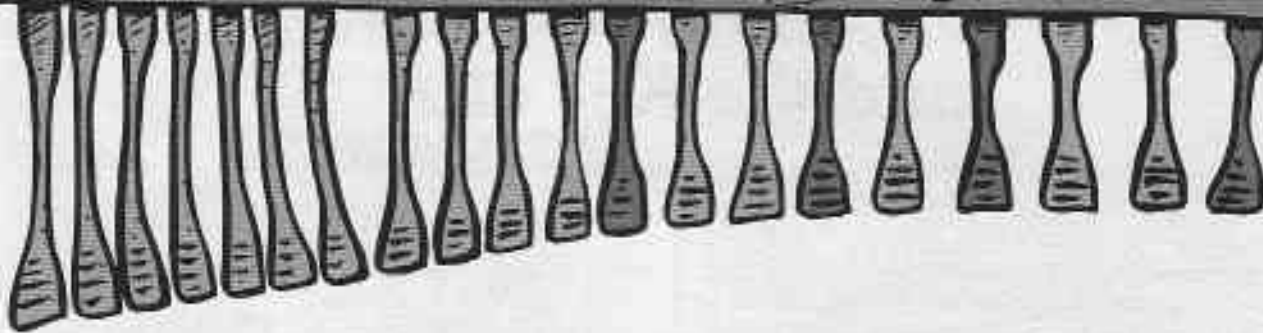


THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN NYCKELHARPA ASSOCIATION

NYCKELNOTES



Building a Nyckelharpa

by Stewart Pugh with Virginia Thompson

The Offer

Did I want a nyckelharpa for my birthday?

Well ... uh... humm.

A few months later, did I want to build a nyckelharpa for my birthday?

Sören Åhker was teaching.

YES!

Off to Minnesota!

Day One

We find a shop called "Norwegian Termite." (Are Swedish musicians allowed in?) Our host is Jock who is a woodworker extraordinaire. At the shop, we find woodworking toys, and a very friendly Norwegian dog. Humans' purpose in life is to make piles of wood shavings for her to sleep in.

We are eight students. Each is given an instruction book and a kit, which appeared to be a pile of nondescript wood blocks, at our work bench. We divide up our tasks. Half of the class is assigned to start sawing out the sides, tail blocks and neck. The other half concentrates on finishing just the neck, tuning pegs, and reinforcement plates. The schedule is staggered so there won't be any bottle-necks using the tools and clamps.

The spruce backs are two thin pieces of wood glued at the edges that are ready to finish. The tops are already edge glued and in process of being bent. They are being heated in hot water, then will be clamped to a mold that echoes the curve of the nyckelharpa top.

It will take a couple of days for the tops to dry in the proper shape. Eight tops and eight molds take a lot of clamps.

This is when I start to discover the secret of building a nyckelharpa—CIAMPS! All kinds of clamps, C clamps, Cam clamps, Jorgenson clamps and bar clamps. The description of clamps in the class notes that says something like "tools not provided" is a bit of an understatement. The plethora of clamps in Jock's shop is still not enough for eight students.

Puma comes in and plays a bit in the morning to inspire the builders. Judy K. comes in for break bringing strong Scandinavian coffee and awesome pastry. The work stops for a while. At the end of the day some have the sides cut out, while others have the neck ready for pegs and fine tuners. We are offered the opportunity to return to work after dinner. Half say they will be back; but everyone shows up every night and works until 9 PM.

Day Two

Those assembling the body have the neck roughed out, the bottom support block is cut and trimmed, the sides need lots of sanding, thinning and truing up before all is ready to glue. The glue-up takes a mess of clamps, a mess of glue, and a mess of time cleaning up the mess. When finished at least it looks like an outline of a nyckelharpa. There is hope yet.

Meanwhile the neck people are adding the tapered holes for the tuning pegs, and drilling the holes and slots for the fine tuners. While waiting for the

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SPELA BÄTTRE!*The Only Way to Improve Your Playing*

The Devil, the Bow, and the Key of A

by Matt Fichtenbaum

All over Sweden can be found “devil’s tunes,” gånglåt or polska tunes typically played on fiddles tuned A E A C# or A E A E and often featuring left-hand pizzicato on the open strings. At the music and dance week Nordic Fiddles and Feet 2001, Ditte Andersson taught her nyckelharpa adaptation of such a tune, from the town of Flen in Södermanland (Sörmland). It’s a delightful tune, impressive to the audience, and it features a couple of technique bits that will help your playing develop. Best of all,

unlike its fiddle version, one needn’t retune one’s instrument to play in on nyckelharpa.

