white candle was lit for each branch. Mrs. Esther Solem was the oldest member of the Peter Olson branch. She had attended every reunion until her death in March of 1975. A traveling attendance trophy was awarded to the branch having the most members in attendance. There were one hundred forty persons registered. We register them every year.

Forrest Midtmoen of New York City attended our reunion the last two years. He is a second cousin of Esther’s. He went to Norway last summer and traced back to thirty-five generations. He was going back again this summer for more information. Since I joined the reunion 24 years ago, through marriage, I have attended about 21 reunions. I am Mrs. Donald Solem, daughter-in-law of Mrs. Esther Solem.

GUSTAV NELSON

Gustav Nelson was only 17 years old when he and his brother Carl, 19, came with their father, Johannes Peter Nelson, to Minnesota. Johannes Nelson’s wife Christine, and their four younger children were to remain in Smaaland, Sweden, until he had earned enough money in Minnesota to send for them.

The year was 1883 when Johannes and his two sons came to his brother, August Nelson, who farmed northeast of East Grand Forks, Minnesota. Gustav worked for his uncle that first year while his father, Johannes, took a homestead on what is now the John W. Nelson farm, five miles south of Oslo, Minnesota.

Before Johannes could send for the rest of his family, he got word that his wife had passed away. Nevertheless the next two sons, Frank, and John Magnus came to Minnesota.

On January 1, 1907 Johannes Peter Nelson passed away, leaving the homestead in care of his oldest son Carl.

Gustav, the second son, worked for some time on the Ole Bang farm, and then later on for Christian Quern. It was here he met and married the daughter of Christian Quern, Olivia Quern. This was in 1894.

Mr. and Mrs. Gustav Nelson.

Gustav and his brother-in-law, Carlotte Quern, farmed together in Higdom township for several years, and during this time three sons were born to Gustav and Olivia. They were John, Christ, and Carl.

In 1900 the Gustav Nelson family moved to Badger, Minnesota, in Roseau county, where they took a homestead. They lived in Roseau county 14 years, and during this time Otto, Gertie, Martin, and Leonard were born.

In the early spring of 1914, the family moved back to the north half of section 21 in Higdom township. One more daughter was born, Carrie. That fall John, the oldest son, passed away at the age of 18.

Gustav Nelson served on the Board of Directors of Farmers CoOp of Oslo for several years. He also served on the school board for district 50 for about 15 years. He was trustee for Our Savior’s Lutheran Church of Granville for 25 years.


Surviving now are Carl, of Oslo, Minnesota; Gertie (Mrs. George Strafelda) of Washburn, Wisconsin; Martin, of Alvarado, Minnesota; Leonard, who lives on the home farm near Oslo; and Carrie (Mrs. George Stavig) of East Grand Forks, Minnesota.

SIGVARD N. NELSON

Erick Nelson, born in Norway, August 22, 1839, was the father of Sigvard N. Nelson. He came to America in 1861 with his father and located at Eau Claire, Wisconsin and worked in a lumber mill for eleven years.

In 1880 he came to Polk county, where he purchased 78 acres of script land in section 20, township 154, range 50, paying $6.00 an acre for it. Later he purchased more land and built a little log house which stood until 1945.

He was married to Oleana Fardar in East Grand Forks in 1881. She also was born in Norway. They had seven children, namely: Annie, Mrs. Adolf Anderson; Sigvard, Mary, who never married; Emma, Mrs. Albert Anvinson; Agnes, Mrs. Carl Larson; Oscar Edwin I (died at birth); Oscar Edwin II, who never married; Oleana who died young, in January, 1912. Erick died in May, 1919. Agnes and Mary are the only ones still living from this family.

Sigvard N. Nelson was born December 24, 1884, on this farm and lived here all his life. He was married to Ada Finseth, a neighbor girl, in July, 1915. She was the daughter of Iver and Karen Finseth, who were farmers. Iver was also a layman who traveled far with horse and buggy or sleigh to preach the Gospel. Born to the Finseths were ten children, namely: Anne (died in infancy), Karen (was a teacher and never married), Ivar (never married), Annie (Mrs. Martin Johnson), Petrina (died at 16 years), Andrew (married Emma Lindroth), Peter (married Anna Nyhus), Ole (married Anna Grenlin), Ole Andrese (died in infancy), and Ada (married Sigvard N. Nelson). All these have died except Ole, who lives in Duluth and is 86 years old now. Sigvard farmed with horses until 1937, when he purchased his first tractor by selling a team of horses plus $740. For many years he had cows, chickens, and sold eggs and cream by delivering to customers in towns. There were many hardships and sicknesses.

There were five children born to Sigvard and Ada: First, Orma, born in May, 1916, married Clarence Gulbranson in 1937. They farmed 160 acres in SE¼ section 22, Higdom township, range 154, which he bought from his dad in 1947. He had a tractor and farmed with grain, also raising cows and chickens. Clarence became ill the last years and died in May, 1961. Since then, the farm has been rented to Donald and Ralph Solem. Orma moved to Grand Forks and is working at United Hospital as a central service technician. They have three daughters: Avis (married Robert D. Iverson in 1960). He is in the Marines. They have three children: Colette, Darlene, and David; Carol married John Sansburn in 1966. He has a camera store in Grand Forks. They have one adopted daughter, Kari Ann; Lois married Dennis Turner in 1969. He is in the Air Force. They have no children.