

Inventory of the

Sons of Norway
Valhall Lodge No. 168
Rockford, Illinois

Records

In the

Regional History Center

RC 265

INTRODUCTION

Sheryl Almquist Hall, President of the Sons of Norway, Valhall Lodge No. 168, donated the records for the organization to the Regional History Center on December 9, 2004. Additional records were donated at later dates.

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SCOPE AND CONTENT

The records for the Sons of Norway, Valhall Lodge No. 168 consists of five series: Valhall Lodge No. 168, Valhall Building Association, Daughter of Valhall, Convention, and Other Norwegian Organizations/District/National/International. The records date from 1907 to 2004.

The Valhall Lodge No. 168 series consists of meeting minutes, financial records, membership records, and other information pertaining to the Lodge. The early records are written in Norwegian. The secretary and assistant secretary books include meeting minutes, financial records, correspondence, and program information. The meeting minutes for the years 1996 through 1997 are missing. The Vall Hall Newsletters since 2013 are in electronic form and may be accessed in the Center's reading room.

Valhall Building Association series consists of meeting minutes, financial records, Lodge rental, and insurance information. The Building Association was responsible for the sale of the first Lodge locate on Kishwaukee Road in Rockford and the purchase and sale of the second Lodge located at 9936 Norman Avenue in Machesney Park.

The third series, Daughter of Valhall includes meeting minutes, a photograph album, and a VHS tape of their luncheon and program on September 18, 1996.

A majority of the records found in Series IV pertain to the Biennial Convention held in Rockford in June 2002.

Series V consists of information from other Norwegian groups, the District, the National, and the International Son of Norway organizations.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

In 1907 a group of Norwegian immigrants organized the Norge Society of Rockford, Illinois. This social organization sought “to unite men and women of Norwegian heritage and to uphold all that is good in the Norwegian tradition and to help out fellow countrymen.” The Society decided to join the fraternal benefit society of Sons of Norway on the recommendation of Christian Ludvigsen of Bjornstjerne Bjornson Lodge in Chicago. With the help of District President Finn Moen and others the charter for Valhall Lodge #168, Sons of Norway, was signed on December 12, 1915.

Up to this time women were not accepted as members but could join a sister organization called Daughters of Norway. At the Fifth District meeting in Ashland, Wisconsin in 1916, one of our charter members, Christian O. Danielsen, first proposed that women be allowed to join the Order. In January 1918 women were admitted as social members.

Hoping to attract more members, Valhall leased property on the banks of the Kishwaukee River in 1920, built a small cottage and used the place for “utflykter” (outings). The site of Perryville, however, was not available for renewal or purchase, so the Lodge was forced to abandon it. It was not until 1938 that the Lodge purchased a four acre tract on the Rock River where a Norwegian style “hytte” was built. Camp Valhall has been an important asset, and the center around which most Lodge activities have been planned.

As the oldest Norwegian organization in Rockford, Valhall Lodge has been the focal point for many Norwegian activities in the community. During the Depression we sponsored the first Junior Lodge, a Dramatic Club, and a dance team. We participated in many civic and cultural events, such as our collaboration with Mendelssohn Club to present programs on Grieg and Ibsen. We raised money for the Norwegian flyers at Camp Little Norway in Canada during World War II and collected clothing after the War under the auspices of Norwegian Relief. Valhall Lodge has hosted five Fifth District Conventions in 1930, 1946, 1960, 1980 and 1994.

In more recent years we have become more visible in the community through bake sales, Heritage Days, speakers in the schools, and booths at local festivals. For four years we displayed a Norwegian table setting at Rockford Museum Center’s Table Walk.

Ivar “Tuffy” Dahlgren and Stan Hanson inspired the first Fifth District Golf Tournament, and Valhall has hosted one each year since the mid-Sixties. Traveling trophies have since been named in their honor. Added to the annual events has been the “Fish Boil” in October, assisted in the beginning by Cliff Feggstad from Mandt Lodge in Stoughton, Wisconsin. It has become one of our most popular functions.

