

# BIRKA BANNER

Bi-Monthly Newsletter, Birka Lodge #732, Vasa Order of America  
[www.birka732.com](http://www.birka732.com)

**MAY- JUNE 2010**

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## Chairman's Message

Greetings to all! The April 23<sup>rd</sup> Installation of Officers was well attended. The following dignitaries attended: District Master, Larry Stidsen and Grand Lodge Deputy Marian Parco. Thank you to our District Deputy/Jr. PDM Dawn Briggs, who conducted the Installation ceremonies along with her installing team from Nordic Lodge, Leif Kristiansson, PGLD/PDM and Siw Kristiansson, past District Deputy to Birka Lodge. Also attending from the District Lodge were; Marlene Patient, Vice District Master; Michael Bagnulo, District Trustee; Shirley French, PDM/District Cultural Leader; Linda Boylan, District Executive Board Member; Marilyn Seaburg, District Chaplain; Judy Tanzer, Assistant District Secretary; and Michael Swanson, District Inner Guard. Also attending from Nordic Lodge was Ken Briggs, past District Officer.

I would like to thank everyone who helped with the April Installation especially with food donations as well as setting up the hall and our Kitchen coordinators, Andrea Swanson, Judy Tanzer, Linda Boylan, Carol Landoni, Ann-Marie Breuer, Denise Esperson, Eva Ghika, Inga-Lill Olsson and members of the Activities Committee. Delicious refreshments were served and enjoyed by all. We certainly have some great cooks at Birka Lodge! We received rave comments from our guests on the wonderful food table of sandwiches and desserts. Thank you, thank you to all! Also, thank you to Andrea Swanson for preparing the gift baskets given to our guests.

Before the summer break, mark the following upcoming events on your calendars. You don't want to miss out on the fun and excitement!

At the **May 28** Meeting, we will be initiating 6 new members to Birka Lodge and we will also have a brief Memorial Service to remember our departed members who have died this past year. Following the meeting, we will have a May Basket auction. Please bring a decorated basket with a Spring theme- contents can be funny or serious and can be as creative and interesting as you choose. Use your imagination. Our auctioneer will be Ann-Marie Breuer.

The final meeting before the summer break will be **June 25**. There will be a Midsummer theme and cultural program. Cultural Leader, Ann-Marie Breuer will be presenting a program on Midsummer traditions. The traditional Strawberry and Peach Shortcake dessert will be provided by the Refreshment Committee. There will also be a raffle basket by Gus and Roz Blomgren. Please plan on attending.

Eva and Vinnie Ghika have invited Birka members to their Swedish Midsommar Celebration at their home in Hampton, New Hampshire on Saturday, **June 19**. A flyer with additional details and directions will be mailed separately. Mark the date on your calendars.

The last Activities Committee Meeting before the summer break is scheduled for Sunday, **June 13** at 3:00 p.m. at the home of Ann-Marie Breuer. All officers and members are invited to attend.

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

I look forward to seeing many of you at these upcoming meetings in May and June. Come and support your lodge and its officers. The new program booklets for 2010-2011 will be available at the lodge meetings.

As a reminder, please check Birka's website, the web address is found on the front page of the newsletter. The website is maintained by Richard Lilja. Thank you, Richard, for all you do.

Before closing I would like to thank Ann-Marie Breuer and the members of the March Refreshment Committee for the delicious refreshments that we enjoyed following the meeting. Thank you also to Gus and Roz Blomgren for preparing the Raffle basket at the March meeting.

My mother, Linnea, is home with a couple of short visits to the hospital but is recovering and continuing to get stronger. She is very grateful for all the cards she has received from her Birka friends. Thank you to all who have called and sent get well wishes.

In closing, I would like to thank the lodge for re-electing me as your Chairman for the coming year. Thank you to all the past officers and to those who have taken an office for the coming year. Your presence is requested to give encouragement to your officers and make more secure the future of our Order.

Best wishes for a healthy and safe summer. Glad Midsommar! Happy Summer!

In truth and unity,

Linda Christianson, PDM, Chairman

# Happy Birthday!

## MAY

1 William Guidara	22 Linda Reidlinger
13 Richard Lilja	25 Al Reidlinger
17 Linda Christianson	26 Helena Blomqvist

## JUNE

3 Alan Clough	28 Ellen Glover
8 Janet Dawe	30 Linnea Christianson
12 Judy Tanzer	

## JULY

3 Nancy Hayward	14 June Guidara
8 Amy Hawkes	15 Nancy Olsson
10 Paul Bergman	16 Richard Sunman
11 Audrey DiPillo	24 William Ghen
13 Pamela Petronzio	29 Sandra DiPillo

## AUGUST

6 Phyllis Askildsen	17 Gordon Hayward
7 Kirsten Anderson	20 Janet Muller
11 Denise Esperson	24 Lara Collins
11 Diane Grady	26 Milton Leitner
16 Polly Berggren	26 Ambia O. Smith
17 Matilda Halloran	

## REFRESHMENT COMMITTEES

### MAY 28th- "May Basket Auction"

Linda Christianson, Co-Chair  
Mike & Andrea Swanson, Co-Chairs  
Sue & Mike Bagnulo  
Linda Boylan  
Lois & Ed Johnson  
Judy Tanzer

### JUNE 25th - "Midsommar Strawberry Fest"

Karin Caves, Co-Chair  
Matilda Halloran, Co-Chair  
Eva Ghika  
Carol Landoni  
Ann-Marie Breuer

## COMING EVENTS

June 13 - Activities Mtg. - Anne-Marie Breuer  
June 19th - Svensk Midsommar Afton - at the Ghika's  
June 25th - Monthly meeting, 7:30 PM  
August 9 - Vasa Day, SAC Park, Shrewsbury  
Sept. 18-20, 2011 - District #2 Convention

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

District Deputy Dawn Briggs, District Master Larry Stidsen and Grand Lodge Deputy Marion Parco and their team did their usual great job installing our 2010-2011 Lodge Officers on April 23.

