

NORDIC-AMERICAN PSALMODIKONFORBUNDET

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INSIDE:

- Janne Martensson & Koralstock—Page 2
Carl Lundgren and his music—Page 3
Dorothy Randolph's Psalmodikon—Page 4
Psalmodikonforbundet 2000—Page 5

NOTES FROM MUSIC-ON-A STRING

By Beatrice Hole

It is soon five years ago that I was invited to attend the 10th anniversary of the Nordic Psalmodikonforbundet in Ostervalva, Sweden.

What a wonderful learning experience that was! Not only to be on the soil that my ancestors stood and played the Psalmodikon but to see and hear how the Psalmodikon is still being played today. Since then I have been able to learn much of the Psalmodikon history from my new friends in Scandinavia.

It has been said, that music is the universal language and I certainly have found that to be true. Sometimes while I was there visiting we had difficulty conversing with one another but when it came time to make music we could easily follow along with each other. The following were some of our favorites:

*"Children of the Heavenly Father"
"Day By Day" "Amazing Grace" and
Elvis Presley's "Love Me Tender", which we
have now coined as the "Universal Song for
Psalmodikons".*

On September 15-16-17, we will all be able to have nearly the same experience, only this time the Scandinavian Psalmodikon players will be coming to us!

In the meantime, you should all be practicing

some songs on your Psalmodikon so that you will feel comfortable entertaining our guests! Let me know if you need more copies of the songs that have appeared in past issues of the Psalmodikon Newsletters.

Psalmodikonforbundet 2000 is the meeting you will not want to miss.

The Nordic-American Psalmodikonforbundet, organized in 1995 by Beatrice Hole of Eden Prairie, MN, is a group of Psalmodikon enthusiasts who are interested in keeping the Psalmodikon traditions alive.

The group meets once a year. The first meeting of organization was on September 12, 1997 at the Norwegian Lutheran Church in Minneapolis. The second annual meeting was held at Granite Falls, MN on September 19, 1998, hosted by Eleanor Sandquist. Last fall for our third annual meeting we met on September 17-19 in Decorah, IA, hosted by Barbara and Donald Berg.

Each year there have been more members attending, and the meetings and workshops have become more involved and interesting.

This year of 2000 will bring a new level of interest to the annual meeting in that the **Nordic-American Psalmodikonforbundet** will host the **Nordic Psalmodikonforbundet of Norway/Sweden** for a "joint" meeting to be held the

Weekend of September 15, 16 and 17.

The Nordic Psalmodikonforbundet was organized in 1985 and they usually hold their annual meeting in August in various parts of Sweden and Norway.

The Psalmodikonforbundet 2000 will be held at the St. Andrew Lutheran Church in Eden Prairie where there is plenty of space for fellowship, music and parking. The church is located 1/2 mile west of Highway 494 just off Highway #5. (See Map with directions to church)

Plans for the weekend are still incomplete but we hope to have a get-acquainted gathering on Friday evening. Saturday morning and afternoon will be music workshops and a general meeting. A noon luncheon will be prepared and served at the church. There will also be an opportunity to perform for the public on Saturday and/or Sunday. We are planning a tour of the American Swedish Institute and possibly, for those that are interested, we may travel to The Vesterheim Museum in Decorah, IA on Monday.

I'll see you at the Psalmodikonforbundet 2000!!!

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Janne Martensson & his "Koralstock"

The above photo was sent to me from Janne Martensson of Roron, Sweden. He is holding an instrument called a "Koralstock". A Koralstock is a Psalmodikon with a long neck. You will notice that the Koralstock also has 12 resonant strings on the side. Janne has several Koralstocks in his collec-

tion. These have been found in the Jamtland area of Sweden and were popular during the 1800's. Thanks Janne for an interesting bit of Psalmodikon history!