In 1986 the Daughters of Valhall was organized to be the philanthropic arm of Valhall Lodge. The group has held three successful style shows, three Spring luncheons, and sponsored

a Norwegian style reception following the presentation of "Kingdom Come" at a local community theater.

In 1965 Valhall elected Anne Ferling as its first women president. Anne was the daughter of one of Valhall's founders. A number of our members have served on the District Board: Hans Johnsen, Gerry Connell, Conrad Garmager, Harry "Bill" Christiansen and Eric Ferling, all deceased. Others who have served on the Board are Margaret Dahlgren, Tom Cullen, Reuben Bahr and Clare Almquist. Conrad Garmager, Gerry Connell and Clare Almquist each served a number of terms as District Secretary with Conrad and Clare moving on to become the District President. Conrad was International President for one term. In 1990 Margaret Dahlgren was named Fifth District Fraternalist of the Year. Currently two of our members are on the Fifth District Board, Constance Rew as Youth Director and Ray Knutson as Recreation Director.

At the present time Valhall has a Norwegian Language Class and a Reading Club (Norwegian and Norwegian/American authors) which meet on a regular basis. A workshop in Hardanger was held in the fall of 1994 and it is hoped more workshops will be held in the near future.

In February 1993 a notice was received from the Rockford Airport Authority informing the Lodge that our property was needed for airport expansion. Less than six months previously Fred Ford had assured us it would be at least five years before such a plan would be put in force. As a meeting with airport officials in July of 1993 a deadline was set, with the end of 1994 as the target date.

A search began in earnest for a suitable home within our price range. Empty school buildings and churches were explored and vacant pieces of land were examined. Finally in late summer of 1994 the Jehovah's Witness Temple in Machesney Park was put up for sale. A first visit brought immediate interest. Being threatened by a lawsuit and being advised against that route by our lawyer and our appraiser, we agreed to sell Camp Valhall. On November 18, 1994, it was sold for \$174,350. An agreement was made to purchase the property on Norman Avenue for \$120,000 on January 3, 1995. With that accomplished, trees have been moved. The flagpoles and the gate will soon be moved along with other personal property.

After today, January 8, 1995, Camp Valhall will no longer be our home. Valhall Lodge will be 4906 [9936] Norman Avenue in Machesney Park, Illinois. The motto of Sons of Norway is "Freedom, Fraternity and Progress." Valhall Lodge was consistently upheld all that is good in the Norwegian-American tradition. As we consider our proud history, we look to carry that same fraternal spirit into our new lodge home and into the next century.

[The history of the Valhall Lodge was taken verbatim from Adjo Til Camp Valhall, January 8, 1995 found in Box 1, Folder 1.]

In 2003, the Valhall Building Association started to discuss the possibility of selling the Lodge and renting a place for monthly meetings. After much debate, the Lodge was sold and the furnishings in the building were auctioned off on December 21, 2004.

SUBJECT TRACINGS

Ethnic Groups
Norwegian Americans
Norwegian Americans--Illinois--Rockford
Rockford (Ill.)
Sons of Norway (U.S.)
Valhall Lodge No. 168

COLLECTION INVENTORY

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	4	Deed to Valhall, 1937; Corporation Papers, 1941
	5	By-laws, 1957-1995
	6	Charter (photocopy), December 19, 1915
	7	Annual Meeting, 2003-2004
	8	Annual Report to the Secretary of State, (1969-1979)
	9-11	Secretary's Book (In Norwegian), August 10, 1907-January 1, 1934
2	1	Secretary's Book (In Norwegian), January 6, 1934-December 2, 1944 (Brief English excerpts for April 7, 1934-December 26, 1937); (In English), January 6, 1945-December 1, 1945, Board Meeting, December 28, 1945
	2-3	Secretary's Book, January 5, 1946-September 6, 1972
3	1-5	Secretary's Book, October 4, 1972-January 6, 1996
	6	Meeting Minutes, January 4, 1998-December 1, 1999
4	1	Secretary's Notebook, January 5, 2000-November 28, 2001
	2-3	Assistant Secretary's Book, December 5, 2001-December 30, 2003
	4	Agendas and Meeting Minutes, January 14, 2004-December 8, 2004
Oversize	1 volume	Financial Ledger, 1922-1927
	5	Financial Secretary's Records, January 1, 1934-July 6, 1938
	6	Treasurer's Cash Book, July 1, 1956-December 2, 1964
	7	Budget, 1970
	8	Trust Deed Note, Larry Connell, June 12, 1979
	9	Treasurer's Record of Bill, (1981-1988)
	10	Expense and Income Ledger, 2000
	11	Proposed Budget and Financial Reports, 2003-2004
	12	Financial Report for Events and Programs, 1956-1971
	13	Matching Fund Challenge, n.d.

