

## Sondre Auverson Norheim

1825 - 1897

Sondre Norheim was born in Morgedal in Telemark county, Norway, June 10, 1825. He immigrated to the United States in 1884 with his wife and five of their six children. After a brief stay at Oslo, Minnesota he came to what is now McHenry County and filed on a homestead near Villard Post Office. The land description from the Register of Deeds Office in McHenry County, Towner, North Dakota is S½SW¼ and W½ SE¼ of Section 35 - Township 155 - Range 77.

He left Norway with a dream of finding a better living in America. Sondre was a modest man, so even his neighbors in North Dakota did not know that his name was a legend in Norway.

Sondre Norheim, recognized as the Father of Modern Skiing, invented a new ski binding and introduced the Telemark and Christiania turns. In order to take full advantage of his skis, Norheim decided they had to be firmly attached to his feet, so he took thin shoots from birch roots, soaked them in hot water, and twisted them together so they would fit around his heel. Now he could twist and turn on his skis and fly through the air like a bird. Thus was the humble beginning of ski bindings.

Norheim died in 1897. He went to his grave a virtual unknown. Although his place of burial is recorded in the Norway Lutheran Cemetery records, his grave went unmarked for many years. A granite boulder and a plaque were dedicated and placed on his grave in a memorial ceremony June 12, 1966. Norway Lutheran Cemetery is only five miles west of where he homesteaded in North Dakota.

## Rannei Aamundsatter

1824 - 1913

By Hermod Monsen

Until recently the age of Sondre Norheim's wife Rannei Aamundsatter has not been known. We knew that she was born in Bergestig, Øyffjell in Telemark and that she passed away in Oregon, USA, but we did not know the year of her death.

Through Hadeland Lag of America we have been informed that Rannei passed away on 1 November 1913 in the State Hospital in Salem, Oregon. It was David Gunderson, Lag genealogist at Hadeland Lag in Fergus Falls, MN, who supplied the death certificate for Rannei Aamundsatter Norheim. Rannei was Dave's great-great aunt, so Dave has his roots from Telemark too, in addition to Hadeland. He coordinated the purchase of a memorial marker for Sondre Norheim's wife Rannei, and the Telelaget of America's Board of Directors has been a major contributor for the marker. Dave and American relatives have contributed funds, too, and the marker is now placed on Sondre's grave in Denbigh, North Dakota.

Sondre Auverson Norheim married Rannei Aamundsatter on 15 January 1854 in Brunkeberg Church in Kviteseid parish in Telemark. Rannei was the daughter of Åmund Olavson Bergestig and Hæge Olsdatter in Øyffjell.

Sondre and Rannei had 8 children: Ingerid, Hæge (died at 1 year), Ole, Hæge, Anne, Auver. Amund and Talleiv.

## The Annual Sondre Norheim Wreath-laying Ceremony

NORSK HØSTFEST 2009

Tuesday, September 29, 9:00 a.m.

Norway Lutheran Church & Cemetery, Denbigh, North Dakota

Master of Ceremonies, *Rev. Luther Hanson*

### PROGRAM AT SONDRÉ NORHEIM GRAVESITE

Call to Assembly . . . . . *Joan Haaland Paddock & Bob Gustafson*  
*Antiphonal Viking Lur Horns*

Welcome and Opening Prayer . . . . . *Rev. Luther Hanson*  
*Chaplain, Trinity Homes*

Viking Lur Fanfare . . . . . *Joan Haaland Paddock & Bob Gustafson*

Laying of the Wreath\*  
on Sondre Norheim's Grave . . . . . *Hallgrim Berg*  
*Author, President of Norsk Federation*

### PROGRAM IN NORWAY LUTHERAN CHURCH

Welcome . . . . . *Lila Espeseth Heskin*  
*Former member, Norway Lutheran Church*

Remarks . . . . . *Charles R. Swartz*  
*Great Great Grandson of Sondre Norheim*

Greetings . . . . . *Jørn Inge Næss*  
*Official Leader of Skien Delegation, Skien, Norway, Minot's Sister City*

Greetings . . . . . *Erling Dahl*  
*Official Leader of Telemark Delegation  
and Telemark Municipality Representative*

Summary of the life of Sondre Norheim  
in North Dakota, Varden, July, 2005 . . . . . *Rolf Haugen*  
*City Attorney, Skien, Norway*

Closing Prayer . . . . . *Rev. Luther Hanson*



*You are cordially invited to the Norway Lutheran Church Fellowship Room  
for a reception hosted by the Espeseth Family, annual hosts  
since the visit of Princess Astrid of Norway in 1984.*

*\*Wreath Courtesy of Lowe's Floral*

*Our thanks to George Officer, Transportation Chairman*