

*Glad
Midsommar*

Skandia Nytt

SKANDIA LODGE #247, VASA ORDER OF AMERICA

VOL. 106, No. 6, JUNE 2018

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Beau Stocking

Vice Chairman:

Ernie Mauritson

Past Chairman

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Ernie Mauritson

Kathryn Martin

Birgitta Roodsari

District Deputy:

Peter Lindgren

Vice-Chairman's Message

Again and again I rediscover my love for the Vasa organization and, in particular, my Skandia Lodge. I hope all of you reading this have experienced the same. Let me share my latest rediscoveries with you.

I have been a member of Skandia Lodge for eight years or so now and have held a number of positions. Some required more work than others, but in the end, they were always rewording. After contemplating for years the idea of holding a Lodge Chairman or Vice Chairman position, I recently took on the task of Vice Chairman. Contemplating might not be quite the right word, it was more like avoided. You see, I saw myself as a very busy man with a wife, a daughter, a demanding job....you now.....responsibilities! How could I make room for more in my life without sacrificing in other areas?

So a few weeks ago, I had my first peek inside the life of a Vice Chairman. Our Chairman wasn't able to lead our May meeting for personal reasons, so the responsibility fell upon my shoulders. "Great". I thought. One more thing to fit into my already jammed life. After debating with myself for days on how I could possibly avoid the task, I just became resigned to the fact that I had to do it. I've sat through Lodge meetings every month for years. The Chairman has a procedures notebook with all the steps necessary to conduct the meeting. Our meetings only last an hour. Let's do this!

During our social hour and dinner prior to the meeting, I looked around the room at the 22 or so very familiar faces who were talking, laughing and just generally conversing. Something was different, special about that evening. I thought, "In about 10 minutes, they would all be looking to me to lead their

meeting".

7:59PM! Almost time to for the meeting to start. The Past Chairman handed me a gavel and the procedural notebook. Show time! But it was in that instant, when I was frantically flipping through the pages of the notebook as to where to begin, when I noticed the age of the paper, the old style of typing, the hand written notes around the margins of the pages..... that I was acting out a tradition that had been passed down to me by hundreds, no thousands, of people. I actually got choked up as I reflected on what the Vasa organization has meant to me, the people in the that room and countless others over the years. I was surrounded by kinsfolk for whom I have a genuine affection. Rediscoveries are truly wonderful!

A week or so ago, I attended the 51st Anniversary luncheon for the Desert Viking Lodge. I had never attended one of their gatherings before. Correction, I had never made time before. When I walked into the dining room, the Desert Viking members made me feel right at home. Like family. It was not surprising that I knew a number of the Desert Viking members, but what was a surprise was how many new, wonderful people I met. After all, this was one of the many reasons I joined Vasa in the first place. Å Rediscoveries are heartwarming!

What will be YOUR next Vasa rediscovery? Try something new....something you think you don't have time for...something with new people...just try!

In truth and unity,

Ernie

Teacher of the Year

Long-time educator Marie Ibsen was awarded Teacher of the Year for Alhambra School District, for the 2017-2018 school year.



Marie has been a Kindergarten or Transitional Kindergarten teacher for 34 years – most of them in the same classroom at Park Elementary School, in Alhambra. Additionally, she has taught many years “teaching teachers” in the Education Department at Cal State Los Angeles.

As a recognized leader in Early Childhood Education, Marie has made important contributions to the development of curriculum for young children. “Children need time to play!”, she has emphasized, and has helped write the curriculum used throughout the District, and the State. In

(Continued on page 6)

June

Happenings

Birthdays:

- 1 *Emmaline Mauritsen*
- 2 *Alma Marie Nordquist*
- 19 *Joann Soderblom Perino*
- 30 *James Henderson*

Business Meeting:

(2 nd Thursday)

June 14

7 pm *Dinner*

8 pm *Midsummer Celebration*

Host / Hostess

Demarjian Family

Swedish American Central Association of Southern California

98th Midsummer Festival

Sunday, June 24, 2018

Ages 13 and above - \$5.00 / Children 5 to 12 - \$2.00 includes parking

Park opens at 8:30 a.m.

