



Oak Leaves

Newsletter of the ELS Historical Society

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Early Days at Paint Creek

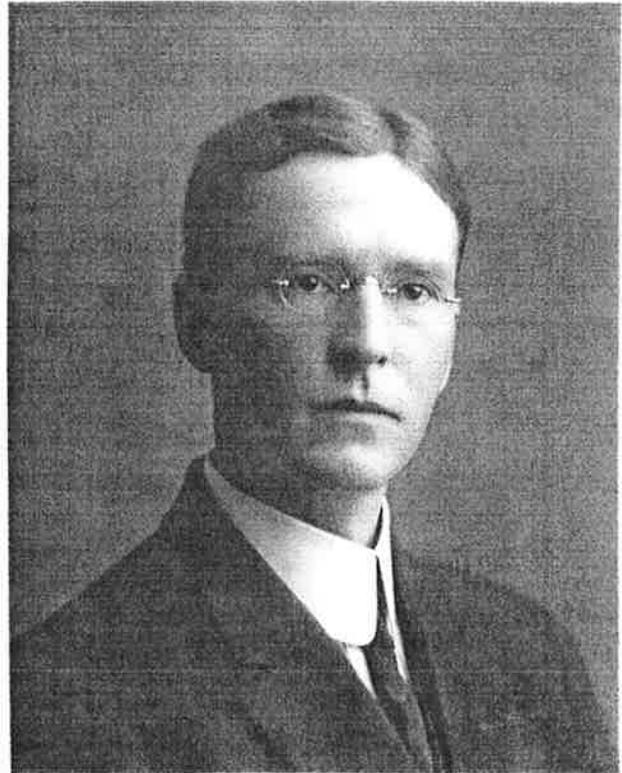


A church gathering at Paint Creek parsonage circa 1910. Reverend Lauritz S. Guttebo is center. The parsonage was built in 1901.

Gladys Busness Tolander is the oldest member at East Paint Creek Synod Lutheran Church, rural Waterville, Iowa. Born in 1908, she has lived all her life in the Waterville area, and those same 91 years as a member at East Paint Creek, one of the oldest of the ELS congregations. She is one of very few left who recall much about the early days at Paint Creek.

The Paint Creek congregation was organized in 1851, initially served by itinerant pastors. In 1853, Pastor U.V. Koren (see *Oak Leaves*, Volume 1, Issues 1-4 for Koren biography) was called to serve the parish. Because the congregation grew quickly, it was divided into two congregations, East and West Paint Creek, in 1858. When U.V. Koren left in 1862, Reverend Ove Jacob Hjort became the pastor. He served faithfully until 1879, when Hagbert Amandus Hartmann took over. Things would never be the same at Paint Creek.

Because of the false teachings regarding the Doctrine of Election perpetuated at Paint Creek by Pastor Hartmann in the 1880's, a small number of members at the Paint Creek churches, including Gladys' grandparents, brought their concerns to the synod. Gladys recalls her parents talking about the situation: "Koren was the one that tried to keep the church together. Hartmann is the one that really did the dirty work, they were really put out by him, which of course, they had a right to be." Indeed, District President Koren tried to mediate the situation through visitation, to no avail. Hartmann held fast to his errant beliefs, and was eventually suspended from the synod. He took with him most of the Paint Creek members, as well as the church building.



Reverend Lauritz S. Guttebo served East and West Paint Creek churches from 1908-1917.

The minority continued to hold services, in country school houses and at the home of Gladys' grandparents, Ole and Martha Busness. This group was served by visiting pastors. The hope was to soon build another church for the small flock.

On May 11, 1890 the cornerstone for the new church was laid by Pastor Michael Olsen Borge. Inside was placed a box containing an 1886 Synod Report,

several other copies of the *Kirketidende*, a pamphlet *Can a Christian be Certain of His Salvation* written by U.V. Koren, the congregation's history, constitution and by-laws, and some silver coins. The church was erected soon after, and the congregation finally had a permanent home.

