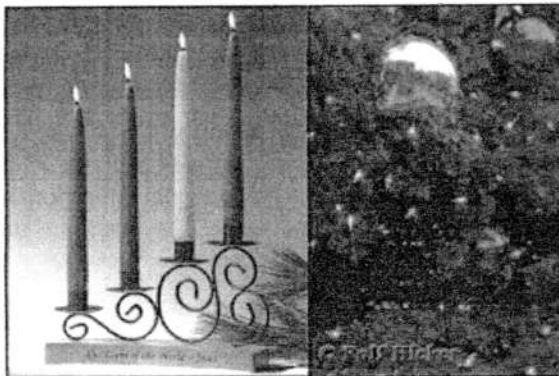
PO Box 1742, Eau Claire, WI 54702-1742

Don't miss our next Ager House Event!

ADVENT AT THE AGER OPEN HOUSE

Sunday, December 12th
Open House from Noon until 4:00 P.M.

Happy Holidays



**Scandinavian Baking
Experience family fun**

For details, please call Helen Wurtzel at
715.834.2859

**Enjoy the
season of
Advent
and
Christmas**

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Donations and Contributions

By Helen Wurtzel

IN MEMORY OF DR. JOHN W BEST

Lauren Ager

IN MEMORY OF A. EDWARD HEINS

Barbara and Fritz Culver

IN MEMORY OF MARGARET JOHNSON

Dawn Bergstrom

IN MEMORY OF ROALD A. AGER

(correction)

Waldemar T. Ager

THANK YOU TO THESE PEOPLE:

Borgny Ager:

A lead masthead used to print *Reform*; Sixteen booklets from First Lutheran Church including *Aarbog 1913, 1915, 1917*, and anniversary and holiday programs. A publisher's letter to Ager with a job offer, 1913. Story by Ager, *Bare Mor*

Jan Etnier

Rosemaled note holder and filter holder; Scandinavian napkin holder

Pat & Alle Hanson:

Bibles and catechism from the 1800s
Two music books; folk music and religious songbook

Eleanor Hesse:

Two books: *Selected Plays of Marcus Thrane* and *Immigrant Idealist, a Literary Biography of Waldemar A. Ager, American Idealist* by Einar Haugen

Johanna Shager Hocker

Two yearbooks from Norway: *Aarbok Gudbrandsdalslaget* and *Aarbok Bygdelagenes Faellesraad*. Photos and documents from First Lutheran Church, and a scrapbook from Lois Wagnild Shager

Irene Lamont:

Two hardanger books, one Scandinavian knitting book, one bookrack, assorted rosemaled patterns and woodenware. Two books: *History of the Norwegian Settlers* and *Astri my Astri*

Phyllis Larson:

A collection of over 50 Christmas Annuals, Christmas Annuals, including some old copies in Norwegian. Some prints.

The Ager Association 2011

Board of Directors

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The Waldemar T. Ager Association

Nov. 2010-Jan. 2011

Dear Ager Association members,

You may recall that our new membership plan calls for renewals that correspond to the calendar year.

You will be receiving your renewal notices for 2011 shortly. We hope you will continue as a member for another year of interesting activities. If you have friends or relatives who aren't members, encourage them to join with you.

We have added four talented new directors to our board: Karen Homme, Stan Hillestad, Frank Smoot and Eric Anderson. Although Ken Ziehr, Helen Wurtzel, and Doug Pearson's terms are ending, they have promised not to desert us.

Happy Holidays from the Ager Board!

**Enjoy these benefits of membership in
the Ager Association:**



Access to the resource library

Three programs each year exploring immigrant heritage

The popular *Advent at the Ager* in December

Ten % off on Ager books or rosemaling items

Ten % off on all Ager craft and language classes

**And, best of all, an opportunity to meet with
others like you who are interested in the
immigration story of the Chippewa Valley.**