

NORDIC-AMERICAN PSALMODIKONFORBUNDET

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NOTES FROM MUSIC-ON-A STRING By Beatrice Hole

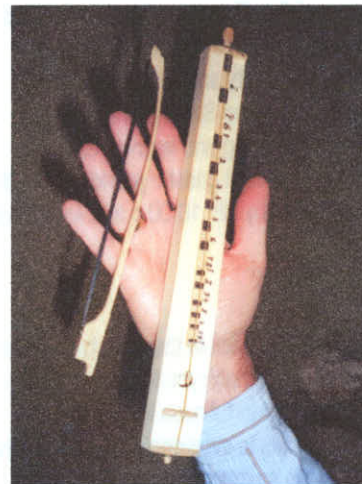
After nearly a year of planning, organizing and making the necessary arrangements, the Psalmodikonforbundet 2000 is now history. Photographs and wonderful memories are all that remain.

It was the best meeting we have had so far. The workshops and programs were well attended and all those who helped, deserve a round of applause and a big thank you for a job well done!

We so enjoyed the presence of our nine Psalmodikon playing guests from Sweden. What a great inspiration they were for all of us. We heard and learned new songs that were very suitable for the Psalmodikon and they all played with such ease and enthusiasm. I am sure that everyone of us went home humming the tunes that were played, especially "Nu ar jag nojd och glader".

As your Chairman, I am always thinking of ways for improvement and new ideas for our annual get-togethers. Perhaps it is time to form an "organized" club, so to speak, and elect officers. As of now, we do not have a host or a place to hold our next meeting which has been set for September 15, 2001. Hopefully, someone will offer to volunteer for the next Psalmodikonforbundet. Perhaps you have some special things that you would like to accomplish at the meetings. Please give some thought and let me know.

Christmas is soon here and I have included a couple of Christmas songs that sound especially nice on the Psalmodikon. Remember, the more we practice—the better the music!



Rodney Sjoberg's
"small"
Psalmodikon—a gift
to our Nordic-
American
Psalmodikonforbundet

At our meeting, a letter of greeting was received and read from Rodney Sjoberg, Chairman of the Nordika Psalmodikonforbundet. He also sent along a Psalmodikon and bow that he had made. It is the smallest one I have ever seen. It measures about four inches long with a sheep-gut string and a real horse-hair bow. It plays a very little tune also. Thanks to Rodney for this special gift!

Rodney has made an even smaller Psalmodikon in that it fits into the petals of an Orchid Flower or can fit into a little match box. That one is only 5 cm long (about 2").

He has also made a very large one—250 cm long (7-1/2 ft.). It took several pieces of sheep-gut to fit onto this large one.

Perhaps these should be put into the Guinness Book of World Records!

A Report on the Nordic-American Psalmodykonforbundet held on September 15, 16 & 17, 2000

We were at the Minneapolis Airport at 1:30 on Friday afternoon with two Vans (thanks to Ken & Jan Anderson) and a pickup. Our nine guests from Sweden had arrived! The luggage, many large Psalmodykons, an accordion and a Nyckelharpe were carefully loaded and put into place. The downstairs of our home and all the bedrooms were overflowing!

In the meantime, all of the other Psalmodykon members were arriving in Eden Prairie. At 7:30 p.m. we all met at the St. Andrew Lutheran Church for a fun evening of music and getting acquainted. A delicious dessert & coffee was served by Sonja & Howard Olson of Anoka, MN. Our thanks to both of you! Several other visitors from the Twin City area were present with their Nyckelharpe instruments and Ross Sutter came with his Dulcimer. We all had a fun time sharing and learning about our old but unique instruments. Our special guests provided us with some lively music that was enjoyed by all! 10:00 p.m. came much too soon.

On Saturday morning, everyone was back to the church again for our all-day meeting/workshop. A big thank you to Larry & Deann Gjenvick for providing us with a wonderful noon lunch. The coffee pot was on all day and thanks to everyone who provided the goodies to go along with it. It was so much fun seeing all the different Psalmodykons and learning new songs!

We all traveled down to the American Swedish Institute for a 6:00 p.m. private tour of the Museum. Per Palmer, our guide, also spoke Swedish and it proved to be a very interesting visit, especially when Lars-Eric Lauenstein, of Sweden, sat down at the huge baby grand piano and entertained us with a beautiful song!