Oak Leaves is published periodically by the ELS Historical Society
6 Browns Court; Mankato, MN 56001
Editor: Robin Ouren. Advisor: Rev. Craig Ferkenstad
Board of Directors: Erling Teigen (Chair), Joseph Abrahamson,
Craig Ferkenstad, Norman Holte, Gerhard Lee, Albin Levorson,
Amanda Madson, George Orvick, Marguerite Ylvisaker.
Oak Leaves welcomes articles of both synodical and local significance for publication. Articles may be edited for style, clarity, or length to allow for publication. Submitted manuscripts will be deposited in the archives of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Membership
All membership renewals due
June 1
Voting Membership:
\$10/year: individual
\$15/year: husband & wife
Associate Membership:
\$15/year: individual
\$25/year: institutional
\$5/year: student
Life: \$200



"Lightning ripped the spire down just so far...they were afraid it would happen again and burn the church down" recalls Gladys of the 1929 lightning strike at East Paint Creek. The photo at left was taken before the lightning. The rebuilt spire (right) was considerably shorter, in hopes of preventing worse damage.

"The first pastor I remember," says Gladys, "is Pastor Guttebo. He baptized me." Reverend Lauritz Seman Guttebo was born October 7, 1881, in Lake Park Minnesota, the son of Reverend and Mrs. Kjøstel Guttebo. He was confirmed by Reverend J.A. Ottesen. Guttebo graduated from Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, in 1901, and went on to Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota, where he graduated in 1904. His first congregation was at St. Mark's, Chicago, Illinois. While there, he married Anna Vangness July 5, 1905.

The newlyweds moved to Iowa in 1906, where Guttebo was a pastor in Story City. In 1908 the couple moved east to Waterville, Iowa and the Paint Creek congregations.

Says Gladys, "I remember Pastor Guttebo was a very nice man, he looked like a very dignified person, and he was. He was very learned," she says.

"He used to come down and stay at our place and he'd teach Bible School," recalls Gladys. Guttebo would walk east

from the parsonage across a couple of miles of field to the Dahl school, where he held Bible School for two weeks. During the week he stayed at the Business home, and walked back to the parsonage on the weekend.

Gladys recalls, "I can remember at noon he'd come home [from Bible School] and eat dinner at our place, and so did I, it was just a little ways from the schoolhouse. I was probably around six or seven. Of course, I would try to get out and run fast, so I wouldn't have to walk with him. And then the same

vention delegate many times, traveling by train to St. Paul and staying in rooming houses at night. "He would tell me about what they did and what they talked about, what they wanted and what they didn't want," she says. "They fought for what they wanted. We had some pretty good ones, they weren't afraid to speak up. That's one thing you had to say for Martin Jacobson [neighbor and good friend of the Business family]...and my dad, too."

It was at that June, 1917 convention that a small group of pastors and lay-

"[Church] wasn't an awful lot different...except it was all in Norwegian, and of course, we understood that."

after we'd eat dinner, and I'd run back. I was half-scared of him just because in those days, kids were to be seen but not heard. That was very important. But I can remember when I'd hurry, you know, I could see a smile on his face. He knew very well.... He was a very nice person."

And, though barely thirty, a good captain to have at the helm of the Paint Creek ship as the old Norwegian Synod fleet floundered through stormy seas of controversy, conflict, and eventually compromise which finally sunk it at the 1917 convention in St. Paul, Minnesota.

"I was pretty little, you see," says Gladys, "so I wasn't able to understand. They were talking about it, things weren't right, I know that, but what I couldn't understand at the time was why. Things weren't going very good."

Gladys' father Edward served as a con-

people refusing to join the merger resolved to start over. One year later, the historic meeting at the Lime Creek church, near Lake Mills, Iowa (see Volume 2 Issue 2) included one L. S. Guttebo among the 13 pastors - "Hearts of Oak" - as T.A. Aaberg refers to them in *A City Set on a Hill* - who came together for their annual convention to reorganize what they called the *Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church* (in 1957 the name was changed to the Evangelical Lutheran Synod).

