

NORDIC-AMERICAN PSALMODIKONFORBUNDET

“A Society dedicated to the education and preservation of the Psalmodikon and Sifferskrift Music”

FALL 2009

Volume 12, Issue 3

NOTES FROM MUSIC-ON-A-STRING *By Beatrice Hole*

Greetings from the editor –

*This has been a busy Summer and it will not be long before the Holidays are here! In fact, the song I have chosen for this Newsletter is a Christmas song. “All Hail to Thee O Blessed Morn”. (**Var Helsad Sjöna Morgon Stund**). The Sifferskrift version is written as it appeared in Pastor Dillner’s hymnal published in 1846. This song brings back memories for me of several years ago. I was invited to participate in a Julotta service on a cold Christmas morning in a little Swedish church. The Pastor requested a version different than what was written in the hymnal. I remember him singing the melody, over the phone, so that I would play it correctly. I learned later that it was Dillner’s version that he wanted me to play.*

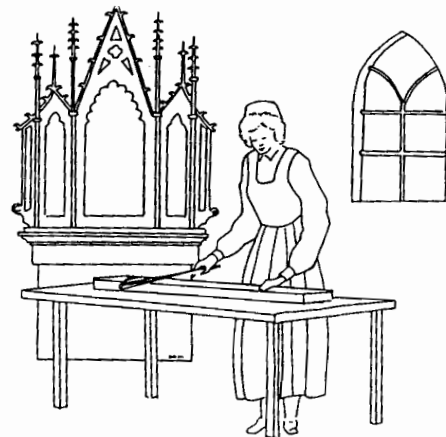
The Annual Meeting was great and so was the weather! I’ve also enjoyed getting together monthly, in small groups, to play our psalmodikons in my home!

We are still getting many invitations to play at various functions. At times this grueling schedule is almost too much for me but it is so rewarding, at the end of a performance, to see the whole audience come forward to see the psalmodikons and ask questions. So many folks do not remember this part of their heritage and are so thankful to have learned the history.

In August the Nordiska Psalmodikonförbundet held their annual meeting in Skålleruds gård Dalsland. Several of their members expressed an interest to come to USA, for a combined annual meeting together, late Summer 2010. We will be in contact with them in the coming months to work on more of the details and will keep you informed.

Kathy Pedersen submitted an interesting article on her trip to Norway this Summer. I was so happy that she had a chance to meet Leif Løchen from Vågå. I met Leif in 1995 when I attended a psalmodikon meeting in Östervåla Sweden. He was part of the delegation that came from Norway. I remember how surprised I was when the song they played for me, their guest from America, was “Love Me Tender”. That proved to me that music is a universal language!

Here’s wishing you happy holidays and may you always have a song in your heart and music at your fingertips!



PSALMODIKON ANNUAL MEETING

Floyd Foslien

The 13th Annual meeting of the Nordic-American Psalmodikonforbundet was held on August 1 at the home of Floyd and Fran Foslien in rural Hudson, MN. The meeting was well attended and the weather cooperated beautifully. The potluck picnic lunch was enjoyed by all.

We had psalmodikon players from Oregon, Washington, Illinois, Minnesota and Wisconsin attending. There were players who were very experienced and also players who were just beginning to learn. All had a good time learning new songs and practicing old ones. Since we had a full range of instruments, from soprano to bass, we were able to harmonize which makes playing more enjoyable.

Seventeen psalmodikon players spent most of the morning and afternoon practicing and learning. While the more experienced players were practicing songs they already knew, some new players were getting lessons from Beatrice in another area and this helped them become more comfortable with playing before they joined the larger group later on. Separate small group lessons for new players worked well. The new players were taught the rudiments of playing and learned some songs for about an hour or so. Joining the larger group was not quite as intimidating as it might have been without this confidence-building exercise.

We enjoyed dinner Saturday evening at the Bungalow restaurant across the St. Croix River in Minnesota.

Eleven members played at the Sunday worship service at Mt. Zion Lutheran Church in Hudson, WI the following morning. We played well and the congregation enjoyed it quite a lot.

The Scandinavian psalmodikon players from Sweden and Norway have been invited to join us next year so that will be a treat to look forward to.

ITEMS FOR SALE

PSALMODIKON SONGBOOK written in Sifferskrift and 4-part harmony for psalmodikons. **\$19.00 pp**

VIDEO "HOW TO PLAY THE PSALMODIKON"

Instructions on how to tune and play the psalmodikon. Sifferskrift music is included to play along with the video. The video also gives psalmodikon history and makes good program material for a presentation about the psalmodikons. **\$15.00 pp**

Send orders to: Beatrice Hole
6560 Leesborough Av, Eden Prairie, MN55346

PSALMODIKON QUARTET CD **\$15.00 pp**

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Singsaas Lutheran Church, Attn: Music CD's
P. O. Box 87, Hendricks, MN 56136
www.countrychurchmusic.com

Psalmodikon Pattern	10.00
Fret Wire	3.00
Tuning Peg	3.75
String	1.25
Fine tuner w/tailpiece	10.00
Maple fret board w/frets	25.00
Sitka spruce top material	12.00
Cherrywood violin bow	25.00
Rosin	3.50

Send orders to: Floyd Foslien
567 High Ridge Dr.
Hudson, WI 54016
ffoslien.sbcglobal.net

IN MEMORY OF NOLA FOSLIEN



Nola Foslien passed away on October 3, 2009 at the age of 89 years. Our sympathy goes out to all members of the Foslien family.

