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February 2005

### SEMINARY RIDGE HISTORIC PRESERVATION FOUNDATION

On October 27, 2004, the Self-Guided Walking Tour of the Gettysburg Seminary Ridge Campus, Lutheran Theological Seminary, was dedicated. This is the first visible part of the interpretive walk that should be in place by the end of 2005. The vision and interest for the tour was spearheaded by LHC member, Pastor **Luther A. Gotwald, Jr.**, who, with a spin-off group from the seminary's Board of Directors, organized the foundation. The foundation was then eligible to receive \$250,000 from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to complete the project.

The tour, with historical markers, points out some of the happenings on campus, particularly during the early days of the Civil War Battle of Gettysburg, when the Union and Confederate armies surged across the campus in a deadly encounter. The project should illustrate the little known history of the seminary's role in the first important engagement of the Battle of Gettysburg and an explanation of the seminary buildings and program.

Among the items on the tour is the location of Confederate General Robert E. Lee's headquarters tent on the campus for the remainder of the battle. Other highlights are related to three antebellum buildings which were damaged by the bullets and cannon balls and the pillaging of the homes of seminary professors, S.S. Schmucker and C.P. Krauth. The seminary building cupola served as a lookout for both armies and also as a hospital, the latter service for which the seminary received a small payment from the federal government.

Among other developments since the dedication was the work of archeologists to survey the tour route across campus with a metal detector to find any further artifacts before starting construction. Only three Civil War items were found: an 1854 quarter; a horseshoe; and a bullet.

Professor Krauth's house, severely damaged in a recent fire, will be restored. Student apartments are in the building and the fire started from a defective stove. The students escaped injury, but lost their possessions.

## NEW MEMBERS!

Welcome to the following new members who joined the LHC since the last issue of this *Newsletter*.

Bill R. Douglas  
1406 Mondamin Ave.  
Des Moines, IA 50314-1948

Julieanna Frost  
18131 Fehr Lane  
Manchester, MI 48158

Kevlin C. Haire  
ELCA Region 6 Archives  
c/o Trinity Lutheran Seminary  
2199 East Main Street  
Columbus, OH 43209  
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91 Judd Street  
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## WORKS IN PROGRESS?

Some time ago, a notice in the Newsletter asked that members involved in projects give brief reports to the membership, with the thought that others can know what is in the “pipeline” and perhaps share important information and references for the project. We have not had any such submissions for a while and it may be due to the fact that a call for submissions was not repeated. Please submit any notes, requests or comments about recent historical, archival or bibliographic projects on which you are working. It may be a chance to be in contact with other members with similar interests and guide you to additional sources for your work. The submissions need not be long, but should include contact information. We hope to have this column become a regular news feature. Students are also welcome to participate.

---The Editor.

## BOOK REVIEW

Jørn Brøndal. *Ethnic Leadership and Midwestern Politics: Scandinavian Americans and The Progressive Movement in Wisconsin, 1890-1914*. Northfield, Minnesota: The Norwegian-American Historical Association, 2004.

Reviewed by David E. Settje, Concordia University – River Forest

Jørn Brøndal's Ethnic Leadership and Midwestern Politics provides an examination of how Scandinavian Americans participated in and affected Wisconsin politics during the Progressive era. With a blend of quantitative analysis, immigration history, and individual examples, Brøndal explores what it meant to be a Scandinavian American at a time when the nation strove for assimilation, a fact that led to mixed results for this particular group: while seeking to maintain their unique identity and at the same time gain political clout, they often got lost in a wilderness of various politicians and interest groups. Yet despite a solid thesis and sound scholarship, historians will find little here

that contributes to Lutheran historiography outside of an occasional reference or a general source about the Scandinavian-American presence during the progressive era.

Brøndal's work does a solid job of adding Scandinavian Americans to the immigrant mix of the progressive era and demonstrating how they influenced Wisconsin politics. He defines the various groups that embody the rather ambiguous title "Scandinavian," explains how and why they came to the United States, and details how they cultivated a unique identity in America that blended their European traditions with new U.S. customs. Brøndal especially outlines their early involvement in politics as outsiders and how they came to participate more regularly. Ironically, this increased involvement came during a period of American reform, in which local, state, and national government bodies strove to eliminate the spoils system, special interest groups, and political bosses. Scandinavian Americans therefore had mixed results: on the one hand, they voted for fellow Scandinavian officeholders and championed various causes in their ethnic newspapers; but, in the spirit of the time, they avoided overt ethnic backing of any one person or issue for fear of inducing anti-Scandinavian sentiments from other Wisconsinites at the expense of gaining real political clout. Brøndal's work is at its best when demonstrating how Scandinavian backing of Robert La Follette exemplified this point. La Follette courted Scandinavian patronage but without ever admitting that he wanted to do so because he firmly believed in reform and feared identifying with any particular group.