9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Breakfast

12:00 Noon - Raising the Midsummer Pole, Ring Dancing

2:00 p.m. Stage Program

Dancing to the music of

Väst kustens Spelmanslag

Vasa Park

2854 Triunfo Canyon Road, Agoura Hills

Exit 101 freeway at Kanan Road Turn West (Left)

about 3 miles to Triunfo Canyon Road. Turn Right

Vasa Park on right just pass stables

Change of Address:

Jane Hendricks
Nathaniel Walker

1680 Conestoga Dr.
Apt B
Merced CA 95340

Bob's Page

May 2018

Swedish Emigrants and American Immigrants

Immigration all over the world is a hot topic these days, but that is nothing new. Around 985-1000 AD when neither Sweden nor America were very well defined regions, let alone countries, Viking explorers landed at what is now called L'Anse aux Meadows on the shore of Newfoundland. Local hostility by the indigenous residents and other factors made Greenland a more attractive place to settle, so for the time being the Vikings were just tourists.

When settlers from Europe began to arrive in America, among the early arrivals were Swedes who stayed in the Delaware River Valley from 1638 to 1655. One of their contributions to American culture was the introduction of log cabins.

The explosive emigration from Sweden came in the period 1860 to 1930 when a full fifth or more of Sweden's population left Sweden, most of them settling in the United States. There were many causes; leading were the large farm families with children surviving to adulthood because of better health care, less need for them as farming became more efficient and rural populations moved to the cities, and the availability of free farmland in America and jobs in the rapidly growing American cities.

This story is told in places such as the Swedish Emigrant Institute in Våxjö, Småland, Sweden. Småland had more emigrants than any other Swedish province, and the Våxjö Institute is probably the best place for emigrant research. The Institute is closely associated with Wilhelm Moberg, whose novels told the stories of emigrating Swedes better than any historian. When I visited the Institute in 1995, one room was a replica of Moberg's workroom together with the source materials for his writings. The Institute has extensive archives of church and parish records, passenger lists for transatlantic ships, letters and diaries of emigrants, records of Swedish organizations in America, autobiographies and other related material. There is a staff which assists visitors in genealogical research as well as doing their own research. For immigrant descendants who want to

learn more about their origins, there is an excellent new (2004) book which leads you by the hand through the sources of genealogical and family history information with multiple examples. It is "Your Swedish Roots" by Clemensson and Andersson, published by Ancestry Publishing.

The climate and environment of the Washington coast were attractive to immigrants from coastal Norway and Sweden with skills in fishing, boat building, farming and logging. The descendants of these immigrants have a new voice which opened on May 5 this year in Seattle, Washington. The original organization was called The Nordic Heritage Museum, started in 1980 in an almost century old former school building. Their current descendants poured 48 million dollars into a new 57,000 square foot building filled with some 600 artifacts and 25 interactive video screens. The focus of the new museum is not on immigration but goes through some 12,000 years of Nordic history and mythology to find the Nordic characteristics which contribute to American culture. The main exhibitions were designed by Ralph Appelbaum Associates, the firm involved in the new National Museum of African American History and Culture, the Newseum, and the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC. A schedule and description of events at several collaborating organizations celebrating "Nordic Seattle" during the month of May can be found at www.nordicmuseum.org/nordic-seattle.

In Truth and Unity,

Bob Swanson

Midsummer

Midsommarafton

Solen högt på himlen står
 Vi ner till havs går.
 Strandkornen flyr i vinden
 Jag får en puss på kinden.
 Flickorna binder blommor i krans,
 Vi alla hoppar runt i dans.
 Barnen skrattar och trallar på en sång,
 Denna natt blir nog lång.
 Bordet är dukat och fullt av mat,
 Det enda som fattas är fat.
 Nu vi våra magar mättat,
 Och stämningen har lättat
 Farfar säger, "SKÅL!"
 Och vi alla dricker vår bål!

Midsummer's Eve

High above stands the sun
 And the feast has now begun.
 The children are playing hide and seek
 Mommy gets a kiss on her cheek.
 Flowers in wreath are bound,
 Meanwhile the teenagers dance around.
 The children are humming on a song,
 This night will probably be long.
 The table is set and the food is ready,
 But we've had a snack already.
 Strawberries and ice-cream for dessert,
 I hope I don't spill on my new skirt
 Grandpa says, "CHEERS!"
 And we all drink our beers!

Written by Caroline Lundström and Adna Hajdarevic, NV2

Midsummer Celebration Trivia

1. In 2010, the good people of Alesund, Norway, set a world record for the tallest bonfire at nearly 133 feet. They are still working on the world's largest fire extinguisher.
2. During Pagan times, Scandinavian people celebrated the longest day of the year as an epic supernatural battle between light and dark, heat and cold. After the arrival of Christianity, people put on sweaters.
3. Midsummer was and is considered to be a time of magic. For Scandinavians, anything pertaining to nature is thought to have a very special power. Gathering flowers to weave into wreaths and crowns is a way to harness nature's magic to ensure good health throughout the year.