If you have Ditte’s recent CD *Ditte Andersson*, listen to the tune a few times to hear how it’s supposed to sound. If you don’t, we’ll proceed anyway, but you really ought to indulge yourself in a copy.

The first part, measures 1 through 4, is straightforward. Observe the “typical” bowing of four sixteenth-notes as two slurred, two separate, and try to accent—emphasize—the

Djävulspolska från Flen Sörmland

from Ditte Andersson at Buffalo Gap 2001

notes that fall on each whole beat.

Ditte explains that the second part, measures 5 through 10, tells a story. The fiddler calls out in measures 5 and 6, and the devil answers in measures 7 and 8 (on the fiddle, measure 7 is plucked with the left hand). Ditte envisions the devil as an ill-tempered type, so she makes her harpa "growl" by bowing these two measures abruptly and intensely. You are free to give the devil a personality of your own choosing.

Double stops make good variations for measures 5 and 7. I sometimes use E (C-string) below the E and A, and A (G-string) below the E.

The third part, starting with measure 11, slurs its sixteenth-notes in pairs using a "rolling bow." Measures 11 and 12 bow over two strings (use the C# on the C string); measures 13 and 14 bow over three strings. At the end of measure 12, hold the E (middle finger) down, and add the B (index finger) and D (ring finger). At the end of measure 13, hold the E, and move the other two fingers down to A and C#, respectively.

The rolling-bow motion involves more up-and-down motion with the hand, and less motion along the length of the bow, than one would first think. Start slowly, and practice

- getting the timing right, so that the two slurred notes on each bow sound for the same time
- making the string crossings clean and precise
- playing each beat's four notes as a smooth, connected figure

It's a fine tune. Enjoy!

**Peter "Puma" Hedlund Nyckelharpa Workshops at Scandinavian Folk Festival
September 5-7, 2003**

Peter "Puma" Hedlund, a two-time world champion nyckelharpa player from Sweden, will be performing and conducting workshops at the Scandinavian Folk Festival, September 5-7, 2003 in Jamestown, New York. There will be workshop sessions for nyckelharpa players of all levels. Details will be announced in the near future. A mailing will be sent to all American Nyckelharpa Association members.

Peter Hedlund has performed throughout the United States and Europe. He conducted workshops in Minnesota last Fall and is filming a series of DVDs about playing the chromatic nyckelharpa.

The Scandinavian Folk Festival offers a weekend of music and dance as well as Scandinavian foods and products. There will be a number of historical and handicraft exhibits, a recreation of a Viking village and Viking ship, film and lecture presentations, and more. It promises lots of fun for the whole family!

The Folk Festival is sponsored by Lutheran Social Services and the Scandinavian Studies Program. Pictures from last year's festival can be seen at www.lutheran-jamestown.org. For further information contact dandy@octyne.net or Don Sandy, 430 Crossman St., Jamestown, NY 14701.

Polska efter Anders Liljefors (den äldre)

Traditional, efter Ditte Andersson



Building a Nyckelharpa

continued from page 1

glue to dry, tuning pegs can always be carved. Jock makes up tuning pegs, each with an acanthus leaf carving. The rest of us are trying not to cut our fingers off. The tool for carving tapered pegs looks and works like a fancy pencil sharpener. The tapered peg holes in the neck require a tapered cello reamer, which looks wicked but works divinely. As beginners we are advised not to get fancy.

Jock glues up his harpa maple back inlaying blue and yellow strips of wood. "It should have proper Swedish colors," he says.

Day Three

The clamps are off, time to start making the bottom of the sides flat for a good glue joint with the spruce back plate. Back to sanding. The sanding board and a two-foot long piece of sandpaper is clamped to a bench and we go

How did this all come about?

In May of 2002, The Twin Cities Nyckelharpsdag sponsored a visit by Peter "Puma" Heiland.

During that time he presented a concert, taught workshops and private lessons, and discussed with Cheryl Pashke the possibility of having Sören Ahker return with him in the fall to teach a nyckelharpa building workshop.

Judy Kjenstad took on the work of finding a location and organizing the logistics for the building workshop. For Judy this meant finding an appropriate location for seven or eight woodworkers and gaining the commitment of the owner. Her contacts with local artisans led her to The Norwegian Termitte, Jock Hofman, and his workshop. With much rearranging, including the demolition of a wall, Jock prepared his shop for the fledgling builders, while Judy recruited and registered the participants and attended to the myriad of details that are done behind the scenes to pull off a successful event.