This reality, however, creates the biggest problem with Brøndal's study. He proves that Scandinavian Americans had a large presence in Wisconsin, but too often they failed to come together as a definable entity, instead backing a myriad of political issues and people even though Brøndal lumps them together. More overall context might have solved this problem. For example, he fails to address specifically Scandinavian American views on assimilation, a factor that certainly would have influenced their political involvement. The issue of context also affects other aspects of his study. He goes into detail about the temperance movement without an overview of it as a national issue and comparing how Scandinavian Americans related to this broader picture.

But for a Lutheran audience the bigger problem comes in their virtual absence from the book. Brøndal mentions religious affiliation as a component of Scandinavian-American identity only briefly, and seldom with specificity. For example, he discusses Lutheran pastors "becoming deeply involved in the political fray" but only spends a few pages on it (48). Indeed, those versed in religious history will wonder throughout the study where faith-life was involved; it is hard to believe that it existed only on the margins, an image Brøndal creates because of a dearth of information in that regard.

That being said, Brøndal's book has merit. He ably demonstrates that Scandinavian Americans influenced Wisconsin politics and contributes their voice to progressive era immigrant, political, and Wisconsin historiography.

[Note: suggestions for books to review and additional reviewers for upcoming issues are welcome. ---The Editor]

## NEWS NOTES

Luther Seminary, St. Paul, announced that it reached an agreement with Jerry Evenrud for receipt of the "Prodigal Son Art Collection". This large collection of important work depicting the Prodigal Son parable includes more than 150 art pieces in various media, in addition to manuscript and photographic materials. The collection comes to the seminary with a generous endowment that will enable the Fine Arts Committee (chaired by LHC member, **Paul Daniels**) to properly store, interpret and display the collection.

The ELCA Region 3 Archives, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, has received an important family collection of Inuit artifacts, photographs and manuscripts from the Edmunds Hartje family. Hartje was a long-time missionary pastor in Shishmaref, Alaska. The collection includes Inuit produced ivory, wood and fur clothing pieces. In compliance with the donor's wishes, the materials not taken by the Region 3 Archives will be sent to the ELCA Alaska Synod office for display. For further details on these new collections, contact Paul Daniels: [pdaniels@luthersem.edu](mailto:pdaniels@luthersem.edu)

## NEW RESOURCES

The 2004 publication of the Norwegian-American Historical Association reviewed elsewhere in this issue is: *Ethnic Leadership and Midwestern Politics: Scandinavian Americans and the Progressive Movement in Wisconsin, 1890-1914* by Jørn Brøndal, Members of NAHA receive the volume as part of their membership. For others, the price is \$44.95 and \$3 shipping. Minnesota residents add \$2.92 sales tax. To order, contact: NAHA, 1510 St. Olaf Ave, Northfield, MN 55057, [naha@stolaf.edu](mailto:naha@stolaf.edu)

Bruce W. Anderson has written, *Pioneer Missionary Lars Petter Lundgren and Wife Alma, The True Life Story of A Pioneer Ministry in Minnesota's Last Frontier, North Dakota, and Canada, 1892-1923*. The book is published by the author, whose grandfather, Pastor Lars P. Lundgren, is the main focus of the book. The book is liberally illustrated with a variety of photographs and includes original sources in both the original Swedish and in English translation. Sources include letters and other writings of Lundgren, such as a novel and published articles. The author has included footnotes and has indexed the volume, citing names and places. The author intended the book to be of interest for a wider audience than his family, in that he has mixed in a great deal of the history and people of localities Lundgren served. The book is \$18.25 including shipping. For further information on the book, contact: Bruce W. Anderson, 1213 Lykins Lane, Niles, MI 49120

## WHAT WILL THE NEXT LHC NEWSLETTER CONTAIN?

This newsletter will be able to fulfill its intended purpose of being a clearinghouse of information for archivists, historians and librarians only if **you** provide material for it.

Please use this page (or as many additional ones as needed) to send material for publication to the editor. Items of interest to readers will include notice of research in progress, new appointments, publications, meetings and celebrations planned or held, biographical materials and generally anything of interest to LHC members.

The editor cannot promise to print everything received, although all submissions are welcomed. The LHC Newsletter is issued four times a year: February, May, August and November. The November issue includes the annual "Index of Writings in the Field of American Lutheranism." The deadline for each issue is the 15th of the month prior to each issue. Please send items to: Elisabeth Wittman, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Archives, 8765 W. Higgins Rd., Chicago, IL 60631, or FAX: 773-380-2977; or E-mail: Elisabeth.Wittman@elca.org

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FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER

**DEADLINE: April 15, 2005**

From:

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(Name)

(Address)