

BIRKA BANNER

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

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2008

Chairman's Message

Greetings to all Birka members. It is that time again when Birka's biggest fund raising event is soon here. The lodge needs the help and support of all members to make this as successful an event as it always has been. If you have not already signed up to help at the fair, the sign up sheet will be available at the November 21st meeting or you can call me. We will also need help setting up and decorating the Community House on Friday evening, November 28th beginning at 5:00 p.m. The tables are always quite busy when the fair first opens and additional help is appreciated. We are also requesting contributions for the **Grabs Table**, a value of between \$2.00-5.00. Items should be new. Please wrap in holiday paper and mark for boy/girl/woman/man. Home baked goods are also requested for the **Bake Table** and should be priced beforehand. **Enclosed with this newsletter is a flyer. Please copy, post and distribute to family, friends, work colleagues, etc.** Many of our lodge members and table chairs have been hard at work for months preparing for the fair. We are in need of a Kitchen/Volunteer Coordinator to work in the Kitchen the day of the fair. Our thanks to Eva Ghika for coordinating and making the sandwiches for many years. Please contact me if you can help. We have imported gift items, linens, jewelry, dala horses, candles and candle holders, etc. from Sweden as well as a variety of imported foods for your Christmas and Holiday table. The Lucia procession will take place at 11:30 a.m. Please mark the date and come and support your lodge. I look forward to seeing many of you there. It would be great if anyone who has a folk costume would wear it the day of the fair!

As a reminder:

Table Chairs and other workers: Please refrain from taking down your displays until after 2:30p.m., when the fair has ended, no matter what degree of traffic we have. It is distracting to last minute shoppers if we are closing down the displays rather than serving our customers. Thank you.

At the September 26th meeting, the Refreshment Committee co-chaired by Pam Petronzio and Audrey DiPillo with their committee, provided some great refreshments. We welcomed new members, Ron and Andrea Holmgren to the lodge. Following the meeting, we had our Harvest Auction with auctioneer, Roz Blomgren conducting the auction. Thank you to all who contributed. The lodge raised \$191 from the auction.

The October 24th Halloween Potluck Supper was also well-attended and everyone enjoyed the delicious casseroles, etc. and desserts brought by the great cooks in the lodge. Thank you to Eva Ghika and her committee for coordinating and setting up the hall. No one went home hungry! Thank you to everyone. Prizes were awarded for interesting and fun costumes worn by our members and children. Thank you to all who brought prizes and also to Bob Landoni, who provided the music. We also welcomed new members Charles and Mary Anne Hawkes and Sonja Pryor to the lodge.

The **November 21st meeting** will be the final meeting for the year and will feature a cultural program by Ann-Marie Breuer. Our theme for the evening is Norrland. Thank you to Andrea and Mike Swanson and their committee for preparing the refreshments for the meeting. Election of officers for the 2009 term will be held. Please contact me if you do not plan on remaining in your current office. Phone number: 781-933-4949. Thank you. The lodge needs your participation.

The first event for 2009 is our annual **Children's Tree Plundering Party which will be held, Sunday, January 4th at 3:00 p.m. at the Community House.** Music, storytelling, dancing around the Christmas tree, gifts, refreshments, and a visit from Tomten are planned. Additional information will be mailed out in early December.

Vice Chairman, Gus Blomgren, was hospitalized recently and is recovering at home. I'm sure that Gus would enjoy receiving a card from Birka members. His address is: 125 Ashland Avenue, Methuen, MA 01844.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the **November 21st meeting** as well as at the **Christmas Fair on Saturday, November 29th.** Your presence is requested to support and encourage your lodge and its officers.

Best wishes for a peaceful and joyful holiday season. God Jul och Gott Nytt Ar!

In truth and unity,

Linda Christianson, PDM, Chairman

Happy Birthday!