At 7:00 p.m. Ross Sutter was performing for the Varmlandsforbundet and invited all the Psalmodykon players to stay and participate in the program also. We all felt very honored to be playing our Psalmodykons at the American Swedish Institute! This gave us a chance to play the tunes we had been practising all day and everyone did very well. Following the program there was much discussion about our instruments while the ladies of ASI provided us with sandwiches, sweets and beverages!

On Sunday we participated in the morning worship service at the Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Minneapolis. The Psalmodykons provided the music during the Communion distribution. Once again, we were treated to coffee and goodies following the service. Everyone was asked many questions about their Psalmodykons, an instrument many had never heard of before.

We then proceeded over to the Norwegian Lutheran Church (Mindekirken) for the Psalmodykon Concert at 1:00 p.m. This performance was for the general public and was very well attended. Not only was there music by the Psalmodykon ensembles and vocal selections, but there were performances by the visiting Nyckelharpe group, and also special music with Janne Martensson on the button accordion.

The Nordic-American Psalmodykonforbundet served refreshments and coffee downstairs following the program. Again, thanks to everyone who so generously provided the sweets and helped with the serving. The table looked just beautiful complete with a Psalmodykon cake!!

On Sunday evening we had a very fun, relaxing evening with a Picnic Supper at the home of Rodger and Beatrice Hole. There was lots of good food and music but this time in a more relaxed atmosphere. The performing was all behind us now!

And this was the ending of a beautiful and fun weekend. Even the weather cooperated as it was sunny and warm every day! The time slipped by so fast and I wish it could have gone on for a longer time! Many questions were racing through my mind --- did we learn enough?---did we do this right? ---- should this have been done differently? But this was a first for all of us and as always, there is room for improvement and hopefully there will be another weekend as such!

During the weekend our thoughts often turned to the Psalmodykon players we wished could have been enjoying the weekend with us. Namely, Nola Foslien of Brandon, MN and Rodney Sjoberg of Trollhattan, Sweden, who have played the Psalmodykon for many, many years but were unable to make the trip to Eden Prairie. And also Henry Storhoff and Harlis Anderson who have passed on. They would be proud of what we are doing to carry on the Psalmodykon tradition and to hear all the beautiful that is still being played on the Psalmodykon.



---- VIDEO TAPES FOR SALE ----

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"HOW TO PLAY THE PSALMODIKON"

Instructions on how to tune and play the Psalmodikon. You can also play along with several songs. Sifferskrift music included.

Mail \$15.00 to: **Beatrice Hole**
6560 Leesborough Ave.
Eden Prairie, MN 55346
(952)934-4535
E-Mail: **Enstreng B@aol.com**



----THANKS FOR A GREAT RAFFLE ----

I would like to thank all the members who donated prizes for the Saturday afternoon drawing at the Nordic-American Psalmodikonforbundet 2000. There were many prizes and many lucky people had their name drawn and received some very nice gifts. It made for a fun break during the day.



THE NYCKELHARPE: This is a keyed fiddle which is a medieval instrument played by bowing 3 melody strings stopped by finger operated keys. The "harpe" also has one drone string and 16 resonating strings. This ancient instrument is a native of Sweden. It is gaining in popularity again due to several musicians in the USA that have formed little groups and are holding practise sessions and teaching others to play.

THE DULCIMER: This is an ancient folk instrument that probably was invented in Persia or Arabia. Many think of it as an instrument of the Appalachians, who maybe played it because it reminded them of the Bagpipes. It is a flat box with metal wires stretched across the top. These wires are attached to adjustable tuning pegs on one side of the instrument. The player plucks a single string for the melody and there are numerous strings for resonating.

THE BUTTON ACCORDION: This type of accordion can be found in folk music from around the world. It is diatonic (meaning you get a different tone when the bellows are pushed in, than when pulled out). There are "buttons", rather than piano like keys, in rows on the melody side and a few chording buttons on the opposite side. This limits the range of tunes that can be played, compared to the piano accordion, but the sound is very special.

THE AUTO-HARP: The harp is the oldest of stringed musical instruments which date back to Biblical times when it was the musical accompaniment to the Psalms. It is played with the fingers rather than a bow. Since that time there have been many different kinds of harps. A recent development of the Auto-harp is that it is held in the lap or against the body. (This one sounds very nicely when played long with the Psalmodikon).