



Birka732.com

Birka Banner

Birka Lodge 732, Vasa Order of America

January/February, 2015

Chairperson's Message

Greetings and Happy New Year 2014 to all Birka Members! I hope you had an enjoyable Christmas holiday and a memorable New Year celebration with family and friends. Now that the holidays are over, it is time to begin our lodge activities for 2014.

Our first lodge meeting will be **Friday, January 23rd at 7:30 p.m.** A cultural program will be presented by Cultural Leader, Ann-Marie Breuer. Please plan on attending. The few remaining items from our Deli Table and Crown Bakery Table will be available for purchase. The annual report to the District Lodge will also be presented. The Refreshments Committee for the evening is chaired by Judy Tanzer.

Our **February 27th meeting** will feature a cultural program about Copenhagen, Denmark, presented by Ann-Marie. The Refreshment Committee for the evening will be chaired by Linda Boylan. Please come to enjoy Vasa fellowship.

At the **November 21st** meeting, Nomination and Election of Officers was held. A motion was made to accept the slate of officers presented. All nominated officers agreed and the nominations were closed. I would like to thank the officers for being willing to serve in your current office and support the lodge. We also initiated, Claire Glover, daughter of Ellen Greenberg, of Andover into the lodge. Welcome, Claire!

Our **Christmas Fair on November 29th** was a great success! My thanks and appreciation is extended to all who helped out both on Saturday and on Friday night during set up. These events cannot happen without the **help** and **cooperation** of everyone. The Christmas Fair is our largest fund raising event of the year, and I'm so very grateful to all of you for being part of the success of this event. Many, many thanks to all. This event is a service to our community and to the many non-Scandinavians who look forward to the fair every year. Our Treasurer, Mike Swanson, will have a more detailed report at the January meeting.

The Lucia procession again this year was wonderful with a great group of children. The children did a superb job and looked adorable as they sang and processed to the stage. Our Lucia was Libby Collins, daughter of Birka Member, Lara Collins. Her brother JP also participated as a star boy. Thank you to our soloist, Pamela Morris, to our pianist, Helen Greene of Ipswich, and to Anders Carlsson of Natick, who sang a solo. Thank you, too, to musicians, Bob Landoni, Mark French, Dan Murphy and Warren Johnson for providing festive holiday music during the fair.

On Sunday afternoon, **January 11th** our annual **Tree Plundering Party** was held. Thank you to everyone who brought food, children and themselves! It was a great time and the children and adults enjoyed the festivities. A wonderful group of 45 attended including 14 children. Thank you to Sue Bagnulo, Judy Tanzer, Carol Landoni, Mike and Andrea Swanson, Gus, Roz, Eric and Greg Blomgren, Linda Boylan, Sharon Guidara and other helpers. A special thanks goes to Ann-Marie Breuer for teaching the game dances and reading wonderful stories to the children; to Mike Bagnulo, our Tomten; to Bob Landoni, our musician, and to Gus and Roz for the karamella.

Sadly, long time local accordionist, Nils Lundin of Norwell, passed away the end of January after a brief illness.

Please note: The next Activities Committee meeting will be on **Sunday, February 8 at 2:30 p.m.** at the home of **Marlys Mahajan, 26 Appaloosa Lane, Hamilton.** The **Auditors** will also be meeting **at the same time** with the Treasurer and Financial Secretary to audit the financial books of the lodge. The activities for the spring will be planned. Please contact me if you plan on attending.

Annual dues of \$25 for 2015 is now due. Please mail your dues to: Financial Secretary, Linda Boylan, 12 Upton Lane, Boxford, MA 01921. They should be made payable to: Birka Lodge No. 732. **Please consider this your dues notice for 2015. Dues are due in January.** It would be great if all dues were paid by April, 2015.

Before closing I would like to thank the members of the November Refreshment Committee, chaired by Andrea and Mike Swanson, for the delicious refreshments that we all enjoyed that evening.

I look forward to seeing you at the **January 23rd and February 27th** meetings. Please mark the dates on your new 2015 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

Hearty Birka Birthday Wishes

to these members . . .

. . . in January

5 Melissa Starrak 18 Greg Blomgren
10 Abigail Butt 22 Gerard Tobiason
14 Janet Bloom 25 Ann-Marie Breuer
18 Eric Blomgren

. . . in February

11 Inga-Lill Olsson 15 Eva Ghika
12 Elizabeth Sandberg 15 Marlys Mahajan

REFRESHMENT COMMITTEES

January 23

Judy Tanzer, chair
Gus Blomgren
Denise Esperson,
Mary Anne Hawkes
Michael, Andrea Swanson
Pamela Petronzio

February 27

Linda Boylan, chair
Ann DeLacey
Audrey DiPillo
Milton Leitmer
Marlys Mahajan
Marilyn Seaburg

Wrong way on the freeway

So Ole got a car phone and on his way home on the freeway, he calls up Lena and he says, "Oh, Lena, I'm calling you from the freeway on my new car phone."
And Lena says, "Be careful because on the radio they say that some nut is driving the wrong way on the freeway."

