

BIRKA BANNER

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

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2009

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 20th meeting or you can call me. We will also need help setting up and decorating the Community House on Friday evening, November 27th 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. We are in need of gifts for boy/woman/man and please mark each package. 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 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 25th meeting, the Refreshment Committee chaired by Pam Petronzio, provided delicious refreshments. Following the meeting, we had a wonderful presentation on the *Viking Longboat* by Birka member Amy Hawkes. Thank you, Amy.

The October 23rd 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 Janet Muller 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. During the meeting, I presented Birka member, Abigail Butt with her Grand Lodge Scholarship Certificate. Congratulations, Abigail! The lodge also voted to host the September 2011 District Convention. The last time Birka hosted a District Convention was in 1996. More details to follow. We also draped the charter in memory of Birka member, Phyllis Askildsen. Long may her memory live among us. Thank you to Gus and Roz Blomgren for providing the raffles at our last two meetings.

The **November 20th meeting** will be the final meeting for the year and will feature a cultural program of Christmas crafts provided by Ann-Marie Breuer. Thank you to Andrea and Mike Swanson and their committee, who will be providing the refreshments for the meeting. Nomination and election of officers for the 2010 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 **Lucia Rehearsal** will be held on **Sunday, November 22nd** from 4:00-6:00 p.m. at the Community House. Please note the time change. New children are welcome. Please contact me if you are interested.

The first event for 2010 is our annual **Children's Tree Plundering Party which will be held on Sunday, January 10th 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 in early December.

My mother, Linnea, was hospitalized recently and is now recovering at home after a short stay at Aberjona Rehab in Winchester. She tripped on a scatter rug. Throw away those scatter rugs! Thank you to all who have called and sent get well cards. She has really appreciated your kindness and prayers. Hopefully, you'll see her soon.

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 |
| 4 Ann Taylor | 19 Andrea Swanson |
| 5 Gus Blomgren | |
| 9 Sharon Guidara | |
| 9 Mary Anne Hawkes | |

REFRESHMENT COMMITTEE

November 20 - Glogg & Pepparkaka

Andrea & Mike Swanson, Chairmen
Judy Tanzer
Karin Caves
June & Sharon Guidara
Sheila & Richard Sunman
Ann Taylor

Schedule of Upcoming Events

- Nov. 20 - 7:30 pm. - Meeting - Cultural Program
- Nov. 28 9:00 - 2:30, Jul Fair Community House,
Hamilton
- Jan. 10 - 3:00 pm - Children's Tree Plundering Party,
Community House
- Jan. 22 - 7:30 pm - Meeting - Spitsbergen

"BANNER" - by mail or e-mail? How shall we send your Banner?

Within the next few months we will be sending the "Banner" by e-mail to those that wish. If you are interested in having your copy sent by e-mail please let your Editor know.

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

DUES ARE DUE!

Each member who prepays their 2010 dues before December 21st will have their name go into a drawing for an additional year of membership - Free. Checks to Linda Boylan, 12 Upton Lane, Boxford, MA 01921.

Sara Ghika will be playing in the Junior Flute Choir on Sunday, December 8th at the Ipswich Arts Center in Ipswich.

We were sorry to hear that Linnea Christianson was recently hospitalized after tripping on a scatter rug in her home. She is doing well and would love to hear from you.

We are especially proud of Abigail St Hillaire Butt for being the recipient of the Gladys & Russell Birtwistle award of the Grand Lodge Scholarship Fund. Abigail will be attending Suffolk University.

Thommy Ilmrud, formerly a member of Birka Lodge, was re-instated as a Birka Lodge member in September. He is now living in Ocala, FL. Hope you visit us when you're in the area.

We are looking for someone who can play the keyboard and would like to join with Bob Landoni and play at our meetings. Call Ann-Marie Breuer at 978-468-0108.