NOVEMBER

3	Jean Clough	19	Sonja Pryor
4	Linda Boylan	24	Ron Holmgren
5	Joanne Emerson	25	Jane Atherton
8	Andrea Holmgren	30	Maggie Starrak
16	Karen MacMillan		

DECEMBER

1	Bob Landoni	10	Richard Johnson
3	Warren Johnson	11	Alison L- Wickey
3	Marilyn Seaburg	16	Gunnar Berggren
3	Carl Wickstrom	17	Cynthia Olsen
5	Gus Blomgren	19	Andrea Swanson
9	Sharon Guidara	22	Warren Riddle
9	Mary Ann Hawkes		

REFRESHMENT COMMITTEE

November 21 - Norrland Theme Glogg & Pepparkakor

Andrea & Mike Swanson, Chairmen
Judy Tanzer
Karin Caves
June & Sharon Guidara
Nancy & Gordon Hayward
Ron & Ellen Sandberg

Schedule of Upcoming Events

Nov. 21 - 7:30 pm. - Meeting - Norrland Theme
Nov. 29 - Jul Fair, 9:00 - 2:30, **Community House,**
Hamilton
Jan. 4 - 3:00 pm - Children's Tree Plundering Party,
Community House
May 2, 09 - Birka Lodge 25th Anniversary
Celebration

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please contact Judy Tanzer, Corresponding Secretary,
3 Anthony Rd., Hamilton, MA 01982 if you have a
change of address or call her at 978-468-7407.

PERSONALS

Leonard W. Franson passed away at the Masconomet
Health Care Center in Topsfield on Sept.17th. He
was 89.

Vice Chairman Gus Blomgren is recuperating nicely
at home after a recent hospitalization. We all wish
him a speedy recovery. See you soon, Gus.

Miriam Lane is now living at the Denmar Rehab.
Center on South St. in Rockport. Send her a card, she
would love to hear from you.

WEB NEWS

Be sure to visit Rich Lilja's newest additions to
Birka's web site, www.geocities.com/Birka732.
Under "Favorite Links" we can easily access the
websites of most of the other Scandinavian lodges and
organizations. Under "Sweden News" we can now
link directly to the very prestigious website of Radio
Sweden and download up-to-the minute Swedish and
world news. And under "Recipe Favorites" he is
seeking your contributions.
Rich will be set up at a table at the Jul Fair for your
inspection. Thanks Rich!

JUL FAIR UPDATE - NOV. 29th

Everyone loved having the Jul Fair at the Community
House in Hamilton last year - and guess what -
that's where the 2008 Fair will be held. We hope to
get in many more tables to enable a lot more seating to
watch the Lucia procession.
Because the Nordic Fair at the Topsfield Fairgrounds
will not be held this year, we will be offering much
more in the line of Norwegian foods, decorations,
etc. Be sure not to miss it.

IS THIS SWEDEN?

Up until 2004, Hotel Alvkarlen had an existence as a
road pub of bad repute on the south bank of Dalalven
(river) between Uppsala and Gävle where the new
freeway starts. Now a China in miniature is being
built there with two restaurants, a hotel with banquet
room, conference rooms and luxurious suites in Chinese
style, a museum and a Shaolin temple housing a Kung
Fu school; and the Preem gas station which will have
a new Chinese design. The budget for this is about
SEK 300 million. The owner is from Zhuji, outside
Shanghai. He has become a billionaire by selling
anti-mosquito preparations. It was his Swedish
partner who founded the establishment. To start
with, the intention was to own and manage it but after
consulting a Feng Shui master, they understood that
Alvkarleby was a place of special energies. The
construction has been ongoing for three years with a
Chinese construction chief, Chinese workers and
Chinese building materials.

Source: Scandinavica.com

NEW MEMBERS



RON AND ANDREA HOLMGREN

Ron and Andrea have lived in Boxford for 34 years. They have 3 daughters, 2 grandchildren and 2 cats! They are both retired teachers. They enjoy working in the yard (Andrea in her vegetable garden and Ron with landscaping), and are busy with family and town activities. Both of their fathers were 100% Swedish (Akerblom and Holmgren). They are looking forward to being part of Birka Lodge.



