

# The Ager Newsletter

Waldemar Ager Museum

July, August, September 2023

## ACTIVITIES

**Board Meetings at 7 p.m.**  
Third Monday of the month.

**Open House--Tours**  
September and October

Sep 9 and 23: 10 – 2.

Sep 13 and 27: 4 – 7

Oct 14 and 28: 10 – 2

Oct 11 and 25: 4 - 7

Winter Schedule

2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays every  
month—from 10 – 2.

Or by appointment.

## Coming Soon

### September 6 at 6:30

Debra Raye King and Tom Wayne King present  
“Sunny Cove Registered Icelandic Sheep.” In the  
Riverview Room of the L.E. Phillips Memorial  
Public Library (LEMPL). See more on page 6.

### October 5 at 5:30 – 6:00

#### Annual Meeting of the Association

Riverview Room, LEPMPL

6:00 Refreshments

### At 6:30

Miriam and Jan Hansen present “Grass, Stone,  
Wood, and Glass: A Tour of Nordic Architecture.”  
In the Riverview Room, LEPMPL. More on page 6.

## Book Discussion

Jo Nesbø, *The Kingdom*

**August 24**, starting at 6:30.

At 7538 Lakeview Drive, Eau Claire

**September 27**, starting at 6:30 at the  
Ager Museum. A trilogy by Roy Jacobsen  
*The Unseen, White Shadow, Eyes of the  
Rigel*. At the Ager Museum.



The Waldemar Ager  
Association  
514 W. Madison Street  
P.O. Box 1742  
Eau Claire, Wisconsin  
54702-1742  
715.598.1776  
[www.agerhouse.org](http://www.agerhouse.org)

Help fund the land/building fund. Donations welcome.

## Presidential Ramblings by Ivar Lunde



Friends,

In my last letter, I mentioned that we had encountered problems in preparing to demolish the properties across the alley. The remaining tenant had paid no rent for five months, but she was unwilling to vacate the premises. We had to secure a lawyer to get the renter out of the building. The legal fees added to the costs of moving forward. But now that the reluctant tenant in 1616 ½ has moved, we can continue with our plans. I will be contacting the asbestos abatement company this week. Once they have completed their job, the demolition will take place.

The museum has entertained many visitors during spring and summer. One afternoon I was pleased to greet relatives of Waldemar Ager's brother, John Martiniussen Cornfield. John changed his surname (from Ager to Cornfield), a common practice among immigrants when arriving in the "new country." The visitors looked through ring binder after ring binder finding pictures and stories that encouraged comments. This is of course one of the purposes of the Waldemar Ager Association, preserving and sharing history.

We are still hoping to have the *stabbur* delivered this summer, but getting transport has become most difficult. The big issue has been the height of the structure (interference with power lines). Only one company has been willing to examine the situation, and I am hoping to hear from them this month.

The Board encourages you to become an active participant in the affairs of the association. As officers' and directors' terms are up, new people are needed to fill their shoes. You may want to serve or know of individuals to recommend for these positions. Encouraging people to be active in the Association will be welcome. Exciting times are certainly before us as we plan for a Scandinavian Culture Center as part of the Waldemar Ager Association and to support all the area's Scandinavian organizations.



Please look for news regarding our annual meeting and don't forget that we have a very active book club. They meet regularly at the museum.

Have a wonderful and safe rest of the year!

Ivar

Above: L to R—Nanette Lunde, Jane Pederson, Ivar Lunde.

Above: L to R—Ager descendants: Barb Decker Wachholz, Pam Culver, Barbara Culver, Susan Decker, Vicki Culver Anderson.

## Where *Reform* Was Published

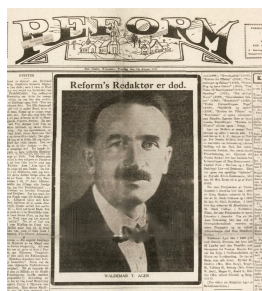
By columnist Bob Gough

Dotters Books recently relocated from the Eastside Hill to a downtown location at 307 S. Barstow St. Waldemar Ager's newspaper *Reform* and his other businesses occupied the second story of this building from the early 1920s to the early 1940s. The new ownership of 307 S. Barstow has handsomely restored both its interior and exterior and mounted a historical plaque on its facade. There is also now a small but interesting historical exhibit in its foyer, in which the central focus is *Reform*.

When Ager took over editorship of *Reform* in 1902 the business was located in the Laycock Building and had a street address of 1 S. Barstow. The newspaper, Ager's commercial printing business, and the Fremad Publishing Co. operated from here until the early 1920s, when they moved up the street to 307 ½ S. Barstow. For a few years after Ager's death in 1941, his family continued to conduct Fremad and the printing business at 508 Water St., which in 2023 has become the new location of Antiques Emporium.



