

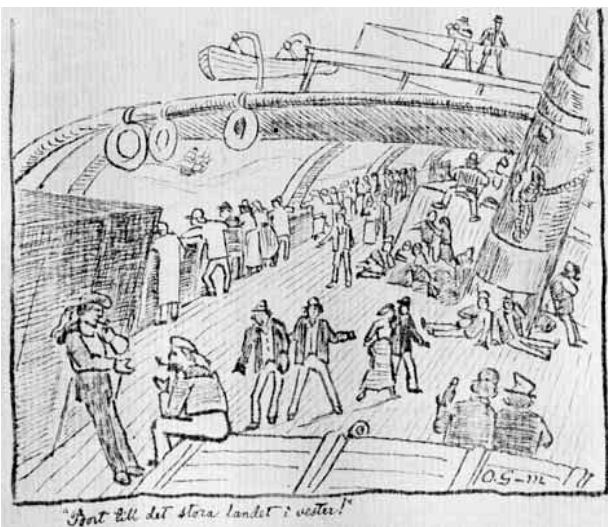
## History About Swedes in Oregon

Leif Rosqvist

Are you aware of the great wealth of fascinating information about earlier generations of Swedes in Oregon? The distinguished journalist, author/poet, and grand old man among Swedish–American newspaper people, Ernst Skarstedt, wrote the book “Oregon och dess Svenska befolkning” (Oregon and its Swedish population) from material he collected during his travel in the western states. This book tells fascinating stories about Oregon State and Swedes who immigrated to America, their journey to Oregon and their lives here. The SRIO organization (Swedish Roots in Oregon) has translated about one hundred such biographies, to share the immigrants’ life stories with as many Swedes as possible.

Today you can read excerpts from Skarstedt’s book as well as translated biographies, which will be updated over time, on the SRIO websites, [www.SwedishRootsinOregon.com](http://www.SwedishRootsinOregon.com)

The featured picture, “*Bort till det stora landet i vester*” (Away to the big country in the west) by Olof Grafström, ca 1885, appears on the front page of the SRIO web site. This picture illustrates very well the environment in which the Swedes spent several months, while immigrating to America.



## ANNUAL MEETING SET FOR MARCH 2

New Sweden’s Annual Meeting will be held on March 2, 2008, at 2:00 PM at Fogelbo, the home of Ross Fogelquist, 8740 SW Oleson Road, Portland 97223. Telephone number (503) 244-3697.

## Walpurgis—April 30 at the Carter’s

Dave and Melinda Carter have offered to host Walpurgis this year. They have a small farm in the Stafford West Linn area, can host several visitors and have a bonfire! There will also be snacks and hot drinks served.

Their address is 1470 SW Borland Road, West Linn, OR 97068 and the event will begin at dusk on April 30.

The directions to their farm: From I 205 take the Lake Oswego Stafford exit. Go north on Stafford Road (about 3 city blocks) to Wanker’s corner. Turn right (east) on Borland Road. Their place is one-half mile east of Wanker’s corner (on Borland where it meets Ek Road). Turn south onto a gravel road into the farm at the junction of Ek and Borland. Look for signs.

Dave’s phone is 503-890-6458 and in general the Carters would like to keep the traffic limited to the field and bonfire. There should be plenty of parking and an attendant to help visitors find a spot. They hope to see everyone there. Just a note: if it’s raining, please bring and umbrella.

**Walpurgis in Sweden: Valborg** . The 30th of April, marks the end of the winter in Sweden and Finland, and is the most important festive celebration of the year alongside of Christmas and Midsummer.