SONJA DAHLGREN PRYOR

is a first generation American. Both her parents and older sister came to America in 1928. Most of her relatives still reside in Sweden. She retired from the Hamilton-Wenham School district where she was Director of Music for 27 years. Currently, Sonja is conductor of Chorus North Shore, the Festival Orchestra and Honors Youth Orchestra.



CHARLES AND MARY ANNE HAWKES

Charles' maternal grandparents came to America in 1888 and settled in Lynn where they raised a family of 5 children. Charles remembers many Swedish holidays with his grandparents. He retired from the shipyard in Maine where he worked many years in Naval Architecture. Mary Anne's lack of Swedish roots is more than made up by her great interest in the traditions, culture and history of Sweden. They have lived in Hamilton for over 45 years, where she taught for many years in the school system. Charles' interests now are gardening, sports and weather.

JULBOCK, the JUL GOAT

Before Christianity arrived in Scandinavia, the ancient Scandinavians used to celebrate the winter solstice around the same time that we celebrate Christmas today. For the ancient Scandinavians, the beginning of the end of winter was a very important reason for celebration. One of those traditional celebrations was the Yule Goat. The Jul Goat was a person disguised as a goat who went from house to house entertaining families with songs and dances, and receiving drink and food in return. In Norse mythology, the good-natured god Thor traveled around in a chariot that was drawn by two magical goats. It is believed that the ancient tradition of the Yule Goat represented the magical goats who came with Thor as he visited homes bringing happiness and protection. During the 19th century the tradition of the Yule Goat started to be displaced by our modern Santa Claus. In Scandinavia the goat disguise was substituted by the jolly man in red, yet the Yule Goat was never forgotten. The most famous of the goats is the world-famous Gavlebocken, a giant straw goat which is built annually in the town of Gavle. In 1993 the Gavlebocken got into the Guinness Book of Records as the tallest straw goat ever built

Source: *Scandinavica.com*

SWEDISH JUL FAIR 2008

Saturday, November 29, 2008

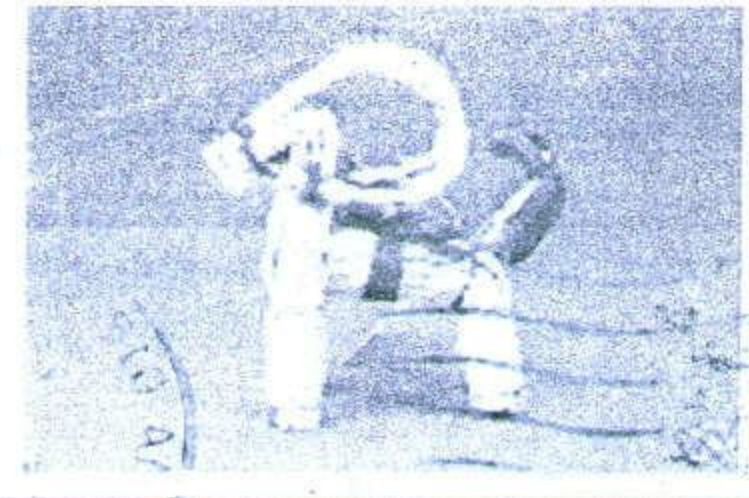
9:00 AM to 2:30 PM

Hamilton-Wenham Community House

Bay Rd. - Rte. 1A

Hamilton, Massachusetts

See Flyer inside for details



BIRKA BANNER

Birka Lodge #732
Vasa Order of America

Lois Johnson, Editor
51 Pickman Rd.
Beverly, MA 01915



FIRST CLASS

Richard Lilja
34 Burroughs St
Danvers, MA 01923