307 S. Barstow St. was built in 1870 in "commercial vernacular" style. As the new plaque on its exterior explains, it has a long association with the printed word. Elbert Printers had space in the building in the 1890s and *Der Herold* was a tenant in the 1900s. Among the many occupants after Ager's businesses left was a newsagent. Perhaps because of this history, when he moved into the building about 1922, Ager does not seem to have been bothered by the fact that for decades a succession of saloons had operated on the first floor of 307 S. Barstow! (There seem to have been none from Ager's time onward.)



Although it carries all types of books, including titles for children, Dotters specializes in contemporary fiction, including work from independent presses. Waldemar Ager would be pleased, I think, to know that the building he worked from is still supporting fiction authors like himself and books published by presses like Fremad.

## Yard Sale 2023

Thanks to the many members who contributed items for the sale. We earned \$711, thanks to the work of these volunteers: Marty Zens, Janice Whukowski, Linda McClelland, Ivar Lunde, Mark Helland, Florence and Dennis Weise, and Bob Gough.



## More about Reform

The weekly publication of *Reform* involved long hours for Ager and often required assistance from volunteers. The printed albums of the newspaper rest on custom made shelving in an upstairs room at the Ager Museum. The digital collection includes approximately 2400 issues of this weekly newspaper, from 1896 until 1941. It is made available online by the Waldemar Ager Association in partnership with the McIntyre Library Special Collections and Archives Department at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. Find the digital collection at [recollectionwisconsin.org](http://recollectionwisconsin.org). Click on "view collection."



# THE TUSENBEINER

Helping the Waldemar Ager Association and Museum Grow • [agerhouse.org](http://agerhouse.org)

## “THE CENTIPEDE” 2K/5K FUN RUN AND WALK

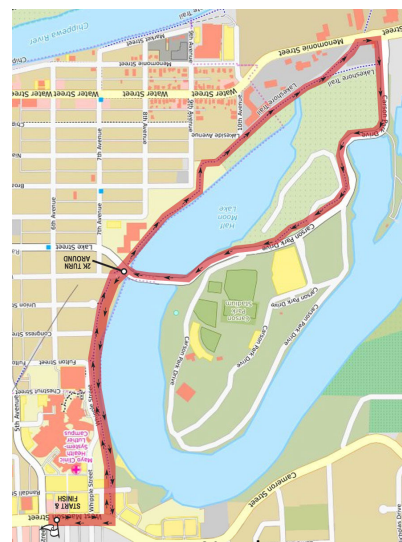
At a meeting of the Board in July 2022, Marty Zens and Doug Pearson proposed a footrace as a fundraiser for the building program. Tentatively called The Centipede, the event would include a 5K route in the neighborhood of the Ager Museum. Marty and Doug studied maps and took hikes on various routes, all of which involved crossing more than one busy street. By September, they agreed that a route starting and finishing in the Mayo Clinic parking lot across the street from the Ager Museum would be safe and effective. All but 200 yards would be on city trail and have just Lake Street to cross (twice).

The goal was to attract at least 50 participants eager to exercise. We also hoped to get most of them in the museum (a post run/walk picnic would be held on the museum grounds) and that we would net \$1000 for the building fund. We had 20 participants and about 16 volunteers. Everyone got a Tusenbeiner T-shirt and a Norwegian flag pin. And we raised almost \$800 for the building fund. We had support from 13 sponsors.

Participants enjoyed the event, and volunteers thought it was a very successful run/walk. Two people did the 2K. Among those who did the 5K, about 6 chose to walk. No records were set, but a lot of smiling faces greeted our timer as they crossed the finish line. Ice cream at the picnic helped too.

We will do this event again in 2024. The date is not set. Look for more information later in the year. Then put “The Tusenbeiner” on your calendar for 2024.

### The Trail



North

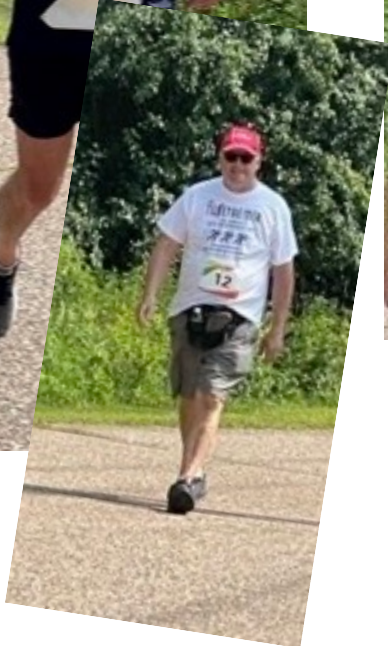
### The Ice Cream





# THE TUENBEINER

Helping the Waldemar Ager Association and Museum Grow • [agerhouse.org](http://agerhouse.org)  
 "THE CENTIPEDE" 2K/5K FUN RUN AND WALK





## Upcoming Programs

### SUNNY COVE REGISTERED ICELANDIC SHEEP

Wednesday, September 6, at 6:30 p.m.