Valborg is celebrated in Sweden in different ways, always depending on the part of the country. Lighting large bonfires is a popular celebration in eastern parts of Sweden like in Svealand or Uppland, where people gather material for their bonfires for months ahead. Lighting bonfires is an ancient custom related to keeping away evil spirits, demons and witches. Nowadays Valborg is just

# Message from the President

Kristi Johnson-James

January, 2008

It is with great pleasure that I invite all New Sweden members to our 2008 Annual Meeting. This meeting will take place on Sunday, March 2, 2008, at 2:00 P.M. Ross Fogelquist has again so unselfishly offered his historic home, Fogelbo, as the venue. Please mark your calendars, and plan to share hors d'oeuvres and good company.

I encourage you to consider serving on the New Sweden Board of Directors. Our Board members work hard and have a lot of fun too. If you are interested, please contact Barry and Laurel Peterson. They comprise our nominating committee. They may be reached at (360) 666-6514, or at [laurel@epeterson.net](mailto:laurel@epeterson.net). Board member elections for 2008 will be conducted by the current New Sweden Board at our March 11 Board meeting. I also would like to remind members that all Board meetings are open, and we encourage members to attend. The meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at the Scandinavian Heritage Foundation office at 7:30 P.M. except for July and December.

If you wish to help with a specific event, please contact me at [kristi7711@aol.com](mailto:kristi7711@aol.com), or call me at (503) 516-0656. We always have something exciting on the horizon, and you will be assured of lively, upbeat company. Even the most mundane task takes on a new meaning when it's done with friends.

As the first message of the New Year, I would like to tell you that your dues dollars are what drives New Sweden. When you pay your annual dues, you are advancing the mission of this valuable organization. We sponsor Trollbacken Children's Language Camp, we help defray costs for all our events, we promote scholarships, and the list goes on. As you can imagine, the costs mount up when we rent churches, pay janitors, engage musicians, and pay caterers. When we have turned a profit, we have chosen to buy tents and tables, so we will not have to rent them in the future. This Board is fiscally responsible, and for that we can be thankful. Our goal is to promote the Swedish culture in America, and I've been told we sometimes out-Swedish the Swedish!! But none of this would be possible if it were not for our members who choose to give of their time and expertise. Your strong support has not gone unnoticed.

Finally, I'd like to close with a heartfelt thank you to all of you for making my second year as your president such a delight. Working with all of you continues to be a great pleasure for me. I truly cannot imagine a more dedicated, informed, fun, sincere, energetic group of people. I hope to see all of you at the Annual Meeting, and even a Board Meeting or two. **Happy New Year!!**



New Sweden booth at ScanFair featuring Julkärve (Christmas Sheaves)



Ross Fogelquist, Erik Thorin, Kristi Johnson-James and Maude Eriksson at the Fogelbo Christmas party of the Lucia Court.

## Dal-maling Class

Dear Friends,

This is to let you know, that I'm going to Sweden for about two weeks. My mother is not well, and I have to find out what 's going on, and what kind of care that she needs. My plan is to be back on January 31. However, if I need to stay longer, I will do so.

I will contact you all, when I come back. The Wednesday painting class is for now scheduled for February 27, March 5, 12 and 19. The Saturday class is scheduled for March 29, April 5, 12 and 19. It had to be moved to a later date due to conflicting schedules at SHF.

Life is unpredictable, as you all probably know. We just have to work around what comes our way, and do the best we can.

Leif is still here at home. If you have any questions, you can contact him, phone (503) 466-2119.

Until next time - Take care!

**GunMarie**

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## Dalmalning or Rosemaling?

Rosemaling is rose painting, originated in the Scandinavian Rosemaling countries of Finland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark. It is also called Dalmalning in Sweden.


The rose was considered to be the sign of Christ. Rosemaling was at its peak from the early 1700's to 1850. The style reflects the influence of French Rococo and Baroque styles.

In the beginning artists only decorated the homes of nobility, and a modified folk art soon spread. The northern Scandinavian communities were isolated and different styles developed in each region, creating many unique styles.

Scandinavian immigrants brought the art with them when they came to America. The various forms were named after the towns or regions where they originated. One important Norwegian tradition was the bride's dowry chest. They became the couple's most valuable possession, because they could hold so much. Most early painters were self-taught and used this art to decorate their homes. No two patterns were the same; a family's possessions could be identified by its unique pattern.