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Some folk's enjoy "surfing the net" and Ed Hopf of Timonium, MD is one of them. Here are some addresses, that he has forwarded to me, for learning more about Psalmodikons on the Web.

www.sunflower.org/~esping/Psalmodikon.html

www.smus.se/musikmuseet/instdraw.html (This is the source for the blueprint of the Psalmodikon with two strings).

www.kalama.com/~heatscan/musik/history.html

www.atvidaberg.se/sights/hembygd/swe/htur5.html (This is in Swedish, but has photos of three Psalmodikons).

www.natmus.is/brnasida/kmunadeild.html (Photo of two Icelandic Langspils)

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Spring is just around the corner and then comes Summer with all the Scandinavian festivals. I know many of you have been wanting to take part in the **NORDIC FEST** that is held in Decorah, IA. The date for this year's celebration is July 28, 29 and 30. Please contact me if you would like to demonstrate the Psalmodikon during one of these days. It is a lot of fun and very rewarding to meet all the wonderful folks that attend the Nordic Fest.

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Some folks have expressed an interest in securing a video on "How to Play the Psalmodikon." I am in the process of trying to arrange for someone to film a video as such. Let me know if you are interested in having one. Also, I still have Psalmodikon tape cassettes for those of you who are interested in listening to Psalmodikon music.



Carl Lundgren med Ladan

Carl Lundgren was born in 1836 on a farm named "Lund" in Karlskoga. Carl had very little schooling as his family moved often during his childhood. He worked as a baker and then a tailor. It was during this time that he became "converted" as it was called. He came into contact with several believers and began to sing and speak at the gatherings which were arranged in homes. Here he met many friends and also married a girl named Sara. This is also where he found his first "Lada", a Psalmodikon, one meter long and 20 cm wide with one string on top and a pair of resonating strings inside. Carl did not play the Psalmodikon the way most folks did but never-the-less became a master on it. He pressed down the string with his thumb to obtain the tune, at the same time in which he set the strings in motion with the little finger. He always called his Psalmodikon "Ladan", thereby came the name, "Lundgren med Ladan". He carried it with him at all times.

Carl and his wife had five children. Sara, his wife, died during childbirth with the last child. His mission now was to sew, hold devotions and worship, and also have supervision over the children. These were his occupations, but he also wrote his own songs. Wherever he went, he drew the people to himself when he preached, sang and played his Lada. Because he also was a humorist, it worked to his favor.

In 1878 Carl Lundgren put out his own songbook

"Nöd och Nåd" (Need and Grace). The material in the song book were songs which Carl himself had written, but there were also songs which friends had written. The song book cost 25 ore and the humorist Lundgren used to say, "this hold in it 12 ore. of Need and 13 ore. Of Grace". In this way it gives more Grace than Need. The song book became very popular and he published a large number of issues. (I am very honored to have a copy of Carl Lundgren's song book).

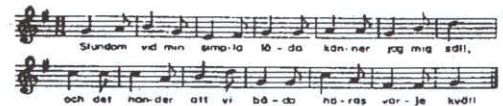
Carl Lundgren died January 5, 1891. His Lada (Psalmodikon) was brought to the USA by his son, Jakob, after he had been to Sweden after his father's death. A descendent of this family, Richard Lundgren, is now a member of the Nordic-American Psalmodikonförbundet and lives in Edina, MN.

Portions of this article are written courtesy of a story submitted by Helena Odvall of Langhem, Sweden. Helena can play in the same manner as Carl Lundgren and no doubt will perform this variation for us when she joins us for the Psalmodikonförbundet 2000 on September 15, 16 and 17.

The following is one of Lundgren's songs:

Av alla de sånger Carl Lundgren skrev är Lådan eller Stundom vid min simpla låda som den också kallas den mest kända.

Olika variationer på melodin förekommer.



5 6 7 5 3 -5 5 5
 Stun-dom vid min sim-pla lå-da
 6 6 -5 6 2
 kän-ner jag mig säll,
 1 1 1 6 7 2 5 5
 och det hän-der att vi bä-da
 1 6 -5 -5 5
 hö-ras var-je kväll

Hur det låt när Carl Lundgren framförde sin sång lär vi aldrig få veta. Kanske låt det något liknande som nedanstående ackompanjemang

135 135 466 135
 466 242 135 135
 466 466 135 135
 466 242 135 1
 Ackompanjemanget
 gjort av H. Odvall