

# The Ager Newsletter

The Waldemar Ager Association

February-April 2013



## *Coming Events*

### **Program Planning Session**

Ager House

February 16, 2013/9:30 – 1:30

### **Board Meeting**

Ager House

February 18, 2013 – 9:30 a.m.

### **Board Meeting**

Ager House

March 18, 2013 – 9:30 a.m.

### **Spring Program**

Senior Center

March 22, 2013 – 7:30 p.m.

### **Board Meeting**

Ager House

April 15, 2013 – 9:30 a.m.

**The Waldemar Ager  
Association**  
514 W. Madison Street  
P.O. Box 1742  
Eau Claire, Wisconsin  
54702-1742  
715.834.3985  
[www.agerhouse.org](http://www.agerhouse.org)



## **Raoul Wallenberg**



## **A True Hero of World War II**

The spring meeting of the Ager Association will be held on Friday, March 22, 2013, at 7:30 p.m., at the Eau Claire Senior Center.

Two members of the Ager Association, Doug Pearson, and Tim Hirsch, will present a program about Raoul Wallenberg, a true hero of World War II. Wallenberg, a Swedish diplomat in Hungary during the war, saved the lives of nearly 100,000 Jews during a six month period in 1944. A graduate of the University of Michigan in architecture, Wallenberg found his way into the diplomatic post after he returned to Sweden.

Stories of heroes are interesting to all of us, and this man's amazing work on behalf of humanity is, truly, outstanding. You won't want to miss this story of bravery against all odds. The public is invited to attend. Refreshments will be served following the program.



**Raoul Wallenberg  
was born in Lidingo  
Municipality, Sweden, on  
August 4, 1912.  
He served in  
the Swedish Army.**

**He became  
a Swedish  
diplomat  
in  
Hungary  
during  
World War  
II.**



**Wallenberg  
was taken  
by  
the Soviets  
and  
presumed to  
have died  
on  
July 17, 1947.**



## Yes, Friends, there is... another Ager House!

Steve Loken, our web master, has discovered another Ager House in Liberty, Texas. The article describing the Texas Ager House appears in the Wednesday, March 28, 2012, edition of *The Vindicator*, which is the Liberty County, Texas, newspaper. The house was built by Henry O. Ager, a long-term pharmacist and businessman in Liberty, for his wife Bridgett Elizabeth Garrity, whom he met at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893. They were married in Elroy, Wisconsin, in 1903. Construction on the house was begun in 1905. On April 1, 2012, it was dedicated as a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark. Steve has supplied the online address of the Texas Ager House in case you would like to know more.

[http://www.thevindicator.com/community/article\\_a3c964d6-7928-11e1-85d1-001a4bcf887a.html](http://www.thevindicator.com/community/article_a3c964d6-7928-11e1-85d1-001a4bcf887a.html)

## A Message from the President...



In spite of the blizzard outside, hearts were warm, coffee flowed, music soared, and children marched at the traditional ***Advent at the Ager*** on December 9, 2012. Many thanks to Carol Anderson for organizing this year's event and to Leon Salander for inviting the duet from ECCO.

**Our board secretary** Richard Kozbial moved to Kalamazoo, Michigan, in late December 2012.

His new address is: Richard J. Kozbial  
1700 Bronson Way  
Apt. 226  
Kalamazoo, MI 49009  
Phone: 269.365.9804

Richard's departure leaves us without a board secretary. **If anyone would like to volunteer to finish his term (October 2013), please call Ken Ziehr or me. We promise you won't be bored!**

**Library News:** Miriam Hansen has compiled a list of all the books contained in the Ager House Resource Library. The list is available on our website at: [www.agerhouse.org](http://www.agerhouse.org). If you would like visit the library to check out books, please contact John Peterson at [johnpet@charter.net](mailto:johnpet@charter.net).

**On February 16, 2013, a planning session is being held at the Ager House** for board and committee members to affirm our short and long term goals. These include continuing with the renovation of the exterior of the house, setting a calendar of events for 2013, and evaluating our success in meeting the goals set forth in our mission statement. We will keep you posted on the outcome.