Early painters in American, remembering the decorations painted by skilled craftsmen in their homelands, began to change their own household ware and became their own

## An Introduction to Rosemaling



Meet Gayle Oram (and her cats), Master Decorative Artist and Vesterheim Gold Medalist in Norwegian Rosemaling. Do you have to be Scandinavian to enjoy Rosemaling? Gayle says, "I cannot find Norwegian roots in my ancestry, unless it goes back to the Viking days when they plundered my Scottish, English and French ancestors.

It must be so, because I have such a strong love and warmth for this beautiful painting and country. I enjoy studying, researching, and painting the different styles, which led to the writing of my rosemaling books." The Scandinavian community in the Portland area is very familiar with Gayle's work; she has held several classes and has been a ScanFair vendor for many years, with her beautiful painted pieces.

She has authored three painting books and hopes her latest book will provide new ideas and inspiration for all rosemalers. Her first two books are now out of print. The new book, *Rosemaling Styles, Study and Design*, provides basic information for beginning as well as more advanced painters. Many people would like to try rosemaling but are intimidated by its complex appearance. The book's instruction shows basic strokes, design elements, characteristics of the styles and you can be on your way to much enjoyment and self-satisfaction. Gayle used oil paints originally, but now uses Jo Sonja's Gouaches, that work well with the use of mediums and one can achieve the same results.

Many of the Scandinavian community remember Gayle as a resident of Tillamook, Oregon; but she is in the process of moving to Pleasant Hill, Oregon, near Eugene. If you are interested in purchasing her book or would like more information the classes she offers, her new address is Gayle Oram, MDA, VGM; Gayle's Art Enterprises; 36757 Immigrant Road; Pleasant Hill, OR 97141; Phone (541) 747-2820; [gayle-sart@oregoncoast.com](mailto:gayle-sart@oregoncoast.com); <http://gayleoram.com>.

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decorators. As Rosemaling began dying out in Norway, it continued to thrive in the American Midwest up to the Victorian era. In the 1970's Rosemaling was rediscovered and now enjoys a resurgence in popularity.

Marrying someone for their good looks is like buying a house for the paint.  
Marriages are made in heaven, but so is thunder and lightning.



## A story about a house

*By GunMarie Rosqvist*

During last fall my husband, Leif, has been translating biographies for the group SRIO (Swedish Roots in Oregon) led by Lars Nordström. In November, during a lunch meeting of the group, Lars mentioned that he was going to Sweden in January 2008. "I'm going to Värmland", Lars said. "Where in Värmland" Leif asked, as we have spent a lot of time in Värmland. "Kindsjön in northern Värmland", Lars answered. "I know where that is, and I've been there", Leif said. No one could have looked more surprised than Lars did. "You are the first person I've met who has ever heard of the place", Lars said. Leif told him to talk to me, as my mother has her roots there, and I spent a lot of time there growing up.

Lars and I discussed this in December, and realized, we were talking about the same house! Talk about coincidence and a small world! The farmhouse is part of a homestead in Kindsjön, Södra Finnskoga, Värmland, Sweden. It was built around the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The builder was my mother's grandfather (Farfar). My mother, Ingrid, was born in this house in 1924 on the Santa Lucia-day, December 13. In the farmhouse there were three separate apartments: two on the first floor and one on the second floor. Little Ingrid lived with her father, Alfred, and mother Dagmar in the apartment on the second floor. Alfred (born in December 1899) was then, as the oldest living son, the owner of the house. In the apartment on the first floor lived a sister to Alfred and her husband, Alma and Hjalmar Gunderson, and another brother and his wife. Three years later, in 1927, Ingrid got a baby-sister, Dagny. Then the saddest thing happened. The little girls' mother, Dagmar, died just about 3 weeks later from complications from child-birth and tuberculoses. Dagmar was only 27 years old when she died. Alfred was so grief-stricken that he kept the body of Dagmar in one of the barns for about 2 weeks, and visited with his dead wife every night.

