



No. 168  
*Drott Lodge*  
Vasa Order of America  
Washington, D.C.



**Drott Lodge Newsletter  
December 2022**

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our**

**webpage:**

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**Vasa Order of  
America - Drott  
Lodge 168**

**Dear Drott Lodge Members,**

It's almost Christmas and this coming Saturday it is the joint Drott Lodge and ASA Lucia and Christmas celebration. What happened to the summer? How could the days pass so quickly? Anyway, hopefully as many as possible got your tickets and will be joining us at this wonderful event coming up next weekend.

My wife Eva and I, in addition to several of other Drott members, attended the beautiful 2nd Advent service with Lucia with the Swedish Lutheran Church of Washington, D.C. in Augustana Lutheran Church, down on New Hampshire Ave, NW. This is how many previous generations of Drott members during 1930's – 1950's celebrated their Christmas with Lucia. Although it's a new Swedish congregation, it's still the same church building. If you visit the church, you can still find chairs, where the choir often sits, named after late Drott members. Over the years, I have met some of their grandchildren who have joined the Drott Lucia and Christmas celebrations.

As a member of the Board of our Vasa Pennsylvania District #9, I have been asked to provide an update on some exciting options under consideration. You may recall that our District includes Nobel-Monitor Lodge #150 of Cleveland, OH, Svea Lodge #296 of Erie, PA and Drott Lodge #168. We unfortunately see a decline of membership among many local lodges. So, what to do? Well, the District #9 Board has been working on what is called "the Restart and Rebuild Plan". This is a proposed plan that describes a possible roadmap to attempt to stem the decline. Also, how to rebuild our lodges by recruiting new members.

What activities within the lodges could be exciting for not only our current members, but also for younger generations including entire families with children? How can the three local lodges work together for different exciting joint activities? To start working together, a Working Group is proposed to be formed with representatives from all three lodges. There is a long list of suggested activities that the Working Group will consider, some being joint events.

Another exciting initiative under consideration by the District is to finance and provide the #1 membership management software. It's called Wild Apricot which includes easy to use website and newsletter design program, event registration, member-only sections etc. Funded for at least two years by the District, this is proposed to be provided to our three lodges and the District itself within the next few

weeks.

So, stay tuned.

In Truth & Unity

Arne Dunhem  
VDM District #9  
Past Chairman Drott Lodge #168



**Saturday December 10, 2022  
4:30 pm - 7 PM  
Lucia and Julfest Celebration  
Drott Lodge and ASA**

***THIS EVENT IS SOLD OUT!!***

We are only a few days away from our last event this year. There will be dancing around the tree and Fika, and Santa has promised to stop by. We'll have a craft table for kids and the adults can browse the Drott Lodge tables with Scandinavian items available to view.

Kerstin Hendrikson will lead the Swedish Lucia and the dance around the Christmas tree.

**St. John's Episcopal Church** is located in Bethesda, at the corner of Wisconsin Ave and Bradley Lane.

**All ticket holders please read:**

Bring your event ticket (paper or on phone) to the check in table. Your name will be on the list.

Please allow extra time for traffic, parking and check in. This is a busy area on a Saturday afternoon.

There are additional parking lots in the area of the church. We recommend you park there, as the parking lot at the church will fill up quickly and there is limited space to turn around.

**Here is parking information:**

[Parking information.pdf](#)

**Drott Lodge Volunteers - Please arrive by 2:45pm.**

**\*\*\*We have removed the sign-up link as this event is sold out.\*\*\***

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## **Other Scandinavian Events in Our Area**

**15th Annual Nordic Christmas Service -Nordisk Julbön Friday,  
December 24, 2022 at 2:30 pm  
Augustana Lutheran Church  
2100 New Hampshire Ave NW and V St NW**

The Swedish Church of Washington DC  
The Norwegian Church Service in Washington DC  
The Finnish Lutheran Church of Washington DC  
The Danish Church in Washington DC  
The Icelandic Church Abroad

More information here:

[julafton.jpg](#)

### **The Nordic Dancers**

The Nordic Dancers of Washington, DC, meet regularly on Wednesdays through May 24. Come and learn traditional dances of Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, and Norway. Music is provided by fiddler, Paul Carlson.

Newcomers are welcome. Proof of vaccination and good-quality masks are required. For more information, visit their website:

**<https://sites.google.com/site/nordicdancersdc/>**

You can also contact them at 301-864-1596 or send a message to [NordicDancers@aol.com](mailto:NordicDancers@aol.com).