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5	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Membership Roster (In Norwegian - Incomplete) Membership Roster, 1973-2000 Membership Directory, (includes some calendar of events), (1981-2003) Membership List, (1996-2001) Member Obituaries, 1999-2004 Membership Committee Booklet, n.d. Membership Blanks, 1970, 1973 <u>The Way It Was For Me, Growing Up On Locust Hill</u> by Wilma Kleive Alilunas, 1986 "The Life of Jensine Amelia Kloppen", 1986 Val Nyheter Newsletter, (1978, 1982-1994)	
6	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19	Val Nyheter Newsletter, (1995-2004) Order of Ceremonies, 2001 Poplcy and Practices for Valhall Lodge No. 168, n.d. Valhall Laws and Regulations and Norwegian Heritage Information, n.d. Duties of Supreme Director, 1968 Committee Reports, 1987-2003 Old Sick Committee Minutes, 1947-1957 Correspondence, 1970-1978, 2000-2004, n.d. Communications, 1995-1997 Programs, Banquets, Dinners, and Parties, (1960-2004) Communication with Norwegian Teacher and Information About Him, 1967-1968 "Dance into Spring" Joint Monthly Meeting with Swedish Historical Society, April 18, 2004 Drill Team Information, 1973-1977 Golf Tournament, 1972 Leadership Workshop, February 28, 1976 Rockford Harmony Singing Society, 1960 "Songs of Norway: A Celebration and Songfest," 2002 Program Song Sheets, n.d. Guest Book, 75 th Anniversary, November 10, 1990; Open House, March 19, 1995	
7	1 2-5	Guest Register, Heritage Days, 2001 Award Certificates, 1934-2004	

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	7	Award Plaques (photocopy), 1995-2000	
	8	Past President (photocopy from plaques), 1916-2001	
	9	In Memoriam (photocopy from plaque), n.d.	
	10	Valhall Card, n.d.	
	11	Newspaper Articles, 1976-2000, n.d.	
	12-14	Photographs, 1978-2004, n.d.	
	15	Scrapbook, 1939, 1975-2000	
8	3 volumes	Scrapbooks, 1929-1996	
9		Artifacts: Canvas Bag, Sons of Norway Logo, n.d. Name Badges, n.d. (2) Name Badges, n.d. (1) Badges with Ribbons, President (2); Treasurer (1), n.d. Ribbons, Pecatonica Memorial Parade, 2001-2003 (3) Bumper Sticker, "Columbus Had a Norwegian Map" (1) Magnets, Valhall Building Association, n.d. (2) Bidders Paddle, n.d. Pen, n.d. Seal, Valhall Building Association, n.d. (1) Stamp, "Property of Sons of Norway, Valhall Lodge #168," n.d. (1)	
Oversize Drawer 13	15	Photographs: Ambulance Presented by Sons of Norway, 1918 Collage - Autumn Preview I, October 1986 Collage - Autumn Preview II, [1987] Collage - "Kingdom Come" at New American Theater, April 28, 1987 Posters: Walk-A-Thon, Mary 20, 1995 Sons of Norway Bake Sale, n.d. Norwegian Table Prayer, n.d.	
	16	Articles on Lodge Moving: Rockford Register Star, January 9, 1995 Parks Journal, March 15, 1995	