SWEDISH CRIME NOVELS

Swedish crime authors are becoming notable in the US. It is said that in the Swedish crime novels, "one gets to know the characters' domestic lives and concerns as background to the plots. Henning Mankell, creator of the detective Kurt Wallander, gives explicit descriptions of various areas in Sweden. Swedish crime writer, Karen Alvtegan, has been nominated for the prestigious Edgar Allan Poe Award for her novel, "Missing." Henning Mankell, is likely the most well known author, with several of his books available in the US. These books can be found at Barnes & Noble and other local bookstores

For further information concerning Swedish Crime Novels, contact Marilyn Seaburg.

VIKING LORE



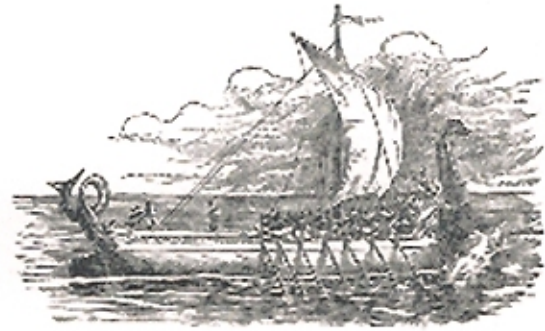
MIKE SWANSON AND AMY HAWKES

At the conclusion of the business meeting, the Lodge members heard a comprehensive and extremely interesting presentation on the Viking Longship from guest speaker Amy Hawkes. Amy, who is an expert in Medieval history, chose as the title of her presentation, The Viking Longship: the Essence of the Viking Age.

After providing each lodge member with a full color handout to assist in understanding some of the more esoteric details of Viking ship building, Amy first outlined the extent of Viking influence in Europe and America from the eighth through the eleventh centuries. This influence manifested itself either as settlements, or as areas subject to frequent Viking raids. Viking settlements encompassed all but the most northern portions of Scandinavia, the British Isles, Iceland, Greenland, L'Anse aux Meadows in North America, Normandy, southern Italy, Sicily and portions of Russia all the way to the Black Sea. Areas subject to Viking raids, but with little or no settlement included portions of coastal France, the Iberian peninsula, and coastal areas in the Mediterranean Sea, the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea.

All of this settlement was made possible as a consequence of the craftsmanship and navigational skill of the Vikings. The brilliant design of the Viking Longships, which were lightweight, extremely flexible and seaworthy, made it possible for the Viking raiders and traders to navigate not only deep ocean water, but also shallow rivers as well. In fact, a typical Viking Longship has a very shallow draft of approximately three feet, six inches. The light weight also allowed the crew to portage around obstacles in rivers, such as waterfalls or severe rapids,

to allow further penetration into areas into which they desired to travel.



The navigational skills of the Vikings is legendary. One can only imagine leaving Scandinavia or the British Isles on a voyage to Greenland, having only Iceland as a guide point along the way. To further illustrate the difficulties encountered in such journeys, one needs to be reminded that the Vikings made these voyages without any navigational aids of any kind, and there was no shelter on these open-deck vessels.

Amy's presentation was fascinating, and certainly gave all who heard it an appreciation of the skill and courage of our Viking ancestors. Thank you Amy and Mike who displayed his hand-made Viking Longship. What talent Mike has.

109TH CONVENTION

The Vasa Order of America, District Lodge Massachusetts No 2, held its 109th convention September 18, 19 and 20th at the Courtyard by Marriott in Fitchburg. The first formal session began with the presentation of the flags of the US, Sweden, Canada, Denmark, Norway, Iceland, Finland and the flags of the Vasa Order of America and the Commonwealth of MA during which the national anthem of each nation was sung.