## 2023 Lodge Nominations Now Open!



Members!

We are beginning the search for next year's Lodge Officers. With the new influx of engagement (and investment) from our District, a wonderful new location for Lodge meetings, and the absence Covid restraints, the future for 2023 is bright.

We need volunteers to step up and help us drive continued ingenuity, involvement, engagement, programming, and continue the business of the Lodge. We appreciate that everyone leads busy lives (with work and family obligations) and we are modernizing our business practices to ensure that any member is able to fulfill an officer role for the Lodge. Please send an email to [pk\\_weeden@msn.com](mailto:pk_weeden@msn.com) or [Julie.Lynn.Olson@gmail.com](mailto:Julie.Lynn.Olson@gmail.com) if you are able to help support the lodge in 2023.

Your 2023 Nominating Committee,  
Karin Weeden and Julie Olson  
Former Chairwomen, Drott Lodge #168



We are closing 2023 within budget and with a net income of several hundred dollars. Twelve months ago, as we planned the 2022 program year, we couldn't have imagined such an achievement (after 2 years with no bazaars, mainly virtual meetings, and struggling to ensure the camaraderie of the Lodge remained alive throughout). But the Lodge flourished... This was due to the efforts of our volunteers, most notably those of the cultural committee and other dedicated members that routinely joined their card-making, craft-making endeavors, genealogy workshop planning on a massive scale, in addition to volunteers supporting Viking Fest, Icelandic bazaar, Joint Lucia, and the painstaking (labor-intensive) herculean task of moving to a new storage unit.

Carol Whitley  
Karin Weeden  
Keith Shoemaker  
Katrin Shoemaker  
Tanya Cantrell  
Janet Johnson  
Ashley Mullinax  
Wendy Shoemaker  
Linda Olson  
Kris Leedom  
Gunnel Hamilton  
Susan Remmert

Laura Rhodes  
Donna Dyhrkopp Clarke  
Julie Olson  
Walter Kunziar (non-member)  
Thomas Weeden & Aiden Scott (non-members)

We thank you – we appreciate you – and we are ever grateful for the efforts you have made for the betterment of Drott Lodge this year.

**Tack så mycket!!**

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## **Past Event Genealogy Convention via Zoom November 2022**

### **Cultural Committee Holds Successful Genealogy Seminar**

The Cultural Committee is extremely pleased with the genealogy conference hosted by Drott Lodge and supported by our members and the Grand Lodge.

The speakers were enthusiastic, bringing their varied expertise to almost 50 attendees, 19 of whom are Vasa members. The Grand Lodge offset the speakers' fees with a \$200 grant, allowing all Vasa Order of America members to take advantage of the members' reduced registration for the event.

The first speaker of the morning was Kathy Meade, the North American representative for Arkiv Digital. A highly respected expert in the area of Swedish genealogy, Ms. Meade serves on the advisory board for the Swedish American Genealogy Research Center at the Swedish American Museum in Chicago. Her presentation, "Researching in the Swedish Church Books Using Arkiv Digital" prompted excellent questions from participants. Meade was followed by Kathy Cuff, the Archivist-Manager for the Vasa Order of America National Archive and Museum in Bishop Hill. Her presentation outlined the records and resources available through VASA, resources that are often overlooked.

In the afternoon, Bob Johnson presented "Swedish Maps for Genealogical Research," a detailed introduction to digitized historic map collections and property descriptions covering most farms and



villages from the 1600s to the 1900s available at the Swedish National Archives (Riksarkivet) and the Swedish Land Registry (Lantmäteriet). Bob is the author of two publications: *Genealogy at a Glance: Swedish Genealogy Research* and *Husförhörslängder and Swedish Household Examination Records: Framing the Solutions to Your Swedish Ancestry Puzzles*. His entertaining speaking style made this a worthwhile addition to the program.

Wrapping up the day was Geoff Fröberg Morris, a Nordic research specialist at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City. Geoff has helped thousands of people search for their Swedish ancestors, engaged in many archival visits in Sweden, and authored hundreds of pages into the FamilySearch Wiki. Geoff routinely speaks at genealogy conferences, and we are especially grateful for his expertise. His presentation focused on the 5 research questions of What, Who, When, Where, and How to use estate inventories or “Boupteckning” effectively.

