

BIRKA BANNER

Bi-Monthly Newsletter, Birka Lodge #732, Vasa Order of America
www.birka732.com

APRIL 2011

Chairman's Message

Greetings to all Birka Members. Spring is finally here and hopefully, everyone has survived this very long and snowy winter. Our January, February and March meetings were well attended and enjoyed by all. I would like to welcome five new members initiated since January. They are: Naomi Gray of So. Hamilton; Kari Ashness of Hampstead, NH; Ann DeLacey of Wakefield; Sharon Mikutel of Dracut; and Sven Hyberts of Tewksbury. I would like to thank the Refreshments Committees for January, February and March for the delicious refreshments we enjoyed.

The **April 29th** meeting will be installation of officers and initiation of Lisa Winsor of Wakefield. The installation ceremonies will be conducted by Grand Lodge Deputy/District Deputy Dawn Briggs and her team from Nordic Lodge in Worcester. There will also be other guests from the District Executive Board. Please plan on attending to support your lodge officers and to welcome guests from the District. We are in need of refreshments following the installation and help to set up the hall. If you did not sign the Refreshment List at the March meeting, please give me a call. Donations of food – sandwiches, sweets, etc. are welcome. My phone number is: 781-933-4949. Thank you. Your help is appreciated. Please come and enjoy Vasa fellowship and refreshments. I encourage anyone who has a costume to wear it or dress appropriately.

The Activities Committee and Convention Committees have been meeting and planning the upcoming lodge events. For the Convention, ad contracts for the program book have been mailed. Thank you to all who helped with the mailing and assembling the packets. There will be extra ad contracts available at the April and May meetings if you know of someone or business that would like to take an ad. The Activities Committee met on April 10th at the home of Gus and Roz Blomgren. Thank you to Gus and Roz. The next Activities Committee meeting will be held on May 15 at 3:00 p.m. Location to be announced. I would also like to thank the hosts of the January, February and March Activities/Convention Committee Meetings: Lois and Ed Johnson, Denise Esperson and Inga-Lill Olsson.

Thank you to Ann-Marie for providing the cultural programs on Skåne, Götland and Easter at the January, February and March meetings.

Annual dues of \$20 for 2011 is due. Please mail your dues to: Financial Secretary, Linda Boylan, 12 Upton Lane, Boxford, MA 01921, payable to: Birka Lodge No. 732.

Reminder: Please consider this your dues notice for 2011.

Dues notice: Effective **January 1, 2012** yearly dues per person will be increased to **\$25**. Due to increases in Grand and District Lodge per capita taxes and increases in Community House rent, a motion was made to increase the yearly dues. The motion will be discussed at the lodge meetings and notices printed in the upcoming newsletters for those unable to attend a meeting.

Reminder: Please notify the Recording Secretary, Mrs. Judy Tanzer, 3 Anthony Road, So. Hamilton, MA 01982, telephone no. 978-468-7407, of any address changes. Thank you.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the **April 29th** meeting and installation of officers. Please mark the date on your calendars! Your presence is requested to give encouragement to your officers and make more secure the future of our Order.

In truth and unity,

Linda Christianson, PDM, Chairman

Happy Birthday!

APRIL

2	Pathrick Olsson	15	Helen Riddle
12	Sheila Sunman	17	Michael Bagnulo
13	Christine Lovgren	28	Helen Pestana
14	Janet Lundstrom	29	Norbert Pestana
15	Carin Liu		

REFRESHMENT COMMITTEES

April 29 Installation of Officers

Everyone's on the Committee this month! Call Linda Christianson, 781-933-4949, to let her know what you are bringing. Come early and help with the set-up of tables, chairs, etc. and also the clean-up.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- April 29 - 7:30 pm Installation of Officers
Dawn Briggs, District Deputy
- May 27 - 7:30 p.m. May Basket Auction

"BANNER" by mail or e-mail?

If you haven't yet, check www.birka732.com and download and print a recent issue of the Banner. A big advantage is that the photos are in color. You can arrange to have each issue sent to your web address instead of regular mail (and, we save the postage!) Our Webmaster, Rich Lilja, is doing a wonderful job of including all the latest news and photos. Thanks, Rich.

Jansson's Frestelse (or Temptation)

- 2 medium onions (chopped or sliced)
- 1 1/2 tbsp. butter
- 6 raw potatoes, peeled and cut in strips
- 18 anchovy fillets (retain brine)
- 1/2 cup cream

Butter baking dish. Saute onions in margarine. Layer potatoes, onions and anchovies, finishing with potatoes. Pour anchovy brine over potatoes. Top with 1/4 c. cream. Bake at 400 F for 30 min. Reduce to 300 F and add rest of cream and bake for another 30 min. Casserole is ready when potatoes are soft.

Thanks to Rut Johnson, longtime Birka member, for her delicious Swedish recipe.

....'round the Lodge....

We were saddened to hear of the passing of longtime member, Vera Bjorkander. Our regards to the family.

We were sorry to hear that Joan Sullivan's husband (not a member) recently passed away.

Ron Holmgren is recuperating at home after a recent hospitalization. Our best wishes Ron.