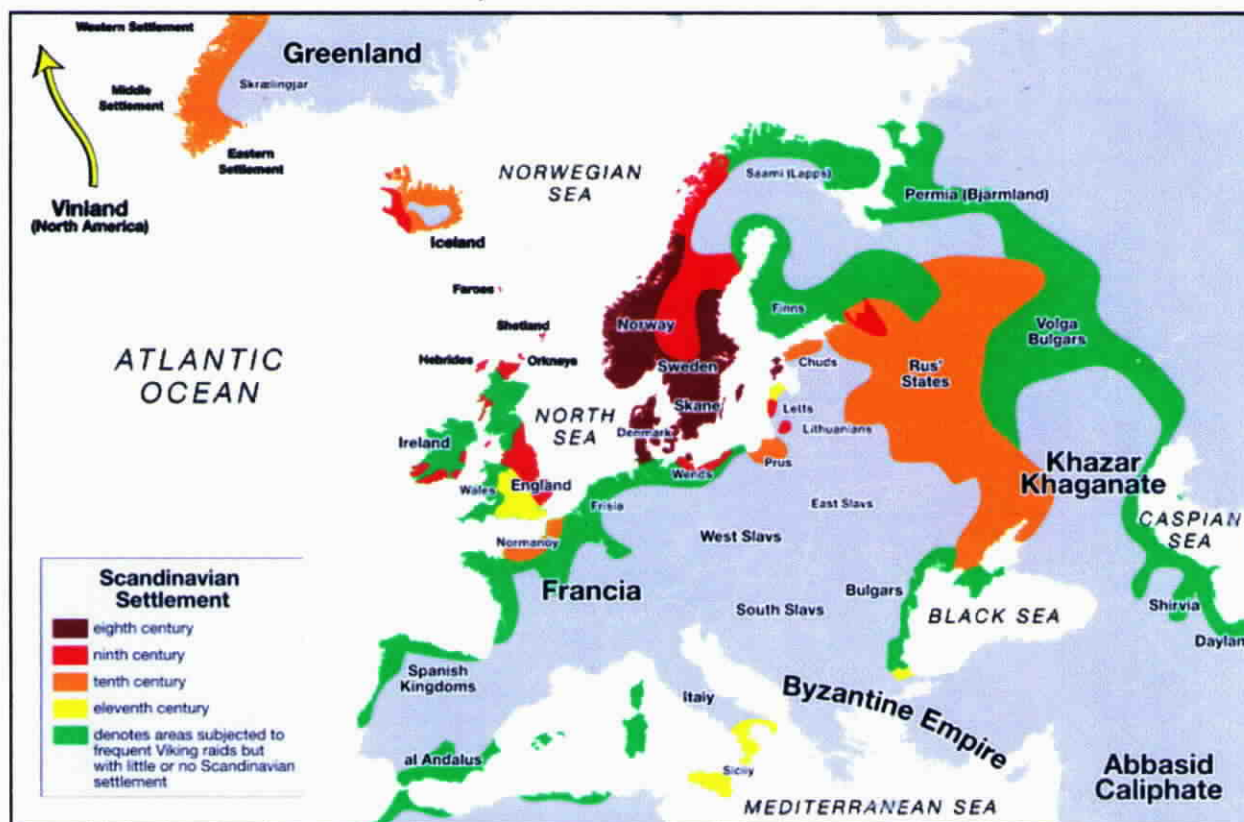
The following Birka Lodge #702 members were installed as officers:

Karl Seaburg - District Outer Guard
Michael Swanson - District Inner Guard
Linda Boylan - District Executive Board
Michael Bagnulo - Spiran #98 Deputy
Linda Christianson - Nordic # 611 Deputy
Judith Tanzer - Assistant District Secretary
Linda Christianson - District Membership Chairman
Michael Bagnulo - District Trustee

The meeting was then formally closed after a message from District Chaplain, Marilyn Seaburg.

Respectfully submitted, Convention Delegates,
Michael Swanson, Richard Lilja, Susan Bagnulo.

The Viking Longship: the Essence of the Viking Age



Two maps showing the extent of Viking travel and settlement during the "Viking Age," 800-1100 AD

Fig 1: A Viking "shipyard"



Fig 2: Normans building ships as depicted in the Bayeux Tapestry

Fig 4: First stage in the construction of a Viking ship; the keel is laid down and the fore- and after-stems are secured to it. The ship is now ready to receive the first strakes.

