

## For Immediate Release



In 2017 Landmarks Illinois added the Norway Temperance Association Hall to their 10 Most Endangered Historic Buildings in Illinois. The Norsk Museum endeavored ever since to gain ownership of the building for two reasons, to save the building from collapse and to restore it to its original 1909 glory. The Norsk Museum will be celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a museum this year. Every year more Norwegian family keepsakes and heirlooms are donated. The NTA hall will provide the much-needed

space for new exhibits. The NTA has great historical value itself and should eventually be added to the National Register of Historic Buildings. Thanks to the generosity of the Borchsenius family, of the Norway Store, the Norsk Museum has claimed ownership of the NTA hall. In 2017, historic architect, Michael Lambert evaluated the structure for the purposes of restoration and estimated the cost to be \$250,000. When we were notified that the building was being donated, Mr. Lambert was invited back for a second evaluation. Inflation now increased the restoration to \$500,000! First the rear wall must be stabilized, then the roof and the windows. After the exterior work is completed, the interior restoration will be addressed.



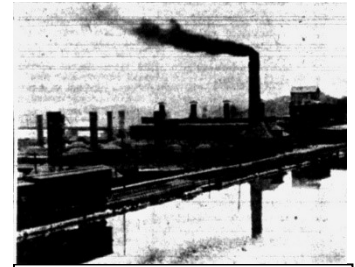
The Norway Temperance Association was organized in the late 1870's by the Norway Methodist Women who believed our nation's ills could be attributed to the drinking of alcoholic beverages. Every year during the 1870's, 1880's and 1890's, the small village of Norway had reports in the newspaper of riots, stabbings, rock throwing and even attempted murder. It was reminiscent of Matt Dillion and Gun Smoke, but without the sheriff. The women of the town took charge to put an end to this Norway



war zone. On August 12, 1880, the first NTA hall was dedicated. At the time they were called the Norway Red Ribbon Reform Club. This new building seated 200 people, at a cost of \$378. Most every town in the country had their own Red Ribbon Club and semi-annually representatives would meet at conventions to promote abstinence and closing bars. Even Susan B. Anthony came down to this area, to support the cause.

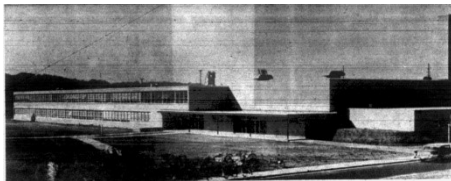
After thirty years of use, it was time to replace the old Temperance Hall. The Thorsen boys finished the foundation for the new building in July 1909. Earlier that spring, 32 teams and as many wagons delivered the brick from Ottawa. This new design of brick, hollow tile, was formed at the **new Pioneer plant in Ottawa**, a subsidiary of

the National Fire Proofing Company. Years later, in 1956, the land used by the Pioneer plant, broke ground for the **new Central School** and now today, the new \$26M YMCA. September 1909, George Wortman put up the orange tile blocks for the walls, then plastered the interior walls prior to the dedication. Under the direction of Rev. C. W. Hanson of the Norway Methodist Church, a new Temperance Hall was constructed. The new NTA cost about \$900, 36 ft. by 60 ft, seating 300. It was dedicated on October 31, 1909. Members of the NTA shared their talents such as musical selections at the meetings they held. This allowed residents in the community to congregate and catch up on any news.



**Pioneer plant**

School graduations were held in the hall where all the area one-room school students would gather for the occasion. This was the first of many movements

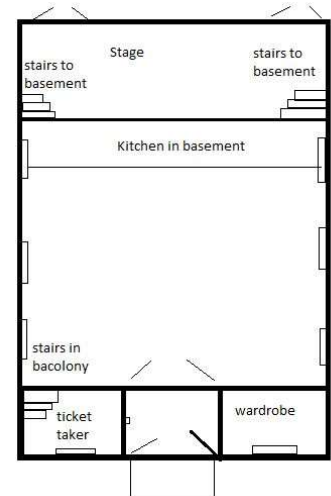


**Central School 1956**

toward school consolidation. Many small towns had a basketball team and Norway's team would play their home games in the NTA Hall. Local groups performed plays or held dinners as fund raisers for their organizations in the hall. Until the advancement of communication, most

small rural towns needed somewhere to share the news and activities of their community. The Temperance Hall was that place for Norway, Illinois. Regular meetings were held until 1956 when they dissolved the organization, and the building was sold. The money from the sale was divided evenly and given to the three churches in the community: Fox River Lutheran, Norway Methodist and the Latter-Day Saints.

During the glory days of the NTA, from 1909-1956, it was the social epicenter and heart of the community. During its 47 years of use, this building was used for 63 meetings, 47 wedding showers and celebrations, 147 parties and dances, 66 fundraisers, at least 9 graduations, numerous basketball games, and 55 stage plays. In 1909, their first fundraiser was an Oyster Supper and by 1939 they were fundraising a new furnace. In June 1941, the NTA was the meeting place for all the area townships, to learn about the new Rural Electric program. In 1954, square dancing was introduced, along with square dance classes.