In 1996, I had the pleasure of meeting and visiting with Nola, at her home in Brandon, MN. I was doing research on psalmodikon history at the time and had read an article about Nola in "The Swedish Pioneer Historical Quarterly" of October 1981, written by Ardith K. Melloh. Nola was a delightful lady and I wish I had known her when she was actively playing the psalmodikon. She started playing the psalmodikon in 1976 after reading a news article about Henry Storhoff of Lanesboro, MN. Nola's psalmodikon was about the same size and age as Henry Storhoff's and like Storhoff, she also put the psalmodikon on a special stand when playing. Besides religious songs, she enjoyed playing tunes such as "Big Rock Candy Mountain" and "Seeing Nellie Home", often accompanied by her husband, Norman, on the organ. Together the two of them enjoyed playing at many of the local functions until his death in 1993. I often wished I could have heard Nola play "Big Rock Candy Mountain". To this day I have not mastered that song!

One of the highlights for Nola was taking part in 1976 Bicentennial celebration in Alexandria, MN, where she played and demonstrated on her old psalmodikon.

In 1995, Nola decided the psalmodikon should be given back to the Foslien side of the family. It was put on the auction block at the family reunion and sold to the highest bidder for \$350.00. Nola's nephew, Floyd Foslien is now a member of the Nordic-American Psalmodikonforbundet and he has mastered the art of making beautiful psalmodikons. Floyd is also a member of the psalmodikon quartet.

Blessed be her memory.



Family of Nola and their psalmodikons. Note the street sign on the driveway of Floyd Foslien.

Letters from Readers:

Dear Ms. Bea,

Thanks so much for having us over to play on your psalmodikons. We had a great time learning about the instrument. We love playing it!

With kindest regards from the Munsons!

Andrea, Selena, Isabel, Sonja and Miranda

Dear Beatrice,

Just a quick note to say how much I enjoyed meeting you guys, getting to know you a little and starting to learn how to play the psalmodikon at your Annual Meeting in Wisconsin. I have not been as diligent about practicing as I should, but at least I do not frighten the cats when I try to play. This is progress!

Anyway, I thoroughly enjoyed my day with the Psalmodikonforbundet. My instrument is beautiful, and I've gotten bit hard with the bug -- sooner or later, I am going to master it! Since I got back home, I've been to the Illinois State Historical Library researching the Swedes of the old Augustana Synod and learning how much of their activity was right around where my wife's family lives in northwestern Illinois. (In fact, Debi and I were married in the Augustana College Chapel in Rock Island, so I've got a little bit of added interest in the project.) I'm mulling around a couple of ideas for potential articles, and I'm sure I'll be contacting you for information as those plans develop.

In the meantime, I just wanted to say thanks for a lovely experience.

Peter Ellertsen – Springfield, IL

I want to thank all of you for your continued support and interest in promoting the psalmodikon heritage. You are all faithful members and as you send in your dues, I am always anxious to read the precious little notes that you send along to me! Beatrice H.

Nordic-American Psalmikonforbundet members meet in Norway

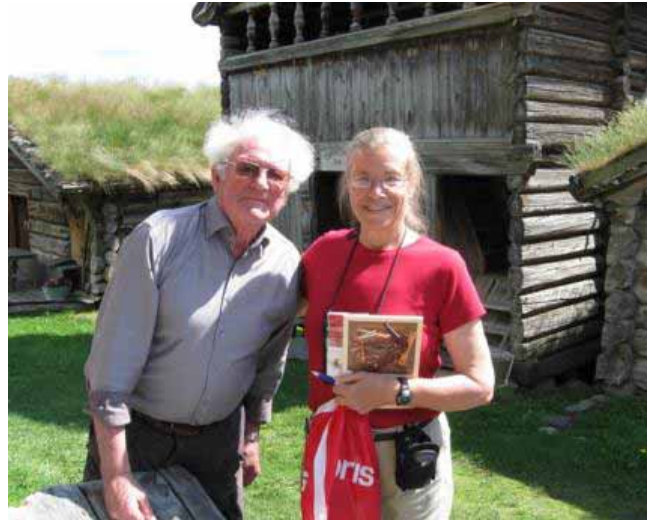
by Kathy Pedersen

In June I received my copy of the NAP newsletter, and was interested to see a picture in it of Leif Løchen and his wife at their farm in the Vågå area of Norway. I was interested because Beatrice had previously told me about how she had met him at a Nordic Psalmikonforbundet meeting in Sweden a few years ago, and that he had written about the history of the psalmikon in Norway. She had shared some of his writing with me and I had worked to translate some of it. I was also interested because I was preparing for a trip to the Gudbrandsdal area of Norway and would be visiting Vågå. Little did I know then that I would find myself at Løchen's home a couple weeks later.