Riverview Room

L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library.



A program by Debra Raye King and Thomas Wayne King. For 14 years, the Kings have been tending Icelandic sheep on their farm in Solon Springs. They use the wool and Icelandic patterns to craft beautiful sweaters. And they document their lifestyle by writing about the experience of life in

Northwest Wisconsin. What they have learned about farming and gardening becomes thematic in their songs and stories. You'll be entertained and educated.



## Grass, Stone, Wood, and Glass:

### A Tour of Nordic Architecture

Thursday, October 5, at 6:30 p.m.

Riverview Room

L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library.

This event follows the Ager Association Annual Meeting.

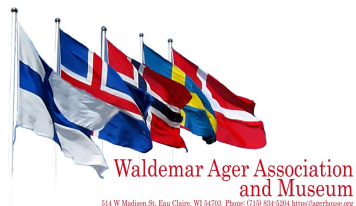
Jan and Miriam Hansen will provide an overview of the way that nature and the landscape have shaped building projects and architectural designs in Scandinavia. From the early turf-covered homes to the wooden stav churches and today's glass-roofed opera house in Oslo, Scandinavian buildings are some of the most admired in the world.

A native of Norway, Jan is Professor Emeritus of Economics at UW-Eau Claire. Miriam is a former librarian and teacher. Together, they have taught and traveled in several foreign countries. Their love of Scandinavia and its culture has resulted in research on a variety of topics from economics to travel and architecture. Very active members of the Ager Association, the Hansens now live in Middleton, Wisconsin.



Opera House, Oslo

Adobe Stock  
agerhouse.org



## Kubb: The US Championship

Ager Association members Erin and Eric Anderson directed the first tournament in 2007. Since then, it has been a fixture in the Eau Claire summer calendar. Teams from abroad and from all over the US compete for top honors. It's a very social sport but can be fatiguing.



## Still to Come in 2023

### Open House: September and October

2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays, 10 – 2

2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays, 4 - 7

**Possible?** One-day events: Learn to make lefse and/or krumkake—or Swedish rye bread. **In November.**

### Advent at the Ager

Sunday, December 10 , 1 – 4.

## Annual Meeting

5:30 on Thursday, October 5  
LEPMPL

## Ager Association Board of Directors 2023

Ivar Lunde, President  
[ivar@skylinestudio.com](mailto:ivar@skylinestudio.com)

Marty Zens, Vice President  
[martyzens@gmail.com](mailto:martyzens@gmail.com)

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Items for the Next Newsletter  
Send to [pearsoda@uwec.edu](mailto:pearsoda@uwec.edu) by  
November 15.

## Our 30<sup>th</sup> Year

Help us fill the next two issues with memories and images. Give us the names of people in your photos. Help us recall special times in our history.  
[pearsoda@uwec.edu](mailto:pearsoda@uwec.edu)

Note: Book discussions are open to all. Attend. Bring a friend.

The Waldemar Ager Museum  
Center for Nordic Culture  
P.O. Box 1742  
Eau Claire, WI 54702-1742  
Physical Address  
514 W. Madison Street  
Eau Claire, WI 54703

### **What it was like on the home front in 1918.**

**"Do Not Forget** that wheatless means wheatless; that graham bread and bread of whole wheat flour or blends of which one portion is wheat flour, which macaroni is, are on the list of forbidden items on wheatless days. Do not forget either that people on those days ought not eat beef or mutton meat, pork, veal or lamb.

Toast as garnish and diced bread in soup ought to cease from now on.

On a lighter note: "Mr. and Mrs. J. Gaustad, this past week, received a couple long and very interesting letters from their son, Einar, who is a lieutenant in the national army in France."

*Reform*, 5 March 1918

#### **DON'T Forget!**

**Annual Meeting of the Association**

**Thursday, October 5, starting at 5:30**

**L..E. Phillips Memorial Public Library**

**The year in review. The look to the future.**

**Program on Norwegian Architecture follows.**

The Ager Museum telephone  
number.

**715 598 1776**

We'd love to hear from you.

Leave a message.