Drott Lodge thanks Janet Johnson and members of the Cultural Committee for the advance planning and promotion of the conference that made it such a special day for so many researchers, both beginners and advanced. The animated question and answer wrap-up could have continued for much longer had we not run out of time!

By Kris Leedom

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### **Past Event** **Icelandic and Swedish Holiday Bazaar** **November 2022**

Last month Drott Lodge joined the Icelandic Holiday bazaar in Fairfax, VA. It was a great turn out. Many visitors were interested in our Swedish items and our organization. We had a great time chatting with the customers, young and old. We also had a chance to visit the other vendors.

A huge thank you to our volunteers who helped out this busy day; Susan, Tanya, Karin, Gunnel, Keith, Katrin and Wendy.

Here are some pictures:











**Past Event**  
**Augustana Lutheran Church**  
**Lucia and Second Advent Celebration**

Several Drott Lodge members attended the annual Lucia celebration in Augustana Lutheran Church on Sunday December 4. During the service we enjoyed listening to songs performed by the Swedish Song Group. Afterwards the lights were dimmed, and the Lucia procession



led by Kerstin Hendrickson started. It was a beautiful performance. The familiar Christmas songs brought a tear or two to our eyes, many of us remembering the Lucia celebrations from our childhoods. Afterwards we had fika and reconnected with old friends.





## **Swedish American Genealogy Conference Salt Lake City, UT**

The Swedish American Genealogy Conference was held in Salt Lake City November 12-19, 2022. Carol Traxler and Janet Johnson, members of Drott Lodge attended this annual conference. Each year the Swedish American Genealogist magazine and the Swenson Center sponsor a research conference on Swedish genealogy. This year was an exceptional year, after two years of virtual conferences, this was an opportunity for Swedish researchers to expand their skills and meet other researchers from around the country and the world. Fifty-eight attended including Americans, Canadians, and Swedes were all in attendance for the weeklong conference.

The conference is held each fall at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City. The Family History Library recently underwent a massive renovation, enhancing the research experience for everyone. Computer terminals now have two monitors, access to records. More records than ever have been moved from microfilm to web access images. The Family History Library has been scanning thousands of books-many of which are free to download from your computer or the library's terminals. The library has always been a wonderful research resource, now it is an amazing place of technology and skill making Swedish research even easier.



The conference brought in speakers specializing in many areas of Swedish research-historic maps, writing your family history, reading ancient script, as well as other topics. The Family History Library also provided expertise that is available remotely as well as in person at the library. (Yes, you can get a private research consultation at no cost via their website). We also learned how to utilize the Swedish National Library's online newspaper collection-a wonderful tool to find your ancestors.





Carol Traxler found her 102-year-old farmor's mormor's mormor, her birthday announcement was listed in the local Halland newspaper, as was her death announcement a few weeks later in 1879. Many hours were spent researching Munkagård, Tvååker, Halland. Janet Johnson found her Swede Finn's (farfar's mormor's morfar) estate records in Lappfjärd, Finland. As well as new leads on the family lines in Norra Hestra, Jönköping. It was a fulfilling week of expanding genealogical skills, adding to family trees, and sharing both the joys and frustrations of researching our family history.

The Swedish American Conference is a wonderful opportunity each autumn for those who want to learn to research their Swedish heritage.

By Janet Johnson

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## **Road trip from Stockholm to Kalmar – Öland**

I had the pleasure of spending some quality time with my sister Lena this summer. Several years ago, when I was single, we used to travel together for a week or two abroad or we took a bike tour somewhere in

Sweden. The longest bike trip was from Stockholm to Mora, Dalarna and back. This time, we decided to make a nostalgic car trip to Kalmar and Öland from which our relatives on our mother's side came.

Some background about my family:

Our father came to Sweden from Estonia, Nuckö Island in a fishing boat with 30 people on board during World War II. His ancestors came from Sweden several hundred years ago. On the Nuckö Island and the other islands people kept the Swedish language. They even cooperated with the Swedish government to send a Swedish pastor to them. Our father was confirmed by prästen (pastor) Sven Danell who later became bishop in Skara, Sweden. Our father Alfred died from cancer in 2002 "after a long and happy life" he said. Our mother died in 2019 and my sister and I were both by her side when she peacefully passed away.