Lest we forget, the magic of Midsummer also extends to romance. One Swedish verse says, "Midsummer night is not long, but it sets many cradles to rock." For unmarried girls, it's said that if you pick seven (or sometimes nine) types of flowers and place them under your pillow, you're sure to dream of your future husband.

Ladies, we are counting on you. *-)

Submitted by Michael Lent

From Skandia's Cultural Leader

MIDSUMMER!

In mid-June, school is out and nature has burst into life. It seems like the sun never sets. In fact, in the north of Sweden it doesn't, and in the south only for an hour or two. This calls for celebration! Friends and family gather for the most typically Swedish tradition of all: Midsummer. Given Scandinavia's long, dark winters, it's not surprising that the arrival of summer is a big deal throughout the Nordic countries. In Sweden, Midsummer's Eve is one of the most important days of the year, rivaling Christmas with its festive spirit and traditions.

Traditionally, Midsummer was celebrated on June 24, the feast day of St. John the Baptist, but the holiday has its roots in a pre-Christian solstice festival. In 1952 the Swedish Parliament decided that Midsummer should always be celebrated on a weekend. As a result, the observance of Midsummer now varies between June 20 and 26.

The focus of Midsummer celebrations is the maypole (or Midsummer pole) decorated with greenery and flowers. As it turns out, the maypole is a comparatively new part of Swedish Midsummer tradition. It came to Sweden in the late Middle Ages from Germany, where the pole was decorated with leaves and raised on May 1 (hence the name). Since spring comes later to Sweden it was hard to find the greenery to decorate the pole on May 1, so the tradition was moved to Midsummer. Some sources also attribute the perpetuation of the term *majstång*, or maypole, to the archaic Swedish word *maja*, meaning "to decorate with green leaves."

Midsummer was considered to be a time of magic, and anything to do with nature was thought to have a special power. Gathering flowers to weave into wreaths and crowns was a way to harness nature's magic to ensure good health throughout the year. Even though most people these days probably are unaware of the magical origins of the tradition, weaving crowns of flowers is still a major part of any Midsummer observance.

A typical Midsummer menu features different kinds of pickled herring, boiled new potatoes with fresh dill, soured cream and chives. This is often followed by a grilled dish of some kind, such as spare rib or salmon, and for dessert the first strawberries of summer, with cream. The traditional accompaniment is a cold beer and schnapps, preferably spiced. Every time the glasses are refilled, singing breaks out anew.

After dinner, many people still want to go out dancing, just like in the old days. Preferably on an outdoor dance floor beside a lake as the evening mist settles and the sound of the orchestra echoes back from the rocky hills on the opposite shore. On their way home, girls and young women are supposed to pick seven different species of flowers and lay them under their pillows. At night, their future husbands appear to them in a dream, since legend has it that the night before Midsummer's Day is a magical time for love.

Midsummer is an occasion of large gatherings – so come celebrate a "Mini Midsummer" and eat, drink and maybe even dance at our next lodge meeting!

Thank you,

Kathleen

WE LOSE A FRIEND

Eira M. Lindberg joined Skandia Lodge, together with her husband Arnold, on June the 25th, 1953. We know very little about Eira since she and Arnold moved to Florida many years ago.

We do know that she kept in contact with some of the Ladies from the same time and that she for many years made a yearly trip to Sweden. She and Arnold were very social. Arnold, who died many years ago, was a wonderful singer. I (Nel) have some old records with him singing. Ira was born in Sweden on April 17 1924 and died in Florida on January 5, 2017 from cancer.

Thank you to Florence Bergstrom for letting us know.

AND WE GAIN ANOTHER

WELCOME to Michael Lent who joined us on May the 10th, 2018. We hope that Michael will like us as much as we do!! Michael has two daughters and one son and Birgitta is so happy to hopefully get more children to the Lucia! Michael has already sent in a happy note about Midsummer. Thank you, Michael. This is VERY positive!!

Skandia Nytt

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Vasa Order of America
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Teacher of the Year (con't)

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addition to playtime, where young students get their first experiences with sharing and cooperating with others, class time includes both letter and number work, educational games and maintaining a 20 x10 foot Greenhouse outside her classroom.

Marie was an early creator of Reading Buddies, where older students read to younger students, enhancing the love of reading within both groups. She has written many grants, providing her with money to purchase thousands of picture books and pop-up books that are used for this activity.

Marie was born in Oakland, California and raised in El Monte, where she attended Elementary and High School. She received her Bachelors Degree in Geology from San Francisco State, before returning to Southern California and earning her Masters Degree in Education at Cal State Los Angeles.

As Teacher of the Year for Alhambra, she will now be nominated as a candidate for Teacher of the Year for the State of California.

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