As Alfred was working, his two little girls had to be placed with relatives. Alma and Hjalmar Gunderson took care of newborn Dagny. Alfred wanted Ingrid to live with his dead wife's relatives, who were very well off and lived in a big house. He put little Ingrid on his bicycle and pedaled all the way to these relatives. Ingrid, though, cried her heart out the whole time, so poor Alfred had to bring her back home again. That turned out to be lucky for her (and me), because most of the family on Dagmar's side (except one brother and one sister) died from tuberculoses. Ingrid spent time with other relatives, but returned home, after Alfred remarried. Ingrid then got three half siblings. She lived in the house in Kindsjön until she was about seven or eight years old. Dagny stayed in the house with the Gunderson family until adulthood. After marrying Torbjörn Tjus she moved to Deje, Värmland, where she still lives. She and Torbjörn built a summer-residence, a log-cabin, on the same property as the main house in Kindsjön. She still visits there with her children Inga-Lill and Leif, who are adults today.

I have been visiting this homestead many times in my life, mostly as a child with my parents and my brother. The featured picture of the house is from 1952. I was then five years old during this visit. My father and his brother (the photographer) were on their knees to hand-plane the kitchen floor in preparation for a new carpet.

The last time I visited the house, was in 1970 with my husband Leif and our oldest son Johan (then 4 years old). In 1974, the house was sold, and the new owners were Lars Nordström and his friend Kalle Jansson. The two friends were planning to live the country-life with their families. Well, Lars' friend Kalle with his wife Eva, still lives in the house, but as many of you know, Lars lives right here in the Portland area with his family. Just like I do!

Lars and his family built another house on the homestead property as a second home for them. That's where they are going in January to ski and relax.

## My Family's Swedish Secret



**My great grandmother and four of her children the summer before they immigrated to America. Please note the empty space they left where my great grandfather would have stood**

As I prepared to journey to my grandmother's house in the woods in the spring of 2006, many emotions were welling up inside me. Why did we never talk of my great grandfather? Why did my great grandmother abruptly leave Sweden, her children in tow? I refused the meal my cousin wished to feed me, just to get to the house. Maybe if I touched the soil, the answer would be revealed. Whatever it was, I was ready to accept the truth. The house stood in the woods, sadly neglected. But somehow, it beckoned me. I boldly queried my cousin. Why did my great grandmother leave? Where was my great grandfather? Had he deserted his wife and nine children? My cousin looked at me with soft, gentle love. He reached down, and picked up a handful of rocky soil. "Kristi, THIS is what stole your great grandfather. He worked himself to death." No more, no less. It all came to me in a flood of emotion. He loved his family, but he had been stolen away.

No gravestone! We were too poor to afford such a luxury. Per Svensson, my great grandfather was buried within the churchyard walls, but his resting place was unmarked. This would not stand! I returned in 2007, hoping to remedy this situation. With the help of my cousins, and the church's blessings, the grave will be marked. The exact spot was located, verified by records. Now, I am appealing to my relatives to help me commemorate his gentle life. A stone, ironically culled from the soil of the harsh land where he toiled, will finally honor a man who loved his family, and gave them his all. I hope my life will honor his. No more, no less.

Submitted by Kristi Johnson-James; January 9, 2008



### Sturdy skirt a hit with Swedish workmen

Published: 17 Jan 08

Mechanics, carpenters and plumbers who have tough physical jobs need strong, functional [clothing](#). But that doesn't mean they have to wear boring, old-fashioned overalls that their grandfathers might have worn. A kilt for professional men recently introduced in Sweden features roomy pockets needed to carry necessary tools and allows the worker to make a striking [fashion](#) statement at the same time.