Since Peter and Sören are avid outdoorsman, Wes Peterson and Bill Dahl arranged two weekend excursions into the north Minnesota woods. The Swedes enjoyed themselves very much, returning refreshed and invigorated in time to play at the local Sunday night dance the first weekend and a Bon Voyage party the next weekend.

Meanwhile, Elise Peters organized a concert and two workshops for Peter and scheduled the private lessons with him. Cheryl Pashke and Mary Crimi hosted group parties and other members of the lag prepared food for the parties and hosted out of town visitors.

Congratulations to everyone: Sören, Peter, and the locals for a great set of events!!!

Sides of the nyckelharpa have been glued!



hard at it. Only when Sören declares it has been done correctly and there are no gaps is the back pinned on with wood alignment dowels, glue smeared and about 18 clamps applied to the back and the body. More clamps would be useful but there is not enough room on the harpa.

Today Jock decides the tuning pegs should be carved from American rock maple. So he makes a set.

Day Four

Hurry to get the clamps off. Other participants are in search for clamps for each of their own phases of the project. Spend day carving the top of the harp body to fit the curved top. The top is now dry and ready to be fit up. Armed with a sharp knife, planes, and lots of patience the top is made to fit. When I thought it was ready, Sören rejects my work and says to keep at it. Back to hand sanding. Some in the class have gotten their tops to fit, *f* holes carved, bass bar clamped and glued, and are ready to clamp and glue the top onto the body. Others have cut the holes and slots in the neck for the fine tuners and have the neck ready for final assembly.

We realize there is no chance of producing a playable harpa by the end of tomorrow. Need to come up with an end game for what has to be done before the class ends. This evening is open house; lots of food and people will be here so we are to keep the dust and noise to a minimum.

Today Jock decides the tuning pegs might look good made out of an exotic hardwood called wenge. He makes a set.

Day Five (last day)

Am getting desperate. I need my top clamped and glued. It will require about twenty clamps for the job. At last I get the top to fit and have Sören's seal of approval, now to start on the *f* holes. I mark them out and start cutting and notice they both face the same way. Interesting, but not acceptable. I am rushing and making mistakes. I get the bass bar marked and fitted, but not glued, and get the *f* holes cut (going the right direction).

continued on next page

Building a Nyckelharpa

continued from page 4

Run out of time. I have a problem the others in the class don't have. I have to ship my tools and uncompleted harpa home on the airplane. I stuff my partially completed instrument into our aluminum harpa case and discover Sören's design is longer than the case. The choice is to trim the top of the neck or the harpa stays in Minnesota for a long time. A minor design change is in order. Good thing the top is not glued on yet, the inside of the harpa is a good place to store the parts for the uncut tailpiece, bridge, nut, and the key box. Sören has been showing the class how to carve tangents and playing keys.

Jock decides the keys would look better if they have little carved faces on them.

Back home

The frantic pace is over and I can continue on the finish sanding of the top, gluing of the bass bar, and start on the key box, I start on building the bow, a whole other adventure. Meanwhile I can show off an unfinished harpa body and explain that my birthday present is a really a large wooden ashtray — until I get enough clamps.



Left: LynnAnne Vesper and openhouse visitor fitting the clamps. At right, Sören Åbker and Wes Peterson adjusting a nyckelharpa. Special thanks to Virginia Thompson and Stew Pugh for the photos.

A Busy Two Weeks

The Twin Cities Nyckelharpalag was honored to welcome back Peter Hedlund.

Sören Åbker traveled with him to teach a nyckelharpa building course. During his two week stay, Peter offered a variety of opportunities to hear and learn more music. Peter was the "headliner" at a concert/dance attended by nearly seventy people. He played a 45 minute concert. For the dance portion of the evening, he and Sören joined the Nyckelharpalag for a set. Then Peter and Sören played a set.

While Sören was busy day and night teaching eight enthusiastic builders, nyckelharpa players had the opportunity to learn additional tunes and technique during private lessons and two workshops. The tunes covered in the workshops included Vallåt från Åreentuna, Marschvals efter Caylon Wallin, Batsman Däck in C efter Eric Sahlström, Tobopolketten efter Eric Sahlström and finally Jonaspolska av Peter Hedlund. The last tune was made by Peter for his son, Jonas, after their USA trip last spring.