*Ella Fossum*

# How an Artifact Finds a Home in a Museum

Below is a photograph of the commemorative plate for the *1971 Nordic Fest* in Decorah, Iowa, which Ken and Lynne Ziehr donated to the Ager House. The subject, a gnome with a spider, is, actually, an artifact in the Vesterheim collection. It is a concrete sculpture by Halvor Landsverk of Whalen, MN. While Vesterheim has an extensive collection of Nordic Fest plates, curator Laurann Gilbertson said, "Believe it or not, we don't have this one!" So the Ziehers have enthusiastically agreed to plans being made to transfer the plate from the Ager Association to Vesterheim Museum in the near future.



## **Gerald R. Revelle** **1941-2013**



A longtime friend of the Ager Association, Gerald Randolph Revelle, of Elk Mound, Wisconsin, died peacefully, at his home with his family nearby after a courageous battle with cancer. He was born in Painesville, Ohio, to Clyde and Delma (Johnson) Revelle and later moved to Advance, Missouri, where he attended high school.

In 1962 he married Joan Herting, and they had four children: Sheri Revell-Johnson, Andrew, Clayton, and Jason. He also leaves four grandchildren.

Jerry worked as a railroad lineman, a salesman for National Presto Industries, and, in the 1980's, he founded his own company, ConCad Technologies.

In retirement, he enjoyed creative writing, photography, gardening, fiddle playing, and spending time with his grandchildren. He was a musician in the ASI Spelmanslag (American Swedish Institute, Minnesota) and an active member of the Norden Folk (Midwest Institute of Scandinavian Culture, Eau Claire).



# Could a Norwegian American Museum Have Been Located in Eau Claire, Wisconsin?

**A Note from John Peterson, Translator:** *There were many articles in The Reform and the daily newspaper about "Pederson's Museum." Many in the city argued that his collection ought to be preserved in Eau Claire. It appears that the city wasn't interested or thought it couldn't afford to buy the collection. In 1930 the collection was bought by Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. Luther College was acting as the custodian of the Norwegian American Historical Museum (Vesterheim), which had been established in Decorah in 1926.*

*In Volume VI of the Norwegian American Studies published by the American Historical Association, it states: "In 1930 a very important addition to the museum was made through the acquisition of the large private collections of P.D. Peterson of Eau Claire, Wisconsin. These collections contain large groups of interesting Norwegian pioneer articles, one of the largest collections of weapons and firearms in the state, numerous Native American objects, and other valuable materials.*

**The following has been translated by John Peterson.  
It is from *The Reform*, 15 March 1921.**



The large collection of museum object and objects of antiquity that P.D. Pederson has kept at the public library ought to be preserved for the city. He wants to sell the collection, but the only way he can make a profit is to pack it up and sell (it) to an antique dealer. Every collector knows that such a splitting up is like killing something completely living and inspiring that one's self has put in the world.

With the exception of Milwaukee, Madison, and Green Bay, there isn't a city in the state that has a museum. We have, in any case, a knowledgeable man's word that the local collection is better than Milwaukee's and Green Bay's. It would be something of a scandal if this opportunity should slip away from us. Pederson's collection is so rich and varied that here one has the substance for a real museum. Besides the large weapon collection, there is a collection of old porcelain, and interesting collection of clocks, and extremely right coin collection, as well as Indian "relics." For us there is also a large collection of Norwegian antiques – carved woodwork, hand woven tapestries, articles for everyday use, copper and containers of many kinds – a collection that could form an exhibit in itself.

The large area in the second story (of the library) is naturally suited for a museum. There is nothing to hinder the whole floor from eventually being used.

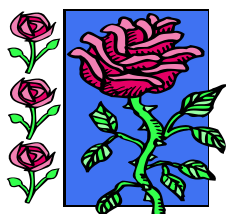
The sum that is being asked is very low. Just the effort to collect these things ought to be worth the price requested because it takes many years of strenuous effort to collect so much regardless of the purchase price of the things.

