



# Crossings and Crossroads

*Norwegian Immigrants,  
the Intermountain West, and Beyond*

NORWAY  
& NORTH  
AMERICA  
1825 • 2025

18–20 November, 2025

## Call for Papers



On July 4, 1825, 52 Norwegians left Stavanger, Norway on a sloop-rigged ship called *Restauration* and arrived on October 9 in New York City. This group, known as the “Sloopers,” marks the beginning of the mass migration of Norwegians to the United States. After settling in the Fox River Settlement in Illinois, some of these Sloopers converted to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) in the 1840s, starting a long association between the Church and Norway and Scandinavia in general.

This continued with the migration to Utah, where the very first pioneer company to reach the Salt Lake Valley on July 24, 1847 included Norwegian convert Ellen Sanders Kimball (born Aagaat Østensdatter Bakke in Telemark). Norwegian migrants were involved in all aspects of settling the Intermountain West, including the dispossession of native lands and direct participants in the Black Hawk War and the Circleville Massacre.

Norwegians settled alongside other Scandinavians and participated in pan-Scandinavian religious and secular institutions. Mormon converts and their children often returned to Norway as missionaries; conversely, the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America established a mission in Utah to reach “apostatized” Norwegians and Lutheran

Norwegians. Norwegians (LDS and non-LDS) in the Intermountain West maintained ties with Norway as well as with other Norwegian Americans, particularly in the Midwest and Pacific Northwest.

Norwegians have contributed to many aspects of life in Utah, including in art (Torleif Knaphus and Dan Weggeland), literature (Nephi Anderson), music (Grant Johannesen), architecture (Ramm Hansen), and education (John A. Widtsoe). After the end of mass migration in the 1920s, Norwegians like Alf Engen and Stein Eriksen popularized skiing in Utah, creating a substantial industry.

As part of the greater 2025 commemoration, Brigham Young University will be hosting a symposium to explore the history, legacy, and future of Norwegian emigration in the Intermountain West and beyond. The symposium will be held in Provo, Utah on the campus of Brigham Young University with excursions to the FamilySearch Library, Church History Library, Temple Square and other sites in Salt Lake City, as well as to Ephraim, Utah. In addition to the excursions and the academic conference elements, the symposium will also include several public-facing events on the last day. See the tentative schedule for more information. In addition to the more conventional academic papers, we invite proposals for poster sessions, book talks, and roundtable discussions.

The focus for this symposium is the Intermountain West as well as continued westward migration and can include topics such as:

Religion, generally / new religious movements / religious minorities and non-conformists

LDS/Mormon experience

Women's experience

Interactions with indigenous populations / settler colonialism

Immigrant experience and mobile identities

Home / reconfigurations of home / returns to the homeland / including missionary work

Norwegians and other Scandinavians (Pan Scandinavian) as well as non-Scandinavian neighbors

Mediatization of immigrant experience (art, literature, journalism, photography, etc.)

Assimilation

Race / whiteness

Norwegian artists, writers, creators, sportsmen etc.

Youth and children's experiences

Identity maintenance (national, regional, Scandinavian, hybrid)

### **Proposal deadline: April 23rd**

More information, including a form to submit proposals, can be found at **[crossings2025.byu.edu](https://crossings2025.byu.edu)**. The organizers can also be reached at **[byucrossings2025@gmail.com](mailto:byucrossings2025@gmail.com)**.

# Tentative Schedule

## **Tuesday, November 18th**

Arrival of participants

Church History Library and FamilySearch

Library events throughout the day (Salt Lake City)

Afternoon shuttle to Provo and hotels

Evening reception, welcome and keynote (BYU campus)

## **Wednesday, November 19th**

Symposium (BYU campus)

## **Thursday, November 20th**

Continuation of symposium

Public square activities

Poster sessions

Book talks

Roundtable discussion / Organized Panels

Family Search activities in HBLL

Food

Excursion to Ephraim, Utah