Additional activities for Peter included a radio show for KEAT radio as well as an evening with the ASI Spelmanslag, the Twin Cities' fiddle group.

We are grateful to have had two wonderful inspirations visit the Twin Cities and look forward to more.



Long Time in Coming ... Especially to Japan

By Rickford Grant

The Quest Begins

Melrose Avenue in Los Angeles may seem to some an unlikely place for someone to become acquainted with the nyckelharpa, but, for me, that's where it all started. The year was 1975 and I was working at a record store there which did a considerable business in buying and selling used records. While most customers were strictly there to buy, there were many who came in to sell, often hundreds of records at a time. We workers had first pick at the incoming, and when we found something that struck our fancy, we would place it in our personal bins in the back of the store.

Each worker had his or her own particular niche. One zoned in on jazz records, another on Broadway shows and disco (it was the seventies, after all), while others were more interested in new wave music and punk. Our manager, a long-haired, sunglass donning, nice guy from "DEE-troit," was the king of metal and forced hours upon hours of the Skorpions on our ears. I, on the other hand, had a reputation as the foreign music collector. If a record came in that wasn't in English, it went straight to my bin—even when I wasn't there. One morning I went into work to find three news additions to my bin from a purchase the previous evening: "Hot Menu" by a Japanese group called the Sadistic Mika Band, "Elva kvinnor i ett hus" by Agnetha Fältskog, of ABBA fame, and yet another Swedish record featuring an instrument called the nyckelharpa.

I had no idea what a nyckelharpa was, so I brought the record out to the front, put it on the turntable and played it for all to hear. Despite interruptions from the manager who kept demanding that I "get rid of that junk and put on the Skorpions," I heard a sound that would, as it turns out, haunt me for many years to come. I brought the record home to keep the man from DEE-troit from breaking it in half and played it again. In my elementary school days I had searched for an instrument. I tried the trumpet, clarinet, accordion, mandolin, and even the balalaika, but this was it. I had found my instrument. My quest thus began.

I went through the local Yellow Pages and, one by one, called every music store in the Los Angeles area, but "Nyckel-whatta?" was the essence of the responses to all of my inquiries. My trips to the major libraries around town yielded little as well. I even made a day trip up to Solvang, a Danish community near Santa Barbara, thinking I might

come up with at least some sort of lead there, but that was a no go as well. In fact, the only success I had was when I decided to pop into a shoe store which specialized in dogs. The owner, a Swedish woman, drew a rough little sketch of the instrument on a scrap of paper, but, beyond that, she could offer no other help. My efforts thus gradually died down until the nyckelharpa was at last stored away in my passive memory.

The Quest Continues

Twenty-six years later and I am living in Toyama, Japan (Could that Sadistic Mika Band record have been the cause?). I had just turned on the CNN program World Beat during a segment on Scandinavian Folk Music. They were showing a clip of the Finnish group Värttinä, which caught my interest enough to make me put the remote control down for a second.

That simple act turned out to be one of those dramatic turning points in life because what followed was a clip from the group Ranarim. My ears pricked up as I again, after so many years, heard that unforgettably distinctive sound. Then, within moments, there it was in front of me on the television screen: my much sought-after nyckelharpa, albeit in the hands of another.

My quest for a nyckelharpa was on again, but fortunately for me, this time I had the Internet to help me. One trip to Yahoo!, eleven key strokes, and one push of the enter key was all that I needed now – a search which brought me to the ANA website. Unfortunately, that very first visit to the site also quickly brought about a reality check as I soon recognized a significant roadblock before me: a nyckelharpa doesn't come cheap. Once again, it was back burner time for my long sought after instrument.

However, fate, as it turns out, was not about to allow the nyckelharpa to completely fade from my consciousness this time. About six months later, I received an e-mail from a complete stranger in Falun saying that she had heard from someone else (also a complete stranger to me) that I might be interested to know that the group Ranarim would be performing in Osaka in March of the coming year. This was too bizarrely coincidental to be merely . . . well . . . a coincidence. Destiny was obviously beckoning.

And so it came to pass that come March my wife, my mother (then visiting from the States), and I made the four-

hour drive to Osaka for the event. We met up with my wife's parents, who live in Osaka, at the auditorium where we saw, to my great surprise, a number of people outside playing their harpas. It is hard to describe the strange sense of envy that welled up inside of me at that moment, but I was definitely green in the most idiomatic sense of the word.