And Ole says, "One nut ---- heck, there are hundreds of them!"



. . . 'round the Lodge

- A Big Birka welcome to Claire Glover of Andover! We hope you enjoy many good times with us at our meeting and activities.
 - Our second annual Cookie Bake was a great success. It was held on **Sunday, January 5**. The bakers, Linda Boylan, Judy Tanzer, Helen Riddler with daughter Pam and granddaughter, and Richard Lilja, baked 17 dozen cookies, all of which quickly sold out at the fair. They baked Linzor tarts, spritz, and jam cookies, holiday favorites of many Scandinavians.
 - **Sick Benefit Fund** If you have been a Vasa member for five years or more and have paid your dues, you are entitled to receive assistance with medical expenses from the Grand Lodge. Each member is entitled to receive up to \$3,000. If you would like an application, please contact Recording Secretary, Judy Tanzer.
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Calendar Summary

January

23 First meeting of the New Year,
At 7:30 p.m.

February

9 Activities Committee meeting, 2:30
p.m. at Marlys Mahajan's home
27 February meeting, All about
Copenhagen Denmark, 7:30 p.m.

Tree Plundering Ends Birka Lodge's Holiday Season

The Lodge closed out its holiday season with its traditional Tree Plundering party. It was a great success! The children enjoyed hearing stories of Scandinavia told by Ann-Marie Breuer, visiting with our own Tomtem, Mike Bagnulo, and learning tradition Scandinavian dances to tunes played by Bob Landoni. These activities and the un-trimming of the Christmas tree were the highlights of the afternoon.



Photos courtesy of Mike and Andrea Swanson (2014)

Please check Birka's website for more photos and view older copies of the Birka Banner. It is great to see all the photos and newsletters in full color!. Its address is www.birka732.com and is maintained by Richard Lilja, our Web Master.

The Plundering Of The Swedish Christmas Tree

'Julgransplundering' is a Swedish tradition of coming together to 'throw out' all the Christmas decorations. Twenty days after Christmas, typically held on the 13th of January, traditionally this also entails dancing around the tree, and games for the children.



Jul Marknad Fun for All

Visitors continue to be delighted at the Lodge's annual Christmas Fair by the Saint Lucia procession, the Swedish baked goods, like limpa and braided coffee cakes, and the Swedish imports, like Dala horses, calendars, and linens. Members worked diligently to insure that everyone was well fed with sandwiches, homemade lingonberry ice cream and cookies, and glogg.

The fair offers something for everyone. The children love the books and the karamella. Hostesses find beautiful imported linens and Christmas decorations. Families find calendars, tree ornaments, and everyone's favorite treat, Damsuga, for their holiday celebrations. For everyone, there is a chance to stop and enjoy the morning with a cup of coffee and some good food. All of this is thanks to the organizational skills and generous gifts of time that members contribute. Thanks to all of you!

Here are some pictures from our Jul-Fair



Here are some pictures from the *'Julgransplundering'*



- Please notify Recording Secretary, Judy Tanzer, 3 Anthony Road, Hamilton, MA 01982, of any address changes. We appreciate your help in keeping the membership rolls up to date. Her phone number is (978) 468-7407.



Movies

A Norwegian and a Swede were at the movie theatre, and the Norwegian bet that the hero would die during the movie. The Swede didn't believe him, and they ended up betting 100 Kroner on it. When the movie was over and the hero was dead, the Swede began to give the money to the Norwegian, but the Norwegian interrupted him "I already saw the movie, so I knew he was going to die. Keep the money." The Swede replied, "oh, I also saw the movie before, but I didn't think he would be tricked twice."

Did you hear?

About the Swedish Doctor who told his patient: "It's very important that you take this medicine exactly 30 minutes before you feel the pain."

About the Swede who was reading the phonebook, "Svenson... Svenson.. Svenson.. It's incredible how many phones that guy has."

Did you ever hear about the Swede who brought his binoculars to a funeral where they were going to bury a distant relative of his...

Did you ever hear about the Swede who was asked if he had lived in Stockholm all his life.
..."Not yet," he answered.

Did you ever hear about the Swede who went ice-fishing...
...and returned home with 10lbs of ice?

Did you hear about the Swede who was asked how often he had sex with his wife?
- "Almost every day..... almost Monday, almost Tuesday, almost Wednesday..."



About us

Birka Lodge #732 was founded in 1984, and currently has approximately 120 members, the majority of our members are from Boston's North Shore area, New Hampshire, and Maine. Members are of Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, and Finnish ancestry.

Our meetings are held the fourth Friday of each month (except July, August, and December) at the Hamilton -Wenham Community House, Route 1A, Hamilton, MA at 7:30pm.

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The Birka Banner is a bi-monthly newsletter, published by Birka Lodge 732, Vasa Order of America, and on the web at www.birka732.com

Lodge Chairperson: Linda Christianson
Editor: Marlys Mahajan
Web Master: Richard Lilja