

Section 4

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Special note

A directory of churches for much of the Lakes Edition area can be found in section one, pages 37-39.

Norwegian heritage shines at Livsreise

Submitted by the Norwegian Heritage Center (Livsreise)

In 2011 the board of trustees of the Edwin E. and Janet L. Bryant Foundation, Inc. conceived the idea of a Norwegian Heritage Center. Its purpose would be to create a meaningful experience for Stoughton, Wis., residents and others to learn about Norwegian cultural heritage.

The name chosen for the facility was Livsreise. Approximately three and one-half years later the facility was completed and opened to the public in time for Stoughton's annual Syttende Mai Celebration in May of 2015.

The Bryant Foundation's founder and benefactor was Janet L. Bryant, widow of Edwin E. Bryant. Mr. Bryant was one of three founders of the Nelson Muffler Corporation, a corporation established in 1939 that later became known as Nelson Industries, Inc. Mrs. Bryant formed the foundation to honor her late husband and show her love for, and support of, the Stoughton community.

Livsreise (*Lifs - rye - sa*) means "Life's Journey." It is a generational journey, encompassing not only the physical journey Norwegian emigrants traveled, but also the continuing journey as generations embrace their Norwegian heritage in Stoughton, Wisconsin and



There is plenty to see, learn and enjoy in the beautiful, handicap accessible Livsreise facility. (Photo courtesy of Livsreise)

across the nation.

The mission of Livsreise is to create an experience that allows visitors to explore Stoughton's Norwegian identity and relate this to the culture that Stoughton and the surrounding area has long embraced.

A visit to Livsreise includes interpretations of the journey from Norway from the period of about 1825 to 1910 and features the cultural heritage brought to Stoughton. Stories of individual immigrants are also shared. Visitors can immerse themselves in the stories of immigrants' personal journeys by turning the

pages of digital volumes, compiled from firsthand accounts, letters and family interviews.

Livsreise guests can explore the cultural roots of Norwegian-American heritage from performing arts and traditional customs to industrial entrepreneurs and the Norwegian language. They can also discover daily immigrant life within these interactive kiosks. Browsing through the culture and history of Norway shows the influence on today's Norwegian-Americans.

Visitors can experience the journey that the early immigrants made by choosing a vocation,

packing a trunk, and buying a ticket to America by selecting items on the interactive table. This experience allows the visitor to encounter the landscape and history of Norway as he/she prepares for the journey across the Atlantic to embrace a new life in America.

Also featured are changing exhibits and displays highlighting Norwegian heritage and arts organizations that currently includes a traveling exhibit from Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum located in Decorah,

Continued on page 101

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 Mandt Park
9am-3pm

Coffee Brew-Off
 (Sample coffee from different brewers)

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