Once inside, we were treated to a mini-concert in the foyer by a local group called Nakatorma, who were performing a selection of Swedish songs. Just beyond them was a series of tables where a variety of Swedish posters, books and traditional goods were being sold. While most of these items were hardly unique, what was unique was that on the last table lay, in all its glory, an Olle Plahn nyckelharpa. I stood there staring at it for the longest time, inspecting every detail. When nobody was looking I had to touch it. Ah... my first physical contact!

Eventually, it was time to enter the auditorium and, fortunately for us, the front row was strangely empty. We sat off to the right of the row, which turned out to be a lucky choice as when the band came on stage, Niklas Roswall and his three harpor were positioned right in front of us. At the end of the concert, I walked up to the foot of the stage and asked Niklas some questions, which he answered quite kindly while a girl standing next to me, knowing how absolutely inane my questions were, tried unsuccessfully to keep her annoyance in check.

The deal was thus sealed: I had to have a harpa of my own. There could be no more waiting. Once back in Toyama, I set to work. I downloaded every copy of *Nyckel Notes*, carefully studied the section of the ANA site on builders, and narrowed my choices down to three. One of these was Tage Larsson, and as the ANA site listed him as having limited English skills, I utilized the limited, and then quite rusty, Swedish I had learned in life, in conjunction with a good deal of dictionary work, in order to write to him. His response was the most positive, encouraging, and warmest of my choices (one of whom, and I won't, out of politeness, name names, failed to even respond), so I decided to go with him.

The Quest Concludes

A couple of months later I was driving to work, which is quite near my house, when I was flagged down by the postman (the advantages of living in a small town). And there, in the middle of the street, the transaction took place. From the back of his red postal van came a giant paper-covered box with bubble wrap poking from the sides. As he transferred the box into my hands, I was excitedly aware that my long quest was nearing its end.

I brought the package to my office where I

**...on the last table lay,
in all its glory,
an Olle Plahn nyckelharpa.
I stood there staring at it
for the longest time,
inspecting every detail.**

removed the wrapping, not without first popping a few of the bubbles of the bubble wrap, like a character from the film *Amélie*. Then came the opening of light brown case and the first glimpse of MY nyckelharpa—the completion of the quest had arrived. A masterpiece! And it was mine! I prepared the bow with rosin, as I had learned on the Internet, and ran it across the strings ... again and again and again. A student of mine heard me from outside and knocked at the door—"What's that 'Heidi' sound,"

she asked. Geographically off as she may well have been, it seemed a fitting description. I did indeed feel like running outside yelling "Grandfather, Grandfather!"

Almost a year has passed since then, but each time I open my case, I still feel the way I did that first time I came face to face with my harpa. Of course, I have been brought down to earth a bit as I stumble through the process of learning and practicing. I often doubt that my clumsy fingers will ever be able to keep up with Peter Hedtund's as he plays the "normal" tempo versions of the lessons on his Nyckelharpskola DVD, but I console myself in the fact that I can at least keep the bow on the strings and not between them. I have also come to terms with my own character which dictates that if anyone is there to listen to me play, I am destined to miss 30% of the notes, gradually play every tune as a waltz, and end up getting my fingers stuck somewhere that they don't belong. But in the end these things don't really matter because on those occasions when I practice on the empty lawn of my university's campus late at night, my mind is still carried into another world where I am surrounded by people, oblivious to my every mistake, dancing a fast and furious polska to my plodding "Vals efter Båtsman Däck."

New CD available from the ANA

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Harpa Happenings

by Chris Leydon

The challenge to live with a woman is like negotiating a reverse hambo: what once required the right foot forward, necessitates the use of the left; an anticipation to the left, has you spinning to the right; the use of patience obviates the need for decisiveness; practicing chivalry heightens a response for a move toward independence. It's a hell of a paradox.

Everyone knows times in their nyckelharpa experience when things can go dreadfully wrong. Especially when playing in public, it's often a game of Russian Roulette, or like being invited to dinner by the great Genghis Khan and wondering if you, indeed, are the dinner being served. So when my soul mate challenged me to play with her at a local fiddle contest, I had this irrepressible fear that I might be volunteering for yet another life paradox to put my soul in jeopardy. Repressing all sanity I heard my mouth round out the words, "absolutely, count me in." Stress is when your gut says "no way" and your mouth says, "sure, no problem." And this was no different. The date was put on the calendar and I figured I had three weeks or so to deny having made the promise.