Guttebo, his wife, and daughter Helen, left Paint Creek in 1917, taking a call to Western Koshkonong in Cottage Grove, Wisconsin, where he served until 1932. Guttebo then served at Concordia in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. While there, he successfully started the Pinehurst congregation. Guttebo was instru-

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Preserving Your Special Textiles

by Laurann Gilbertson
Textile Curator,
Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum

We all have textile that we want to save. It is likely that your special pieces are as varied as mine. I have one of grandfather's bandanas, the family christening gown used first by my mother and most recently by a nephew, the plaid scarf I got from my sister for being her maid of honor, and my hooked rug that won a white ribbon at the state fair. Old linens and garments, as well as new pieces that will be passed down to future generations, can greatly benefit from some kind treatment.

Unfortunately, textiles are fragile and they will deteriorate gradually over time. Although you can't stop the deterioration, there are several easy things you can do to slow it down to help preserve your textiles:

DON'T leave your textiles in direct sunlight. Light will fade colors and it will also weaken fibers.

DO display your textiles on north-facing walls or in a darker room. When you have pieces framed ask for "museum glass" or Plexiglas, which filters the harmful UV rays of light.

DON'T use nails or tacks to hang quilts.

DO sew a muslin sleeve to the back to hold a pole. Or display the quilt over a piece of fur-

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Resources for Archival-Quality Preservation Materials

Conservation Resources Intntl.
8000-H Forbes Place
Springfield, VA 22151
1-800-634-6932
FAX: 703-321-0629
www.conservationresources.com

Gaylord Archival
Box 4901
Syracuse, NY 13221-4901
1-800-448-6160
FAX: 1-800-272-3412
www.gaylord.com/archival

The Hollinger Corporation
Box 8360
Fredericksburg, VA 22404-8360
1-800-634-0491
FAX: 1-800-947-8814
hollingercorp@erols.com

Light Impressions
Box 940
Rochester, NY 14603-0940
1-800-828-6216
www.lightimpressionsdirect.com

Metal Edge, Inc.
Archival Storage Materials
6340 Bandini Blvd.
Commerce, CA 90040
1-800-862-2228
www.metaledgeinc.com

University Products, Inc.
517 Main St. Box 101
Holyoke, MA 01041-0101
1-800-628-1912
FAX: 1-800-532-9281
www.universityproducts.com

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mental in starting Christian Day Schools at Koshkonong and Concordia. He also served on the Board of Regents of Bethany College for many years.

Pastor Lauritz S. Guttebo died of a heart attack August 12, 1947, at the age of 65, and is buried in the family lot at the Western Koshkonong cemetery.

About church customs and recollections from 90 years ago, Gladys says, "It wasn't an awful lot different...except it was all in Norwegian, and of course, we understood that. At first it was Norwegian all the time. Guttebo spoke both. Lamps hung above, and they had candles in them to begin with, and then it was bulbs. We had just a pot belly stove. It was in the middle there some place. And of course, you see,

the men went on *their* side, and the ladies on *their* side. I can remember one day, when I was just a little girl, I suppose I was around three, four years old, I got away from Mother one time, and I

ran over and sat beside Dad. Oh My, and Ooh!, that was something I should never, never, *never* have done. My dad put me on his lap so I couldn't get anywhere anymore. We weren't supposed to run around, I'll tell you."

"Even with the pot belly stove, the church got pretty cold, and then even after we did get the basement [in 1922, teams of horses pulling the mounds of dirt out with "big shovels" as Gladys calls them - her dad's buckskin team among them], we had a potbelly stove down there in one corner, and oh, how cold it would be. To get warm, they'd go over to the stove and stand with their back to it, and one lady singed her coat on the back because she got too close."



Gladys in her confirmation dress. Does she remember the date? "September 7, '22," she says, without hesitation.

Pastor Joseph Bernard Unseth served at Paint Creek from 1918-

1946. Says Gladys, "Reverend Unseth confirmed me. His son, Ted, was confirmed with me and Carlton Jacobson. We had a lot to do, a lot to learn, so many scripture passages and the cate-

chism explanations. We memorized hymns, and of course, we were brought up on the Norwegian. Then of course, they started World War I, and we weren't supposed to use any other language in churches or anything [by order of the Iowa governor], so we had to go right over on English.

"The day I was confirmed, I was scared stiff, because all your relatives came, and of course, there were so many of mine, and the church was full. I was just scared stiff if I'd miss anything.