This men's skirt in heavyweight cotton has other advantages. It is undoubtedly refreshing – or at least mildly alarming – to feel a cooling breeze running up your legs during a long, sweaty day hammering in plasterboard or installing a new floor.

"We initially launched the kilt as a sort of experiment. We thought only a small number of daring men would wear it. But it proved to be surprisingly popular," says Susanne Kristianson of Blåkläder, the company from Svenljunga, western Sweden, behind the unconventional work wear.

The trendy kilt has attracted a following among self-confident young Swedish men who are not afraid to challenge conventional gender stereotypes - although, as any Scotsman would tell you, there was never anything girly about wearing a kilt. The unconventional garment is especially popular among carpenters: it features two reinforced nail pockets, a loop for carrying a hammer and a knife holder.

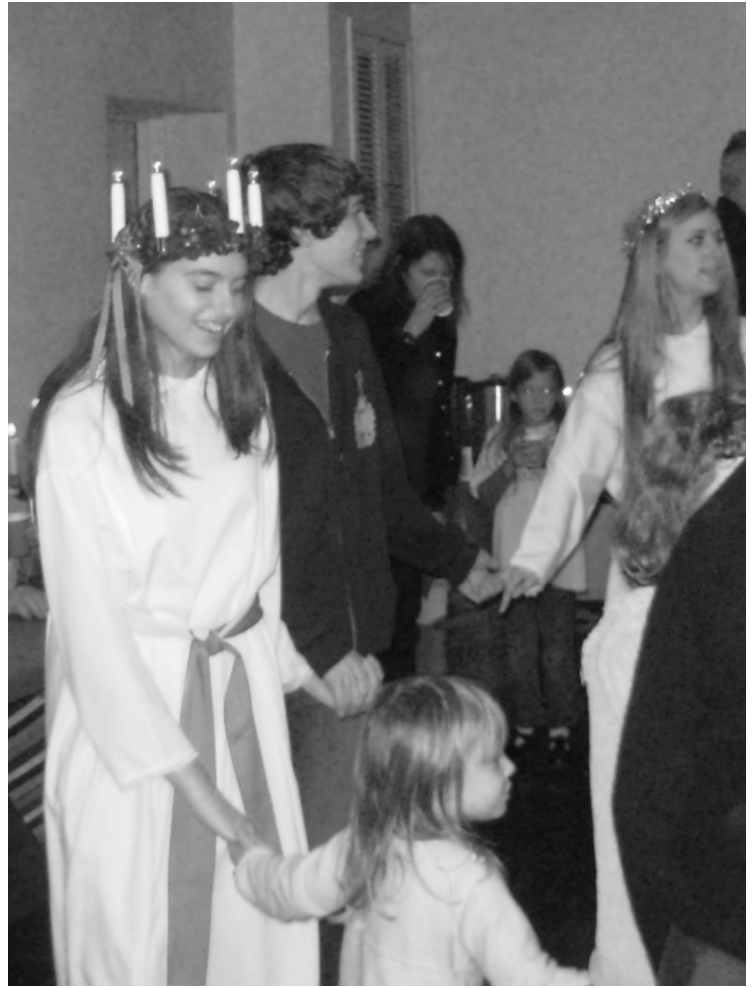
One of Sweden's largest manufacturers of heavy-duty and protective clothing for men, Blåkläder sells its new workingman's kilt nationwide; it is also listed as a regular item in its product catalogue. The garment was lauded as "Fashion Product of the Year" in late October 2007 by TEKO, the Swedish Textile and Clothing Association. The company, whose name means "Blue Clothing," has been making work clothes since 1959.

David Barta ([news@thelocal.se](mailto:news@thelocal.se))

The strains of familiar and loved Lucia songs fade and Christmas decorations are once more put to rest; we can reflect on the traditions of this magical season.



Shannon Kaufman, Anna Kosatka, and Kristine Olson, 2007 Lucia Court.