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## 8-12-1880 Hall Dedication

On Saturday last a hall, erected by the **Norway** red ribbon club, was dedicated to the cause of temperance. It is a one story building, has a seating capacity of two hundred, and cost \$372. Temperance people were in attendance from the surrounding country in large numbers, and the occasion was one which will be remembered for years by the residents of the village and vicinity. The forenoon exercises consisted of singing by the Newark choir, prayer by Rev. J. G. Campbell, an address of welcome by the president of the club, Mr. Ingalls, a historical address on the "Ups and Downs of the Club," by Mr. Ingalls, reading of a paper reciting the work of the club in securing the erection of the building, address by Mrs. Hanson, presenting Bible, stand and flag, donated by the ladies, a dresponse by the president, and

dedicatory address by W. E. Bowman. Dinner—prepared by the ladies and served on a table one hundred feet long to all who would partake, free of expense—followed, and then short addresses by H. H. Matlock, Ottawa, J. H. Fowler, Newark, Rev. Mr. Smith, Lisbon, Rev. J. G. Campbell, Newark, D. Hurd, Marseilles, and Mrs. Nickerson, Seneca, together with two recitations by little girls—one about "Hotel Life," the other "Mrs. O'Leary's Cow" and the Chicago fire. A letter from George Woodford was read.

About \$100 were collected from the crowd to liquidate unpaid bills and furnish the hall with needed articles.

## 1909 building new NTA

**Norway.**  
Rev. Hanson was in Chicago last week.  
F. Ingles is on the sick list at this writing.  
Harry Uglund was at Severt Thompson's Sunday.  
Mrs. Severt Thompson is still on the sick list.  
Mr. and Mrs. D. Hanson went to Chicago last week.  
Mr. and Mrs. B. B. Hagen visited with Mrs. S. Hodney Sunday.  
Mr. S. Uglund commenced moving some of his furniture last week.  
Geo. C. Borchsenius has been having an attack of jaundice, but is some better.  
Francis Selby and wife are entertaining Mrs. Selby's brother, of Iowa, this week.  
The **Norway** school-house was on fire Monday, which was not extinguished until the roof was nearly burned off. Thanks are due to the promptness of the people for their aid.  
The temperance drama given by the **Norway** Temperance association in N. T. A. hall Tuesday and Wednesday evenings will be played in Newark Saturday evening, Feb. 6th. The receipts will be used in building the new hall.  
Your correspondent is requested by J. G. Gabrielson, of the **Norway** Temperance association, to return thanks to all who contributed to the fund for the new hall. The subscriptions aggregated \$194.

**OTTAWA PRODUCT  
SHIPPED TO CANADA**

**National Fire Proofing Company Has Contract for 210 Car Loads of Material.**

The Pioneer plant of the National Fireproofing company, of this city, is working at full capacity to fill the large orders that have been received within the past few weeks.

One of the largest orders received comes from Canada and requires 210 car loads of the vitrified porous building tile. An average of six car loads is being sent to Chicago every day to fill this order. At Chicago it is transferred to a large lake steamer and transported to Fort Williams, Canada, where bins for the storage of cereals are being constructed. The delivery of the tile began March 20th, and it is expected the order will be filled by May 1st.

At present 150 men are employed at the Ottawa plant, and if business increases as materially in the future as within the past month more men will be added.

The new **Norway** hall, which is under construction at **Norway**, will be built of the product of the Pioneer plant. Several days ago thirty-two teams and as many wagons, owned by residents in the vicinity of **Norway**, came to Ottawa and hauled the building material to that structure.

**Norway.**  
F. Ingles was in Ottawa Wednesday. The Thorsen boys finished the foundation for the new N. T. A. hall last week.  
Geo. Uglund bought a horse of Ingles Bros. last week.  
Miss Mina Nelson spent Sunday with Miss Edna Holcman.  
A number of our people were hunting pearls Sunday morning.  
Mr. and Mrs. K. Uglund and family visited at S. Uglund's Sunday.  
Miss Mabel Hodman entertained a number of her friends Sunday.  
Mr. and Mrs. B. B. Hagen and son called at Mrs. S. Hodney's Sunday.  
Mr. and Mrs. B. Thorsen spent Sunday at Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Erickson's.  
A few of our boys attended the social at Silas Johnson's last Saturday evening.  
Miss Josie Johnson returned from Aurora Saturday, where she spent the past week.  
The **Norway** Temperance association will give an ice cream social next Saturday evening. Everybody is invited.

## 1909 NTA Dedication

Miss Ethel Knapp is teaching in the Springstead district, Miss Vera Heavenhill in the Hess district and Miss Elma Omundson in Miller township.

The Temperance club of Norway are building a hall 36x60 feet. George Wortman is putting up the walls, which are of hollow tile.

The seats for the new school house did not arrive in time to be placed in the rooms last week, so the opening of the school has been postponed for a week.

will soon be able to leave the hospital. George Wortman is plastering the temperance hall in Norway. The dedication is to take place on the 31st if the building is completed in time.

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### NORWAY TEMPERANCE HALL TO BE DEDICATED OCT. 31ST

The dedication of the new building of the Norway Temperance association will be held with appropriate services October 31st. The program follows:

Afternoon session—2 o'clock.

Music—N. T. A. orchestra.

Song—N. T. A. octette.

Scripture reading and prayer by

Rev. F. C. Norman.

Piano solo—Lillian Hanson.

Address—Rev. H. Moser.

Song—N. T. A. octette.

Music—N. T. A. orchestra.

Evening session—7:30 o'clock.

Music—N. T. A. orchestra.

Song—N. T. A. octette.

Scripture reading and prayer by

Rev. Hanson.

Piano solo—Lillian Hanson.

Dedicatory address—Rev. O. A.

Mortvedt.

Song—N. T. A. octette.

Music—N. T. A. orchestra.

An oyster supper will be served in the dining room from 7 to 7 o'clock.