Palmer and Palma (Unseth) Dehli did their courting in church...they were married at Paint Creek in 1930.

You see, we had everything on that day, questioning, maybe not quite an hour, but pretty close, and everything. "Mrs. Unseth played the organ. We stood up in front of the organ, and I know my hair ribbon just shook, and you could see that. So Mrs. Unseth

reached over the side, and she says, 'Gladys...' I heard somebody saying my name, so I kind of turned a little bit, and she said, 'grab a hold of the railing. Grab real hard' she said. And so I did. You know, that really helped."

"I think Unseth had a one or two-horse buggy that just had one seat, and he used that to call places, on the sick. They also had a top rig. Some of the top rigs had fringe around, and that's where they get that 'Surrey With the Fringe on Top', you see. Then, the congregation bought him a car, that was a Ford, those were kind of the first ones that came out in the rural areas anyway. We surprised him, and I know that he was very appreciative.

"Pastor Unseth had a daughter, Palma, and she played the organ after her mother. Palmer Dehli, he did the leverage [pumping the bellows] so they could keep the organ going" recalls Gladys. That weekly "duet" kindled a romance. "Everybody went to the wedding" Gladys says.

"There were hymns I liked, funeral hymns I thought were so great, like 'I am But a Stranger Here'. I can remember my dad had a favorite hymn, 'A Mighty Fortress is Our God.' We had hymnals that had both Norwegian and English, it worked out pretty good."

Many things have "worked out pretty good" at Paint Creek. After 148 years of God's grace, the little flock still endures, the Word is still preached, and the Church, built firmly on the Rock on which it was founded, still stands.



Our Treasure-house of History

As far back as 1928, the synod's Board of Trustees began discussing the need to preserve artifacts of historical significance, in hopes of establishing a museum for this purpose.

In 1970, the ELS Department of Archives and History was established to preserve the records of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, Bethany Lutheran College, and Bethany Theological Seminary.

Since its inception, "The Archives" has moved around Bethany campus, from the basement of the now-raised old library, to the basement of the new seminary building at 6 Browns Court, and the collection it houses has grown considerably.

This collection of documents, books, photographs, and artifacts is a valuable tool for anyone interested in researching people, places, or events within our synod.

ELS Archives & Museum

6 Browns Court
Mankato, MN 56001

Open: Mon., Wed., & Fri.
9 a.m. - Noon
or by appointment

(507) 344-7854

The Archives is divided into three main categories: records from the synod itself, Bethany College, and Bethany Theological Seminary. Within these three categories are many subdivisions which organize very nicely the thousands of pieces of history within the archive walls.

What kinds of things might a person find in The Archives? The ELS Archive contains files from all the officers of the synod, the many boards - including Doctrine, Worship, Home and Foreign Missions, Education and Youth, Publications - the annual convention, and more. Files include documents as well as photographs.

The Bethany College Archive contains files from all of the departments within the college, faculty members past and present, Bethany Women's Auxiliary, and records of the anniversaries and many dedication services which have taken place on campus.

The Bethany Seminary Archive houses records from the Board of Regents, faculty, Reformation Lectures and Vespers, and a rare book collection, among other things.

Archival items of special interest, according to Assistant Archivist Rev. Walther C. Gullixson, include the following: the photo collection of Hannah Otteson, daughter of pioneer pastor Rev. J.A. Otteson; centennial pictures of churches and pastors by Iver C. Johnson; files on all the past and present ELS congregations which include church histories, anniversaries, installations, constitutions and records

on microfilm.

Says Gullixson, "We have books and pamphlets from the Ukraine. There are 190 different versions of Dr. Martin Luther's Small and Large Catechism in seven European languages, one from

cer from Norway dated 1867; soil from Palestine; very old Danish coins, a minister's collar and tin storage box; portraits of Rev. and Mrs. U.V. Koren and Rev. and Mrs. J.A. Otteson; bullets from the Civil War; and a branch from one of the famed oaks at Koshkonong.



Archivist Norman Holte (left) and assistant Walther Gullixson take a break from their work.

Africa and one with sign language for the deaf."

