"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die..."

Ecclesiastes 3
Genealogy is all about family… near and far… past, present, and even future.

At Tre Lag Stevne we pause, gratefully, to remember those members of our extended Tre Lag family who have passed away in recent times.

We have been blessed to enjoy their active connection with us and to share a measure of their interests and heritage.

Their legacy lives on in each of us.
Mary Elizabeth (Fossen) Benson  
1928-2015, Age 86  
Minnetonka, Minnesota

- Mary is the daughter of George and Mabel Fossen.  
- She was married to Gordon Benson.  
- They have 4 sons: Scott, Steve, Doug and Eric  & have 10 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren  
- She was a U of M graduate, an adventurer, and had a life-long passion for travel. She worked as a librarian most of her career  
- As a member of both Gudbrandsdalslag and Trønderlag, Mary was a faithful attendee of Tre Lag for many many years
Mary Elizabeth (Fossen ) Benson
1928-2015

Mary with her grandchildren, 2011
Mary Elizabeth (Fossen) Benson

A tribute from her sons:
We recognize Mom in all of us, and the character traits that come along with it - a sense of adventure, a fierce independence (sometimes a little too fierce), self-sufficiency, overlooking minor discomforts, willingness to rise to a challenge, and a measured sense of risk - heading off into the unknown while not doing anything really stupid.
Robert Charles “Bob” Christensen
1940–2015, age 74
San Francisco, California
Nord Hedmark og Hedemarken Lag

- Born in Madison Wisconsin
- Son of Cora and Harold Christensen
- One brother, Donald
- UW and Rensselaer Polytechnic Graduate
- Bob worked for Stauffer Chemical and Zeneca, Inc.
- An orchid grower!
- A member of NHOH Lag since 2000
- Ancestral Roots in Ringsaker and Folldal
Robert “Bob” Christensen
1940–2015

Gene & Ginny Nelson with Bob
(Gene and Bob are 1st cousins)
Robert “Bob” Christensen
1940–2015
Tre Lag Photographer from 2003–2013

If you’ve ever had your photo taken by Bob Christensen, raise your hand!
Lyle Elverud
1930–2014, age 84
Plymouth, Minnesota
Gudbrandsdalslag and Trønderlag

- Son of Iver and Marie (Paulson) Elverud
- Survived by his wife of 52 years, Elsie (Eide) Elverud and by 4 daughters: Ann, Amy, Lisa, and Brenda
- Lyle has 2 sisters, 1 brother, and 9 grandchildren
- He is a veteran of the US Army Intelligence Corp.
- A career Employee of the Department of Defense
- President Norwegian Worldwide – St. Paul Chapter
- Past President of Gudbrandsdalslag
Lyle Elverud
1930–2014

Elsie and Lyle

A freckle-faced lad!
Lyle Elverud
1930–2014

Lyle was proud of his farming background and continued to work on his land until the day before he was hospitalized.
Priscilla Sorknes (Johnson) Grefsrud
1932–2014, age 82
Sedona, Arizona

• Daughter of Alfred and Hilda (Sorkness) Johnson
• Married Earl Grefsrud, a Lutheran pastor (*deceased*)
• Mother of 3: Lorinda, Nate, and Pauline
• Priscilla has 1 sister, Verla, and 3 grandchildren
• A graduate of Concordia College
• She shared her gift of music – teaching piano lessons and music to students of every age.
• Fluent in German, Norwegian, and Swedish
• She had a total passion for genealogy
• Genealogist for Solørlag and Romerikslag
• Let many tours to Norway
Priscilla Sorknes (Johnson) Grefsrud
1932–2014
Orlin Richard Oium
1934–2014, age 80
Towner, North Dakota
Gudbrandsdalslag

Son of Richard & Esther Irene (Moen) Oium
Survived by his sister, Joyce
B.S. from North Dakota State University
US Army Veteran
Until 1963 worked for the Farmers Home Administration
He “retired” to raise polled Herfords and Columbia Sheep and ranched his grandfather Hans O. Ouim’s homestead until the time of his death
Orlin Richard Oium
1934–2014

Orlin had an avid interest in genealogy, politics, hunting, fishing, music, and (most of all!) in his Oliver Farm Equipment
Johan Ronningen
1915–2015, age 100
Honolulu, Hawaii
Nord Hedmark og Hedemarken Lag
Son of Otto Ivar and Grace Ronningen
Graduate of the University of MN

- Earned a Bronze Star while serving in the Fifth Army in Italy in WWI – and was a member of the 88th “Blue Devil” Division
- Lieutenant Colonel in the Korean Conflict – Military career from 1942-1954
- Johan worked 7 years as a private planner and engineer
- Then as a planner for the city and county of Honolulu
- A Centenarian!
Johan Ronningen
1915–2015

Johan was very proud of his ancestry and conducted personal research in and contributed to many libraries across the country.

He has 3 children.

His son Erik, an antiterrorist specialist, was in the World Trade Center when it was attacked. He survived.
Gordon O. Sandbaken
1927–2014, age 87
Golden Valley, Minnesota
Gudbrandsdalslag

- Son of Oscar and Clara Sandbaken
- Survived by his loving wife of 57 years, Beverly
- Father of 3: Mark, Carrie, and Paul
- Gordon has 2 sisters and 2 grandchildren
- US Army Veteran
- 1951 Graduate of Gustavus Adolphus College
- Retired from International Multifoods in 1992 after 41 years of service
Gordon O. Sandbaken
1927–2014

In 2014, Gordon donated his bunad to the Gudbrandsdalslaget, where it was auctioned off.

The grateful winner was John Peterson

At Gustavus in 1951
Shirley Rae (Lien) Schafer
1950–2014, age 64
Fargo, North Dakota
Gudbrandsdalslag

• Daughter of Harvey and Dorothy (Durkin) Lien
• Survived by her husband, Al, of 34 years and by her father
• Children: Zachary, Amanda, and Michael
• Shirley has 2 brothers and 1 grandson
• She grew up in Fargo & attended Aakers Business College
• Shirley and Al lived in Louisiana, Germany, Kentucky and they eventually settled in North Dakota
Shirley had a love of genealogy and spent countless hours researching her family history. She was a former director of Gudbrandsdals Lag and has served on the Tre Lag Planning Committee. She coordinated the hospitality suite in 2012, made centerpieces for our banquet and was generous in donating her time and talents.
Blessed Be Their Memory

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Mary E. (Fossen) Benson • 1928-2015 • Minnetonka, MN • NH T
Robert C. Christensen • 1940-2015 • San Francisco, CA • NH
Lyle M. Elverud • 1930-2014 • Plymouth, MN • G T
Priscilla Sorknes (Johnson) Grefsrud • 1932-2014 • Sedona, AZ
Orlin R. Oium • 1934-2014 • Towner, ND • G
Johan Ronningen • 1915-2015 • Honolulu, HI • NH
Gordon O. Sandbaken • 1927-2014 • Golden Valley, MN • G
Shirley R. (Lien) Shafer • 1950-2014 • Fargo, ND • G