



News Release



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For Immediate Release

Historical Exhibit on Norwegian Immigration to Minnesota set to Open February 21, 2013 in St. Paul

A new museum exhibit, "New Land, New Life: Norwegian Immigration to Minnesota, 1825-1925" opens February 21 in the Landmark Center of St. Paul. St. Paul Sons of Norway Synnove Nordkap lodge has researched and developed the text and photographs resulting in a 20-panel exhibit with a general topic featured on each. It shows February 21 through June 20 in the Ramsey Co. Historical Society north gallery on the main floor of the Landmark Center, 5th & Washington in downtown St. Paul. The exhibit is free and open to the public. The project is underwritten by grants from the Minnesota Clean Water, Land and Legacy Fund and the Sons of Norway Foundation.

The exhibit culminates two year's work by the St. Paul Sons of Norway lodge volunteers. The exhibit includes artifact display cases, programs and events including cultural skills demonstrations, performances, talks and a film. St. Paul Sons of Norway hosts an Opening Reception, Thursday, February 28 from 11 am to 1:30 pm on the main floor of The Landmark Center, featuring a free Schubert Club Noon concert by Skålmusik, a 5-piece ensemble from

Brainerd. A day of Children's programs is planned for May 18, including crafts and troll stories along with performances by the Peer Gynt Dancers, a junior youth group of the St. Paul Sons of Norway, under the leadership of Susan Stow.

The exhibit and associated events may be one of the most ambitious projects undertaken by a local Sons of Norway Lodge in America. The St. Paul Sons of Norway Lodge has engaged its members in developing this high quality exhibit featuring 20 panels of text and photographs. The text was reviewed by historian-authors Dr. Odd Lovoll of St. Olaf College and Dr. Betty Bergland of UW-River Falls. Two members of the St. Paul Sons of Norway served as the graphic design team.

Cultural and social events have been scheduled to run concurrently with the 5 month exhibit. Among these are: Author Candace Simar will discuss her historical novels, *Abercrombie Trail*, *Pomme de Terre*, and *Birdie* featuring Norwegian immigrants displaced during the Dakota War of 1862. All events are in the Landmark except Candace Simar's "Author Talk" Sunday afternoon from 2-3 p.m. which is at the Central Library in downtown St. Paul across from the Landmark Center and the exhibit. Other events include members demonstrating cultural skills and information such as wood carving, Norwegian knitting, Hardanger embroidery, Skin fell, the Runes, Genealogy; The Hardanger Fele group will play a concert; and the Psalmodikon group will play and display a psalmodikon.

Many artifacts in the exhibit represent families or local community significance. A DVD featuring Lodge members telling the stories of these artifacts will be played at the exhibit. One Lodge member did the video production and another, a professional journalist, contributed her talents to the interviews.

Lodge President Kathy Stevens commented, "We are eager for the public to see this great exhibit. This project embodies the time, energy and passion of so many volunteer members of our Lodge. We believe it will touch the hearts of many Minnesotans, whether they are Norwegian or not. The history and stories are timeless for so many that came to this land from far away."

After its scheduled time at the Landmark in St. Paul the Norwegian Immigration exhibit will travel to selected county museums-Sons of Norway venues in greater Minnesota. The exhibit will be open daily during regular business hours of the Ramsey County Historical Society and will run until the end of June, 2013.

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