Ray Sanford, of Hamilton, a Charter member, died on February 20th after a long illness. He is survived by his wife Nancy.

The Boston-Bermuda Cruise Line, the "Norwegian Spirt" will never be the same again after Birka's June cruise. Those participating will be Mike and Sue Bagnulo, Bob and Carol Landoni, Andrea and Mike Swanson, Inga-Lill Olsson, Ann-Marie Breuer, Janet Mueller and Frank Ryan, Glenn and Grace Boucher. What fun they will have!

Remember how much we all enjoyed our summer boating trips during the last few years? Well, Ann-Marie Breuer is working on it and hopes to have something out of Newburyport in August. Keep tuned.

The 110th Annual Convention of the Vasa Order of America, District Lodge of Mass. No 2 will be held on Sept. 18-20th, 2011.

## SIX NEW MEMBERS

Our congratulations to the following new members who will be initiated at the May meeting:

Ernie and Marilyn Sandburg  
Lori Thoreson  
Richard and Karole Johns  
Ann-Marie Anderson

Photos will be printed in the next issue.

## SVENSK MIDSOMMAR AFTON

Eva and Vinnie Ghika will be hosting their annual Svensk Midsommar Fest on Saturday, June 19th at their home in Hampton, NH. Enjoy a fun day with your Birka friends, lots of wonderful Swedish and American foods, games for the whole family plus dressing the maypole as well as dancing around it. Bring your own chair and something for the common table. Coffee and soda will be provided. There will be a fishing pond with goodies for the children as well as a kiddie pool. A flyer, with full details, will be sent out.



## KARL SEABURG

We are saddened to report that Karl passed away on March 5th at the Peabody Glen Healthcare Center after a short illness.

Karl was born and raised in Malden, MA. He attended Malden schools. His first job was at a gas station, which he started at 15 and worked until he was 18, at which time he joined the G.E. apprentice association program. He graduated while working for G.E. with a bachelors degree from Northeastern University. At that time he was promoted to a Manufacturing Engineer at General Electric. Though he held several jobs during the following forty four years, General Electric was where he stayed until retirement.

During his younger years, Karl was a busy person. In the summer time he camped on weekends with boating, swimming, mountain climbing and enjoying the outdoors. He jogged every day, which eventually took it's toll on his knees. In the wintertime, he skied almost every weekend at Cannon Mountain, Mount Snow and Wildcat Mountain. He also had an affinity for big band music and enjoyed concerts as often as he could go. This lasted throughout his lifetime. He married Marilyn when he was in his thirties, bought a house which he lived in until he died. Marilyn and Karl have a son John, who is a chemist.

When John went off to college in 1986, Karl and Marilyn joined the Birka Lodge and its dance group. Karl thoroughly enjoyed the dance group and the lodge as well. He was a Charter member and treasurer of the lodge, watching the money like it was his own. He loved the Christmas Fair and drove yearly to the Crown Bakery for their famous kaffe

bröd and other baked goods and took care of the Coffee/Dopp table at the Fair.

Karl enjoyed people of all sorts and took them as they were. Consequently, he had a lot of friends to warm his life.

## BJÖRKÖ- VIKING TRADING CTR.

In Lake Mälaren, 18 miles west of Stockholm, Sweden, lies the small island of Björkö. Its size belies its importance in the Viking world of 1,100 years ago. On this island are the ruins of the town of Birka, which together with the towns of Hedeby in Denmark and Kaupang in Norway, was one of the most important trading centers in Scandinavia during the Viking Age.

Founded around AD 790, Birka was part of a royal strategy to control trade in the Baltic through the establishment of trading centers. Traders came to Birka from all over Europe - England, Germany, Greece and the lands of the eastern Baltic - bringing their cloth, silks, glass and weapons to trade for furs, antlers and iron. There is even evidence that Arabs and Orientals came with their goods.

Crafts flourished: woodcarving, leather work and wrought ironwork, among others. As trade grew, so did Birka, expanding along the lakeshore with small wattle-and daub houses and workshops arranged in rows separated from each other by fences.

The permanent population of Birka was never very large, probably no more than 700 to 1,000 at its height. Merchants who came from other lands increased that population temporarily, especially in wintertime when trading was most brisk.

Birka lasted only two centuries. Founded at the end of the eighth century, it was abandoned by the end of the 10th. It wasn't war, plague or natural disaster that was the death, but probably a combination of other circumstances.

Water levels in Lake Mälaren fell, making Birka's harbors less usable - and perhaps most importantly, the town of Sigtuna was founded on the Swedish mainland around AD 970.

What visitors to Birka first notice are the gentle green hills dotting the island, that are actually burial grounds. Both Christian and pagan burials have been found beneath the mounds. Visit the museum near the boat dock and the Viking Age Houses. Birka is on UNESCO's World Heritage List.

# Installation of Birka Lodge Officers - April, 2010



Larry Stidsen, Grand District Deputy, Dawn Briggs, District Master, and Marion Parco, Grand Lodge Deputy.



Siw and Leif Kristianson and Larry Stidsen observe as Dawn Briggs installs Linda Christianson for her 8th term as Chairman of Birka Lodge 732.

## **BIRKA BANNER**

Birka Lodge # 732  
Vasa Order of America

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# FIRST CLASS