The writings of Peder G. Tjernagel, whose family history, "The Follinglo Dog Book" has just been published by the University of Iowa Press, can also be found in The Archives.

Artifacts, too, can be found: arrow heads, axes, and mallets; a cup and sau-

Furniture also has a place. The Hannah Otteson collection includes a piano and stool, three chests of drawers, four small tables, and rockers. An heirloom cradle from Mrs. Styrk Reque is very similar to one found in the old home of President John Adams. A loom for weaving carpets and a spinning wheel are among these stored larger pieces.

"There is a real need for a place to house and display the museum furniture, pictures, and artifacts," says Gullixson.

The list of archival items is endless. All have great significance in the story of our synod and our heritage. And most are accessible to the

public.

The ELS Archives and Museum is open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from nine a.m. to noon, and at other times by appointment. Anyone interested in visiting may call (507) 344-7854. Archivist Norman Holte may be reached at (507) 388-4308, and Assistant Archivist Walther Gullixson at (507) 388-5969.



The "Oak" Leaves... A New Leaf Sprouts...

We wish to thank Reverend Craig Ferkenstad, who began the **Oak Leaves** newsletter three years ago, and who has served as editor since its inception. Through 10 editions Rev. Ferkenstad has brought us closer to our shared past, and, hopefully, helped nurture in us a deeper appreciation of that history.

With this issue comes a transition. Rev. Ferkenstad has made the decision to step down as editor. The newsletter will be edited now by Robin Ouren, a member of Norseland Lutheran Church, rural St. Peter, Minnesota. Reverend Ferkenstad, who shepherds that congregation, will continue as an advisor for **Oak Leaves**.

Robin has been interested in history for most of her 36 years, growing up in Waterville, Iowa, as a member of our East Paint Creek church. While attending Bethany Lutheran College 1988-1990, she worked with Reverend Walther Gullixson in the ELS Archives.

After Bethany graduation, Robin attended Luther College, Decorah, Iowa. While at Luther, she worked as Assistant Archivist at Vesterheim Norwegian American Museum, also in Decorah.

Robin has worked as a freelance writer since 1993, writing feature articles for newspapers. She also wrote and edited books for Penfield Press, Iowa City, Iowa from 1995-1997. In 1997, she be-



Reverend Craig Ferkenstad, who began **Oak Leaves** in 1997.

gan researching and writing a book which she also published in 1998, entitled, *"The Town on the Hill": A History of Waterville, Iowa*. Currently, Robin is writing a collection of preschool Bible stories.

Robin lives in Norseland with her husband, Eric, and children Beret, 4, and Peder, 9 months.

The goal for the future is to continue the fine work begun by Reverend Ferkenstad. You are encouraged to submit historical articles, oral histories, biographies, story ideas, photographs, and comments regarding **Oak Leaves** to: Robin Ouren, RR3 Box 53, St. Peter, MN 56082. You can call Robin at (507) 246-5309 or contact her via E-mail at: heyrab@mnic.net.



niture, such as a bed or couch.

DON'T store textiles in plastic. Textiles need to have fresh air so mold and mildew will not grow. Plastic can break down and cause textiles to yellow and deteriorate.

DO wrap textiles in an old, clean sheet or some washed muslin before storing them. Pillowcases work very well for smaller items.

DON'T store textiles in direct contact with wood, cardboard, or paper. These materials are full of acid, which will migrate onto the textile causing them to become yellow and brittle.

DO use an "acid-free" box, or put a layer of aluminum foil in drawers and boxes to act as an acid barrier. Add an old, clean sheet or washed muslin for additional protection.

DON'T store textiles in hot, cold, or damp places such as attics and basements.

DO preserve special textiles in the part of the house where you live, such as a bedroom. Ideal conditions are dark, 60 to 75 degrees, and about 50% humidity.

DON'T ignore pieces in storage.

DO check them yearly for evidence of insects, mildew, and deterioration. Prevention is the best cure for insect problems. Watch for sharp-edged holes or webby traces. **DO** carefully clean the textiles with the nozzle attachment of your vacuum. Cedar blocks and moth balls (with naphthalene) can help discourage pests, but only moth crystals (with paradichlorobenzene) will kill eggs, larvae, and insects.