There will probably be a meeting announced this week in the Public Library's auditorium to deal with this matter. For some people, such a collection is just "junk." For others, it is mere curiosities, but for those culturally interested, it is immensely worthwhile that we keep this collection and enlarge it. It would be very worthwhile for the students of the city. We now have several hundred young people in our higher schools and business schools. They can learn more by seeing things than reading or hearing about them.

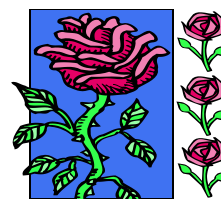
The collection ought to be saved for the city.







## Sigmund Aarseth Leaves a Legacy of Rosemaling By Miriam Hansen



Sigmund Aarseth, one of Norway's most famous artists, died on December 11, 2012. He was born in 1936 in Sæbo near Aalesund on the west coast of Norway.

A Master Painter, he was well known for his rosemaling, both in Norway and in the United States. Ever since he taught classes at the Norwegian-American Museum in Decorah in 1968, he returned regularly to the United States to teach, exhibit, and to decorate the interiors of buildings with his unique style of painting. His paintings can be found in restaurants in Chicago; the Norwegian Hostfest building in Minot, North Dakota; and the Vesterheim Museum; as well as historic buildings in Spring Grove, Minnesota.

Aarseth studied arts and crafts at several schools, mostly in Oslo, but was mostly known in Norway for his landscape paintings that showed the seasons and the ever-changing light of the landscape.

On his farm in Valdres, where he lived for the last 50 years, he spent the long winters painting interiors, many of which are featured in the book, *Painted Rooms*, authored by his son, Gudmund Aarseth.

The Ager House Resource Library is fortunate enough to own this book, which was donated by one of our members. You can find it in our collection under the call number NK1460.A27. In 2009 Sigmund Aarseth was awarded the St. Olaf Medal of Culture by King Harald for his efforts in spreading Norwegian history and traditions worldwide.



### Ager House Resource Library Catalog Now Online at [Agerhouse.org](http://Agerhouse.org)



The Ager House Resource Library Catalog contains over 1100 items and is now on the Ager House website. It is twenty-two pages long with more items to be added as the library expands. Anyone can go online and access the list. The library is open by appointment by contacting Ager Association member, John Peterson, who will be glad to meet patrons at the Ager House to access materials of interest. John's telephone number is: 715-552-0865. He is also available by email: [johnpet@charter.net](mailto:johnpet@charter.net). Please note that materials from the library do not circulate.

### Important Events in 2013

**Syttende Mai Celebration**  
Friday, May 17, 2013  
Peace Lutheran Church

**Midsommer Celebration**  
Saturday, June 15, 2013  
The Ager House

**Advent at the Ager**  
Sunday, December 15, 2013  
The Ager House

# 2013 Membership/Renewal Application

Once again we are asking for your help to meet our operational needs. YOUR donations help us pay for such things as lawn care and snow removal, heat and light, water and sewer, telephone, and insurance. Newsletters and programs also are benefits of membership and require members' financial support.

Revenue for the last two years is listed below.

Membership & Instruction Revenue 2010-11	\$7721.00	Other Donations 2010-11	\$6940.00
Membership & Instruction Revenue 2011-2012	\$10301.00	Other Donations 2011-2012	\$2560.00
Paid Members 2012-13	99	Life members	14

Other things to note:

1. Our fiscal year begins on September 1 and ends August 31. **Memberships follow the calendar year-- from January 1 to December 31.**
2. We maintain two accounts, the endowment fund and the general fund. We want to grow the endowment fund as investment for the future. We use the general fund to pay for anticipated expenditures, emergencies, and supplements to the cash flow differential.
3. Last year we added a new roof to the Ager House at a cost of \$5,500, which was paid for with generous gifts from members and friends. In 2013 our major expense will be painting and adding siding to the house exterior. This will be a costly project because of the layers of lead paint on the old siding that needs to be removed safely. Estimates are in the neighborhood of \$30,000.