We raised \$250 for the Red Cross/ Japan Earthquake Relief Fund at our recent Easter Basket Silent Auction. Roz and Gus Blomgren were chairmen, assisted by new member Sven Hyberts as auctioneer and with help from the Blomgren boys.

Birka continues to be a lodge very much interested in travel. Ann-Marie Breuer recently returned from a very interesting trip to Ireland with friends.

The Guidara family, June, Sharon and Daniel thoroughly enjoyed their recent trip to Italy visiting places like Rome, Florence, Venice and Pisa.

DISTRICT LODGE CONVENTION

The 110th Convention of Massachusetts District Lodge No. 2, Vasa Order of America, sponsored by Birka Lodge No. 732 will be held September 16-18th, 2011 at the Peabody Marriott, Centennial Drive, Peabody, MA.

Birka last sponsored the District Convention in 1996. Convention Committee Chairman will be Linda Christianson; Convention Coordinating and Program Book Committee will be Linda Boylan, Judy Tanzer, Denise Esperson and Andrea Swanson; Centerpieces and Favors, Ann-Marie Breuer; Treasurer, Mike Swanson, plus Activities Committee members.

Birka Lodge, founded in 1984, is under the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts District Lodge which in turn is guided and directed by the Grand Lodge of the Vasa Order of America. The Vasa Order of America, with several hundred lodges located throughout the US, Canada and Sweden, is the largest Swedish-American cultural fraternal organization for persons of Scandinavian heritage in the United States.

Birka Lodge currently has 6 members serving as District Lodge Officers: Mike Bagnulo, District Trustee; Linda Christianson, District Membership Chairman; Marilyn Seaburg, District Chaplain; Linda Boylan, District Auditor; Michael Swanson, District Inner Guard; Judy Tanzer, Ass't. District Secretary.

NEW MEMBER



Naomi Nyquist Gray

Naomi grew up on a farm in Cokato, Minnesota, not far from Minneapolis. Cokato was settled mainly by Scandinavians - Swedes, Norwegians and Finns - in the 1800s and 1900s. All four of Naomi's father's grandparents came from the Varmland Province in Sweden.

Naomi has worked in the museum field for many years. Early in her career, she was the Curator of the Phillips House in Salem. Her research area was domestic history and public memory. Currently, she works part-time in the Development Office for Historic New England. She is also busy caring for her children, Ezra (age 6) and Eleanor (age 3), as well as volunteering her time at Christ Church in Hamilton, where her husband, Patrick, is the Priest-in-Charge. Naomi enjoys reading, swing dancing, and (hopefully soon) practicing her violin more.

YOUR FAMILY HISTORY

The late Birka Lodge member, Rogers Finch, was to be an inspiration to all that were interested in tracing their roots. Unfortunately, he passed away in the early stages of writing for the Banner. Luckily, June Guidara, a long time member, has developed a keen interest in tracing her roots and has had very good luck in tracing the lives of her grandparents.

Read the following introductory article written by Rogers on how to get started, then read June's synopsis in tracing her ancestry.

"How do I get started? This is the most frequent question that I hear from people who have become interested in their ancestors and the culture of the

times and places in which they lived. My recommendation is to get a good book on genealogy and set aside time to read it. One of the best is "Shaking Your Family Tree: A Basic Guide to Tracing Your Family's Genealogy" by Ralph J. Crandall. The book (SKU 7046, \$19.95 + shipping) can be ordered from Picton Press by phone 207-598-7766, or on-line at <http://www.pictonpress.com/store/show/1973>. [Note: the complete article can be found on the Birka website]

I have many pleasant memories growing up celebrating Swedish customs with my family. My mother's parents were born in Sweden. We enjoyed Lucia celebrations and said grace before meals in Swedish. Someone asked what our Swedish name was and where our grandparents came from. We did not know where they came from and my grandfather's last name was a short Italian-sounding name.

With the help of the website, *Ancestry.com*, I viewed the US Census records and learned that my grandfather used 2 different years of birth and 2 different first names and was born in Hälsingborg. I obtained a copy of his marriage certificate in New York which displayed his parents names.

In an E-mail issue from *Genline.com*, there was a link to a web site called the Demographical Database for Southern Sweden (Halland, Skåne, Blekinge) <http://www.ddss.nu>

The site suggested entering as little information in the search as possible. First names are preferred as last names were not permanent, and until the early 1900's, wives did not take their husband's last name. I entered the first names of my grandfather, his parents, also a 2 year range of dates and hit Submit. Instantly, I retrieved my grandfather's birth record which was very complete, noting he was his mother's third child, his parents were married and his father was in the military and their ages. Also, his father had the last name of Andersson, followed by the short Italian sounding name that my own grandfather used.

Within an hour, I retrieved the marriage certificates of my great grandparents, my great grandmother's death certificate plus other information.

Ancestry.com is available for free at the Peabody Institute Library in Peabody. Also, they offer a free 14-day membership online. Swedish household records are included.

It is a very wonderful feeling to verify my ancestry. Knowing the resources available lessens the effort.

June Guidara, Birka member

110th CONVENTION

Massachusetts District No.2

Vasa Order of America



September 16 - 18th 2011

Peabody Marriott
Centennial Drive, Peabody

Sponsored by Birka Lodge #732

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Birka Lodge #732
Vasa Order of America

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FIRST CLASS