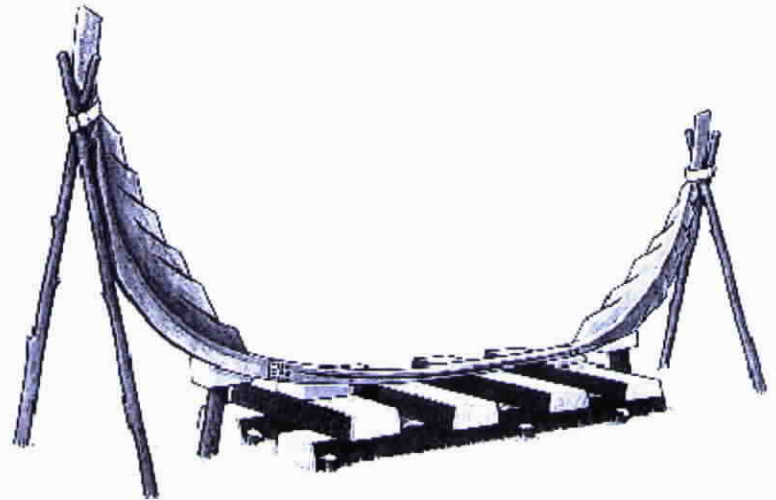


Fig 3: Planks cut radially from a single log with an axe

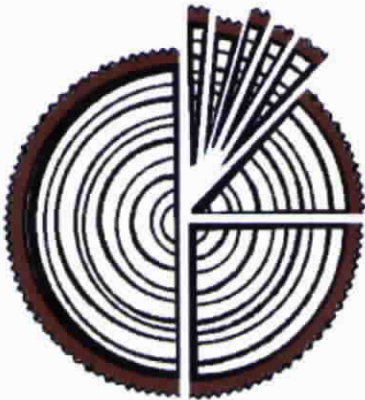


Fig 5: The "clinker" method of ship construction

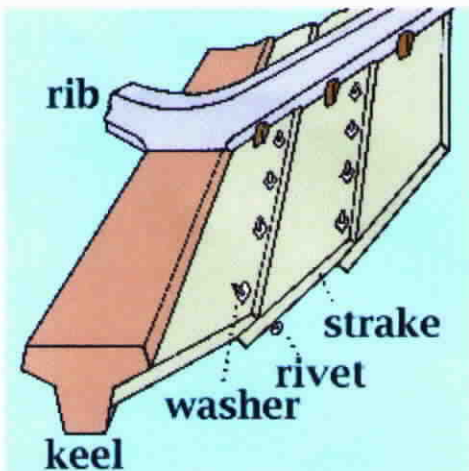


Fig 6: Cross-section of the Oseberg Ship

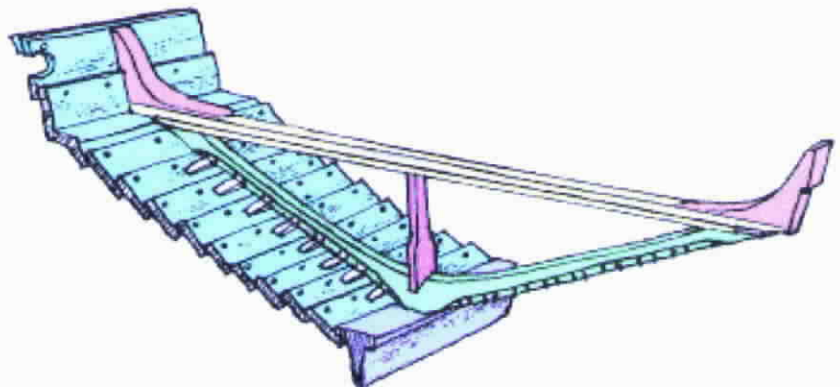
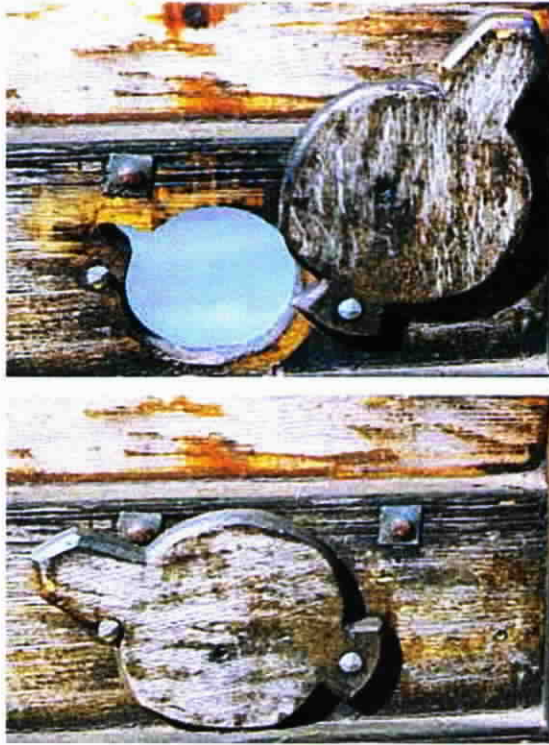


Fig. 7

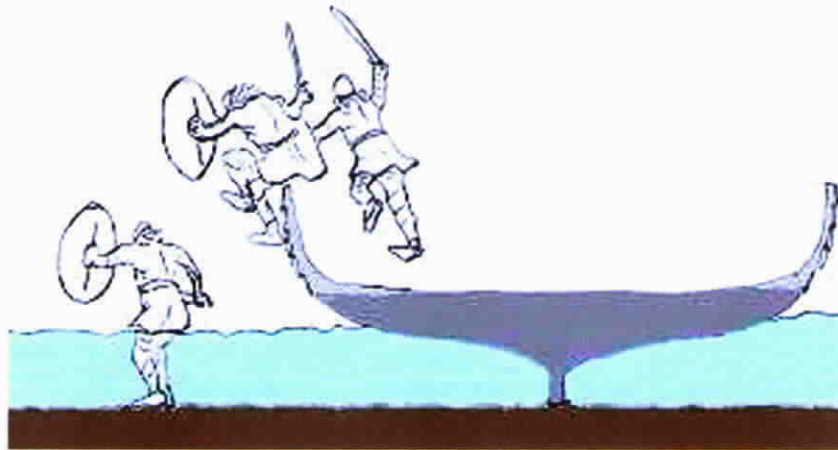


Oarport with "cover" open.

Also note the notch cut in the oarport to accommodate the entire width of the oar blade.

Oarport with "cover" closed.

Fig. 8



Vikings disembarking from a beached longship.

Fig. 9



Vikings hauling their ship overland, from a 16th-century woodcut.

Fig 10: Viking coin and brooch



Fig 11: Picture stones from Scandinavia depicting Viking longships.