DON'T put fragile textiles in the washing machine. If you want to wash them, **DO** them by hand in the sink. Use Orvus (also sold as Quilt Soap) or Ivory Dishwashing Liquid and warm water. Check colored threads to make sure they won't bleed in the wash by putting a drop of soapy water on the back of the textile on each color. Press a white cloth to the drop for a minute. If there is no color on the blotter, you can continue. Use a half teaspoon of detergent for each gallon of water. Wash gently and rinse well. If you have very hard water or softened water, consider using distilled for the rinses. Lay the textile on a towel to air dry.

DON'T use chlorine bleach (Clorox, Hilex) on old textiles.



Evangelical Lutheran Synod
Historical Society
6 Browns Court
Mankato, MN 56001

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DO use only safe bleaches. For textiles with food or baby stains, use sodium perborate (Biz) as a pre-wash. Follow directions on the package, then wash and rinse well. For pieces that are yellow or gray, hydrogen peroxide is the best choice. After you have washed and rinsed your textile, and while it is still damp, put your textile in a bowl that has equal amounts of hydrogen peroxide and water. When the textile is saturated, gently fold it and place it in a clear plastic bag. Seal the bag and leave it overnight. Remove the textile, rinse well, and air dry.

DON'T dry clean fragile textiles. The process is much like a washing machine, so it is appropriate only for very sturdy pieces.

DO consider dry cleaning wool items, especially if the colors bleed in water. Ask your dry cleaner for special handling.

DO consult a textile conservator before attempting major repairs. Often the best treatment is no treatment.

DO enjoy your special textiles. Use them, share them, and preserve them.



Oak Leaves

is the official newsletter of the
Evangelical Lutheran Synod Historical Society

The Evangelical Lutheran Synod Historical Society was begun in 1996, by members of the synod eager to preserve and create greater appreciation for the synod's rich history.

Oak Leaves is published periodically, and sent to all members of the society. Beginning with this issue, two copies of **Oak Leaves** will also be mailed to each of the synod's congregations. Our hope is that you will keep **Oak Leaves** in your church library, use it within your church groups, pass it along to older members who are themselves a valuable part of the history, and to younger members so that they may learn and gain a greater appreciation of their own roots. They are our future.

We encourage all of our congregations to preserve their own histories. How can you do this?

1. Keep copies of all church bulletins, bulletins of ordinations and installations, church anniversaries, and other events. Start a file for these records.
2. Send copies of these records to the ELS Archives; 6 Browns Court; Mankato MN 56001.
3. Take photographs of your pastors and their families, charter members, confirmation classes, and of groups that attend special church functions. Identify the people in the photos on a separate sheet of paper, and keep with the photos in a special file.
4. Gather church history from your members. Write it down! Tape-record it! Make a special file for these oral histories. Send copies to the ELS Archives!

5. Display important artifacts from your church history: Bibles, hymn books, communion cups, baptismal bowls, portraits of pastors and churches. Use church display cases, or create a special area in the church or fellowship hall.

6. Join the ELS Historical Society! Information on membership can be found at the bottom of page 2 of this issue. Send membership dues or questions to: ELS Historical Society; 6 Browns Court; Mankato, MN 56001.

7. Attend the historical society's annual meeting, held at Bethany Lutheran College the Saturday before Synod Convention. The meeting in 2000 will be held June 10. More information will follow in future issues of *Oak Leaves*.

8. Send articles of historical significance to the synod or your own congregation, oral histories, photographs, story ideas, and comments regarding *Oak Leaves* to: Robin Ouren; RR3 Box 53; St. Peter, MN 56082. E-mail: heyraab@mnica.net.

YOU are an important link to the past! Your congregation and its history - whether that history spans a hundred years, or a hundred days - is an important part of our heritage. Through God's grace, we will pass on to our children that history, and - most importantly - God's greatest blessing to us all:

**God's Word is our great heritage,
And shall be ours forever;
To spread its light from age to age
Shall be our chief endeavor.
Through life it guides our way;
In death it is our stay.
Lord, grant, while worlds endure,
We keep its teaching pure,
Throughout all generations.**