Every summer we spent some time in Kalmar and Öland visiting our grandparents and other relatives. In Kalmar, my mother had an aunt named Anna Winell, who was a photographer. She was retired since many years when I and my sister met her. She lived in a big, quite luxurious apartment. Anna Winell is known for photographing crystal glass from Orrefors by using a special technique that made it look real. The National Museum in Stockholm has had some of her photos on display. When she passed away, Kalmar Län's Museum got her old camera and several photos from her photo shop. They had an exhibition on her life and work, and they still sell the book that was published for that event. Her sister Alva also helped her in the photoshop.

Our mother was born on a quiet, big farm named Degerhamns Gård, in the southern part of Öland. Our grandparents sold the farm when they retired and moved to a 6-bedroom apartment in Kalmar. We enjoyed living with Aunt Anna since she lived just 10 minutes walk from Kalmar castle and also close by a wonderful beach.

We started our trip on a lovely summer's day in Stockholm and drove south on highway E4 toward Norrköping. In Norrköping we changed roads for E22 to Kalmar. This is a scenic route. Our first stop was in Söderköping, a charming small town with old wooden houses, nice gardens and where a small river flows through the city. Lena and I headed for Jannes, our favorite konditori (bakery and café) in the old town center. Everything is fine baking, delicious cakes, cookies and buns. Everyone should be able to find something to nourish.

We continued our trip going by Västervik and Oskarshamn, both cities are situated by the sea. E22 takes you to the tip of southern Sweden. From Oskarshamn you can also take a boat to Öland. We reached Kalmar and decided to stop here on our way back. We drove over the

long bridge Ölandsbron (6,072m) with a fantastic view of the sea and the surrounding landscape. After a couple of hours, we ended up at Böda beach on the northern side of Öland. It's one of the most popular beaches in Sweden. You may take your morning walk along the 10 K long sandy beach, a swim and then enjoy a long and tasty breakfast at the Bödagården. Special for this part of the island is for example Neptuni åkrar (the fields of Neptun), miles of sandstones at the shore, beach and land, rare flowers and moss. Further north is Långe Erik (Tall Erik), the light house from which you can see far away. There is also Trollskogen (Troll Forest), a very beautiful forest, where there is a museum, you learn about the insects, birds and animals that live in this forest. I recommend it both for children and grownups.

After some wonderful days at the beach we returned to Kalmar, where we stayed at Slottshotellet (Castle Hotel), since some luxury was needed. From there it takes only 3-4 minutes to walk to the castle. So of course, we visited this very special and important castle in Swedish history. I give you a link so you can find out more about it. Not far away from the castle is a church yard (cemetery), the most beautiful one in the world, I think. My sister and I went there to put flowers on our ancestors' graves. From the gravesites you can see the castle, the sea and Öland's silhouette at the horizon. It is such a peaceful resting place! Of course, we took time to walk into the city of Kalmar, where we found Holmgrens konditori (bakery) close to the city wall and the harbor. Smaskens (yummy)! We did not feel anxious to go back home, but we needed to head back. We took the same route, but this time we made a one-day stopover in Oskarshamn and stayed at Clariton hotel at the city marketplace. Very nice rooms. We visited the Döderhultar'n Museum, where our grandmother's uncle Axel Petersson has a permanent exhibition of his sculptures. Many of them are carved in wood. I must have gotten some of his skills, because I also like to sculpt. The next day we drove back to Stockholm. We both agreed that this trip had been a marvelous opportunity to connect as sisters and a very special time to remember our childhood days and our family.

by Gunnel Hamilton

Here are some pictures from Gunnel's trip:



## Membership Fees for 2022

This is the LAST month of the year. If you forgot to make your payment for this year, please make sure to contact Carol Whitley.

Regular annual membership fees due are \$50.00

Life Members and Youth Members still at \$25.75.

Please go to MemberPlanet and make your credit card payment.

You can also send in a check. Please contact Carol Whitley at [carol4600@verizon.net](mailto:carol4600@verizon.net).

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## Keep Your Memberplanet Account Up to Date

It is important that you update MemberPlanet if you have new contact information, such as if you have moved or have a new phone number.

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## Newsletter Deadline December 28

The next newsletter will be distributed in January 2023. Do you have something you want to share with us? Did you go on a trip? How did you spend your holiday? Please send in your story and a picture or two.

All submissions are due to [pk\\_weeden@msn.com](mailto:pk_weeden@msn.com) by **December 28, 2022**. Please make sure to include the word **NEWSLETTER** in the subject.

VASA Drott Lodge 168  
c/o Carol Whitley, Membership Secretary, 4600 Connecticut Ave NW Apt 819  
Washington, DC 20008

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