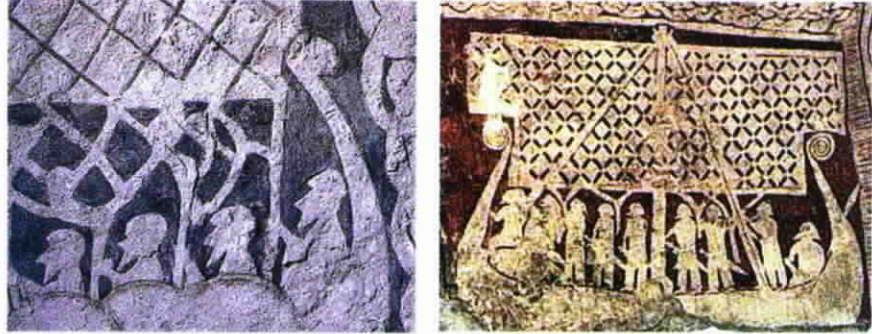


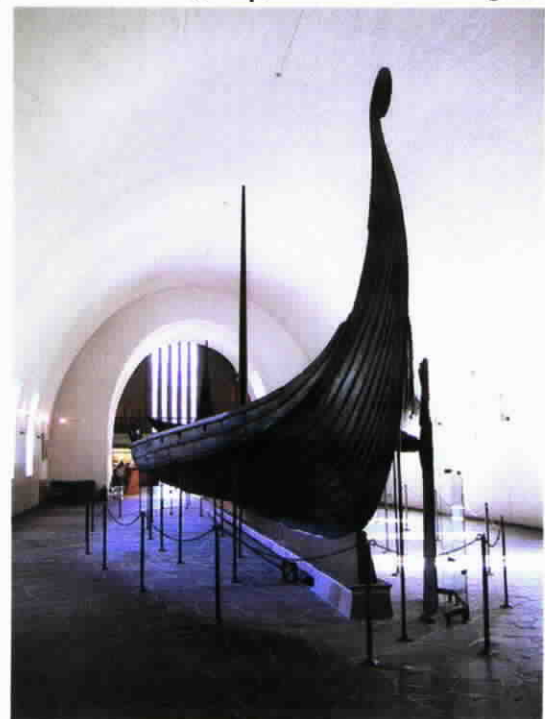
Fig 12: Stone ship burial in Sweden: "Ales Steinar"



Fig 13: Stone ship burial in Sweden: "Anund's Barrow"



Fig 14: The Oseberg Ship, a burial for a Viking woman.





**Come to the January 22nd
meeting..**

See Ed and Lois Johnson's video
aboard a Norwegian icebreaker off
the coast of Spitsbergen, and step
out onto an ice floe, 600 miles from
the North Pole, for a champagne
toast under the bright *Midnight Sun* !

BIRKA BANNER

Birka Lodge # 732
Vasa Order of America

Lois Johnson, Editor
51 Pickman Rd.
Beverly, MA

GLAD JUL

Our annual Jul Fair will again be held at the Community House in Hamilton on Saturday, November 28th from 9:00 to 2:30. Everyone seems to love the wonderful, cozy atmosphere and, of course all the beautiful Scandinavian decorations, foods, etc.

We will have imported gift items, linens, jewelry, dala horses, candles, and candleholders etc, from Sweden, as well as a variety of imported foods for your Christmas and Holiday tables.

Andrea Swanson will be replacing Eva Ghika as head of kitchen refreshments. We'll still continue to have the delicious egg, sill and cucumber sandwiches. Yum. Please call Andrea at 978-948-2106 if you can help.

Our Lucia presentation will take place at 11:30 a.m. with Anna Onufry of Boxford as Lucia. Anna has been a member of the Lucia pageant since 2000.

FIRST CLASS



SWEDISH YULE FAIR

(Traditional Jul Marknad)

Saturday, November 28, 2009

9:00 am-2:30 pm

Hamilton/Wenham Community House

(Bay Road-Route 1-A)

FREE ADMISSION





Lucia(Bride of Light) 11:45 am

Scandinavian & American HOLIDAY MUSIC (all day)

LUNCH AT NOON: Assorted , Open-Face Sandwiches

Coffee & Coffee Bread, Glögg & Pepparkakor (all day)

Home Baked Goodies & Imported Foods

Gifts, Handcrafts, Imported Linens, Ornaments, Jewelry

Cards, Wrapping Paper, Candles, Candle Holders & Rings

Dala Horses, Straw Goats, Jul Tomtes(gnomes)etc.

VÄLKOMMEN!

BIRKA LODGE NO.732 OF HAMILTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Vasa Order of America

Non-Profit Fraternal Benefit Association