**Please use the form below to send in your 2013 membership contribution at this time. We appreciate having your email address and telephone number in order to notify you when emergencies or special events occur.**

## The Ager Association Membership/Renewal Application

PLEASE MAKE YOUR CHECK PAYABLE TO *THE AGER ASSOCIATION*.

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code\_\_\_\_\_

Email\_\_\_\_\_Telephone\_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to: The Ager Association, P.O. Box 1742, Eau Claire, WI 54702**

Annual Membership Levels: New\_\_\_\_\_ or Renewal\_\_\_\_\_ (Please check one.)

Life Membership: \$1,000\_\_\_\_\_ Supporting Membership: \$100 \_\_\_\_\_

Sustaining Membership: \$50\_\_\_\_\_ General Membership: \$25\_\_\_\_\_

Additional Gifts in Memory or in Honor of \_\_\_\_\_

Other donations may be designated for the Endowment Fund \_\_\_\_\_ or the General Fund \_\_\_\_\_.

**The Ager Association  
2012-13 Board of Directors**

Ella Fossum, President  
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Ellie Paulson, Vice President  
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Steve Loken. Webmaster  
bravo@sjloken.com

Carolyn Barstad, Layout Editor  
cjbarstad@charter.net

**Board Members Needed**

We are still looking for an Ager Board Secretary and one additional Ager Board Member. If you have any suggestions, please contact Ella Fossum or Ken Ziehr.



**Gifts and Donations  
to the Ager Association**

*Thank you to the following people who have recently donated to the Ager Association.*

**Donations to the General Fund**

**Tryg Ager**

**Frank Derge** – in memory of Roald S. Ager

**Don Moyer** – in memory of his mother, Camilla Clark Moyer

**Leon Salander**

**Donations to the Building Fund**

**Robert Esse**

**Edith Kling**

**Evelyn Krigsvold** – in honor of Tom and Pat Tompkins

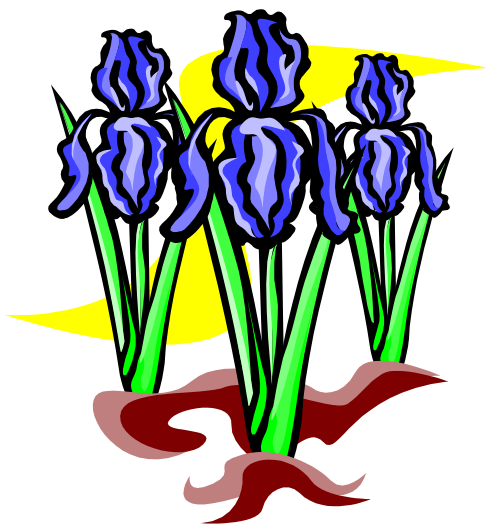
**Recent Acquisitions** – Jeff Wurtzel donated a Bunn Coffeemaker for the Ager House kitchen.



**Memberships and Donations**

Please look at the mailing label on your newsletter. There should be a number on the label that shows 2012, 2013, or *Life Member*. If your label shows 2012, then it is time for you to renew your membership for 2013. If your label shows 2013, then you have already renewed your membership, and you are a member for the entire 2013 calendar year. If your label shows *Life Member*, you are a member for the rest of your life, and you do not ever have to worry about your membership again. However, if your label does not show one of these, then you are not a member of the Ager Association, and we would like you to join us! On page six of this newsletter, there is a membership form to complete and return for renewals and new members. We hope you will do that. Your membership is important to the life of the Ager Association. In fact, the Ager House is currently facing a major renovation of the exterior – roof, siding, and painting, and it is obvious that these things can't be done without the strong support of members and friends. We hope we can count on you to join the organization this year.

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



SPRING MEETING  
OF  
THE AGER ASSOCIATION  
ON  
FRIDAY, MARCH 22, 2013  
7:30 P.M.  
AT  
THE EAU CLAIRE SENIOR  
CENTER

DETAILS INSIDE...