On June 20th I joined with twelve others with family roots in the Gudbrandsdal for a unique historic/cultural tour. Five of the thirteen of us had psalmikon connections. Marilyn Sorensen, one of the group's leaders, is the great granddaughter of a man who taught and played the psalmikon in Dovre. Anne Farning owns the psalmikon her great grandfather played as a klokker in Nord Fron. Dick Lundgren's Swedish great grandfather, Carl Lundgren, was an itinerant preacher and played his psalmikon, which he called his "låden" (box). Carl Lundgren is featured in *Music for Psalmikon; Written in Sifferskrift*, the music book produced by the Nordic-American Psalmikonforbundet in 2005. Hjørdis Helgestad and I are members of the NAP and play modern replica instruments.

As our tour group traveled up the valley from Lillehammer, I learned that our bus driver had gone to school with Leif Løchen's children while he and they lived in Lillehammer and Leif worked at Maihaugen. He also told me that we would be visiting Valbjør, the historic farm that is Løchen's home. I purchased a copy of *Fra skorofele til salmodikon; Artikler og innlegg i aviser*, a book written by Løchen and published by Nord-Gudbrandsdal Folkmusikkarkiv in 2000. I carried it with me on the day we were to visit Valbjør. At the farm, we were greeted and guided by Løchen's son, who connected me with his father. I was very pleased to meet Løchen and have him write a greeting in my book. I completed the circle by

showing him a picture of Beatrice and I playing our psalmikons together. The visit to that old Norwegian farm made my special trip to Norway complete!





Psalmodikons at Sunday morning worship
Zion Lutheran Church, Hudson, WI

THERE IS A SIMILARITY!



Rodney Sjöberg, of Trollhättan Sweden, is the leader of the Nordiska Psalmodikonförbundet. He has been a psalmodikon enthusiast nearly all his life and I think he is beginning to look much like Pastor Johan Dillner (1785-1862). Do you agree??



Psalmodikon members at annual meeting at home of Floyd Foslien. August 1, 2009

MEMBERSHIP DUES

The Nordic-American Psalmodikonförbundet Newsletter is published in the spring, summer and fall. We would appreciate it if you would send your interesting stories and photos to share with other readers. The **\$8.00 membership fee** helps to cover the cost of printing and postage for the Newsletter. Thank you for checking the address label and keeping your dues current.

Send membership dues to: Beatrice Hole
6560 Leesborough Ave
Eden Prairie, MN 55346



All Hail to You, O Blessed Morn!

All hail to you, O bless-ed morn! To tid-ings long by
 True God, the Fa-ther's Son, is he; Yet tru-ly one of
 He will, like us, shed bit-ter tears, In him shines, like a
 For our re-demp-tion still he comes.

h-ets borne Ful-fill-ment you have giv-en.
 that we find in him a broth-er.
 our fears And send his Spir-it's pow-er.
 -sand suns, God's mer-cy, cloud-ed nev-er!

Oh, great-est and most bless-ed day When un-to earth in
 He comes with peace and love to live On earth, our err-ing
 He will re-veal his Fa-ther's will, Our cup of woe with
 Now all who will on him be-lieve, Who fol-low him, he

rious ray Shine out the grace of heav-en!
 to give Such help as could no oth-er.
 cy fill To sweet-en sor-row's hour er.
 re-ceive as his flock will gath-er.

Young and their old their Voice - es send - ing
 Seek - ing car - ing For the blend - ing, Prais - es the hope - less,
 Strug - gling, suf - f'ring, He, by the love - less, And the buy - ing
 He will guide us, Walk be - side us, And Dear - ly up - hold us,

Un - to heav - en For this no - blest of earth's chil - dren!
 All the lost ones Thirst - ing for un - fail - ing foun - tains,
 Our sal - va - tion, O - pens wide the gates of heav - en!
 Till in heav - en We shall be like him for - ev - er!

Ps. 119 Var hälsad sköna morgonstund

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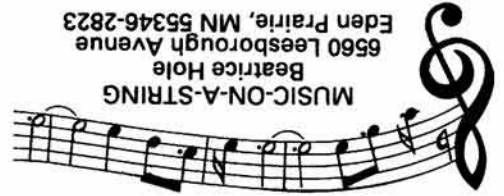


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Psalmmodikon website: <http://www.psalmodikon.org>

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