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	2-9	Board Meetings, April 4, 1984-October 3, 1995
11	1-6	Board Meetings, April 28, 1996-December 8, 2004
12	1	Board Meetings, Subcommittees, Pledge Drive, Rental Agreements, 2003-2004
	2-4	Relocation and Planning Meetings, March 10, 1994-April 1, 1996
	5	Kitchen Planning Committee, January 11, 1995-March 13, 1995
	6	Kitchen Remodeling Bid Information, 1995
	7	Ad-hoc Archival/Historical Property Committee Minutes, February 3, 2004
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	2	Savings Account, 1994-1995
	3	Rental Information, 1975-1999, n.d.
	4-6	Lodge Rental Books, April 1980-August 2003
	7	Lodge Rental Agreements and Insurance Information, 1984-1992
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14	1	Insurance Information, 1996-2000
	2	Airport Lease Agreement, 1992
	3	Inspection Reports and Permits, 1996-2004
	4	Inventory List, Fall 2002
	5	Lodge Partial Floor Plan, n.d.
	6	Mortgage, 1999
	7	Real Estate Assessments, 1997-1999
	8	Sale of 9936 Norman Avenue Lodge, 2004
	9	Auction of 9936 Norman Avenue Lodge, 2004
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<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
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	12	Meeting Notes, March 3, 1990-January 11, 1993
	13	Photograph Album, 1996-1999
15	1	VHS Tape, Daughters of Valhall Luncheon and Performance, September 18, 1996
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	3	Notes, 1976
	4	Thirty-fourth Biennial Program and Minutes, Rosemont, IL, June 8-10, 1978
	5	Forty-second Biennial Program, Rockford, IL, June 16-18, 1994
	6	Forty-fourth Biennial Reports, Janesville, WI, June 18-20, 1998
	7	International Convention Program, Washington, D.C., August 18-21, 2004
		Forty-sixth Biennial Convention, Rockford, June 5-9, 2002:
	8	Bank Statements, 2000-2002
	9	Correspondence, Schedule of Events, Tickets, 2000-2002
	10	Delegate List, June 6-9, 2002
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	13	Minutes and Finances Report Book, 2000-2002
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16	1	Reports to District Lodge 5, June 6-9, 2002
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	7	District Lodge 5: A History of the "Ole Bull" Fifth District, 75 th Anniversary, 1914-1989	
	8	Directory, 1995, 2001	
	9	Fifth District Meetings, 1976-1977	
	10	District Lodges: Lodge Directory, 1976-1978, 2002-2003	
	11	National: Brochures, 1975, 1996, n.d.	
	12	Change of Beneficiary Forms, n.d.	
	13	History, Benefits, and Ideas Presented by Greg Ragan, Fraternal Benefits Counselor, n.d.	
	14	Guide for Leadership, Order of Ceremonies, 2002	
	15	Rituals, Order of Business, Ceremonies for Sons of Norway, 1978	
	16	Eric Sez, 1975-1977	
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	8-10	Publicity, 1990, 2005-2008	
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	3	Programs Sponsored by Valhall Lodge, n.d.	
	4	Riffles and Eddies Boone County Conservation District Newsletter, Fall 2005-Fall 2007	
	5	Sarah Longwing, 2005-2007	
	6	Special Events, 2001-2007	
		Norwegian Heritage Notebook:	
	7	Autumn Pioneer Festival, 2005-2007	
	8	Norwegian Heritage Garden, 2007-2008	
	9	Immigration and Heritage Stories	
	10	Norsk Museum, n.d.	
	11	Norwegian American Weekly, June 20, 2008	
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	2	Resources for Family Histories, n.d.	
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	18	Ski Club, 2006-2007 National:	
	19	Norway Centennial, 2005	
	20	Norway Times, December 12, 2006	
	21	Sons of Norway Brochure, n.d.	
	22	Sons of Norway Foundation Annual Report, 2006	
	23	<u>Viking</u> , April 2004	
Oversize	1 album	Tunes From the Amerika Trunk, Traditional Norwegian- American Music From Wisconsin Volume II	