Anna Kosatka, Oregon's 2007 Lucia, dances with Lucia Fest Participants after the program.



Christina Merryman and Elisabeth Wallberg greeted Lucia Fest guests with smiles and programs.



Swedish School Starboys entering the sanctuary during Lucia Fest.



The Swedish School Lucia court led by their 2007 Lucia, Emma Hunter

## Walpurgis—April 30 at the Carter’s (cont.)

seen as a celebration of springtime, but for a feel of the good old Viking days the Skansen Open-Air museum still celebrates Stockholm's largest and most historical Valborg celebration.

For most of the Swedes though, Valborg just means the end of the winter season and there is no better way to celebrate it than singing Spring songs. Spring songs and choral singing are very typical of the Swedish Valborg celebrations, with many of the traditional songs dating from as back as the 19th century. The most popular and traditional spring festivities are held in the old university towns of Uppsala, Lund and Gothenburg, with its famous carnival parade.

Current and graduated students party all day and all night, and even perhaps longer than that, wearing all the time their characteristic white graduation caps. Valborg is a double national festivity in Sweden because King Carl XVI Gustaf celebrates his birthday on Valborg's day, 30th of April. Swedish flags are raised all around the country to salute him and show him respect.



**Meet Bode Lundin with her grandmother, Anna Lundin**

Bode is the daughter of Markus and Nikki Lundin, and the granddaughter of Hans and Anna Lundin.

The photo was taken Thanksgiving Day at Lake Washington in Seattle. The beach is in the Madrona neighborhood just below where Bode lives.

Bode goes to a Montessori school four days per week. She has been skiing with her parents at Whistler/Blackcomb mountain in Canada, where she also has gone to a ski school. This season she has already skied 16 days and can make it down the hill from the top of the ski area . Pretty good for a 3-year old!!! Isn't there another great skier named Bode? (Miller) that is.



Photo: [www.imagebank.sweden.se/Nicho Södling Facing Södermalm from Riddarfjärden](http://www.imagebank.sweden.se/Nicho_Södling_Facing_Södermalm_from_Riddarfjärden)

**Stockholm is a walking city**, with so much to offer for people who like to simply stroll around, taking the day as it comes, planning on the go and following their instincts

Likewise, for visitors who prefer more structured holidays, packed with cultural and historical experiences, there is a vast selection of sights, attractions and destinations scattered across the entire city centre and its surroundings .

Sometimes it is better for people to wonder why you remained silent than for them to wonder why you spoke —

## Calendar of Events

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| February 27, 2008 | Wednesday painting class with GunMarie Rosqvist begins at SHF office (4 week class) |
| March 2, 2008     | Annual Meeting at Fogelbo, 8740 SW Oleson Road, Portland, OR 97223; 2:00 PM         |
| March 29, 2008    | Saturday painting class with GunMarie Rosqvist begins at SHF office (4 week class)  |
| April 30, 2008    | Valborg at the Carter’s; 1470 SW Borland Road, West Linn, OR 97068                  |

New Sweden Cultural Heritage Society

10765 SW Cottonwood St.

Tualatin, OR 97062

### Membership for 2008 (New or Renewal)

Our membership dues are renewed each year at the beginning of the year. All subscribers also receive the Nordic Reach magazine. If you'd like to renew or join for 2008 now, just send in the form below with your check. If you have questions, please contact our Membership Chair, Denver James at email [denverjms@aol.com](mailto:denverjms@aol.com), or by phone at 503-454-0135.

### Membership Renewal Form

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: (\_\_\_\_\_) e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Single \$20.00  Family \$35.00  Patron \$50.00  Scholarship Fund

Each membership includes a subscription to *Nordic Reach* magazine. Make checks payable to **New Sweden**.

Send completed form and check to Membership Chair:

Denver James,  
10765 SW Cottonwood Street  
Tualatin, OR, 97062  
Telephone (503) 454-0135