There's an expression that goes something like "time knows no kindness." The day arrived and the promise was not allowed to be forgotten. Making movements toward the door, she said "Shall we?" and all I could think of was the first three reasonable words in all ten commandments, "thou shalt not" This woman I live with, once she makes up her mind, is like a horse turned towards the stable after a long ride—nothing can alter her focus. Figuring there would be no harmony either at the festival or at home without an act of chivalry, I grabbed harpa in hand and we were off to the fiddle competition.

I live in a land where wagons no longer carry hay, where wheat fields are an endangered resource, and where the electricity in music comes from the wall socket and not from the vibrating, acoustic strings that beacon one's heart. However, there is a small oasis not far away, a working eighteenth century farm, that was the chosen location for the contest. We entered by a dirt country lane and were met by one attendee after another each carrying a stringed instrument of every imaginable kind and size. Emerging from our car and slinging our nyckelharpas over our shoulders, we felt instantly at home.

The setting for the fiddle fest was at the heart of the farmstead. A hay wagon was positioned in a hollow below the farm house and set up as a stage with mikes and speakers. In preparation for going on stage as well as sharing tunes with others, the tradition was to find a spot, your spot, and simply start playing. Music was everywhere—in

the barn, corncrib, silo, outhouse—*everywhere!* No one had claimed the sheep shed, and since my life with this woman had included twenty years of slaving in a barn raising Polled Dorsets, we were immediately attracted by the familiar and we unpacked to tune.

A lesson learned in five years of playing in public is that playing for a gathering whose attention is focused elsewhere is easy. Cocktail parties, museum openings, and fund raisers are all wonderful. Nobody really listens to you. You're just the lubricant to inspire vocal chords to exercise with less restraint: the louder you play, the louder the audience converses. We figured playing for the sheep would be no different. However, fiddle gatherings *are* very different—every note is heard, is wanted to be heard, is yearned to be heard, especially if the musical form is different. And to these American fiddle folks, the polska form IS different. Different also is the emotional comfort of playing immersed in a nurturing environment. Anxiety miraculously dissipates and you find your stride with ease. The music just flows.

Often, when I'm in the groove, I find my eyes close and it is as if my hands and bow know what to do without



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me. I become more an appreciator of music than a music maker. Such was the case at this festival, however, when opening my eyes at the end of a tune, the gathering around both of us was many people deep. Prominent among the listeners were these folks with arm bands that looked like they might be menacingly official. Both I and my companion have been thrown out of places before: She's gutsy and stubborn, I'm adventuresome and stupid. Nyckelharpas and fiddles have a history of adversary relationships so I figured why should this be any different. I even thought our guests might, just perhaps, provide my much needed excuse to keep me from making a fool of myself on stage. My blessed ticket to a reprieve was at hand.

Wishful thinking! The opposite proved true and our playing had actually guaranteed our presence on stage. I was soon nestled in front of the stage hoping I had accumulated enough Karma to perform well. One after another, contestants shared with us their tunes, many exhibiting exceptional virtuosity. After a dozen or so artist appearances, I knew I needed to visit the mandolin players dominating the out-house and relieve myself of the lemonade which had sustained me through the afternoon.

On my return, I recognized the voice on the speaker system. The melody of the phrases and the clarity of the

Swedish accent as it prepped the audience for the magic sounds of the next act sounded hauntingly familiar. It was the voice that captured and has held my attention since youth. I was immediately sighted as I made my way through the crowd and introduced as the "Johnny come lately." Amidst the laughter, there was no time to think, no time to feel and, more importantly, no time to back out. It was a time for decisiveness. I just grabbed my nyckelharpa and joined the woman who had thrown the gauntlet before me.

The view from atop the hay wagon was different. Hundreds of radiant smiles comforted the two of us as we played one tune after another. With each applause and each view of couples dancing in the grass before us, our hearts were transformed. We felt empowered. We felt we were big time. To share with so many in so short a time was, for us, to touch the universe. It may not happen again, but it happened.

As music makers rather than music takers, we had dared to dance the Hambo in reverse. We had challenged ourselves to take a different spin and to experience the paradox of living while playing with each other and our neighbors.

We now throw the gauntlet out to you.

Schottis i Nattskjortan

Trad. efter Anders Mattson

Transcribed by Elizabeth Weis, 1996

Nyckelharpa Strings for Sale

The American Nyckelharpa Association is pleased to announce the availability of strings for the nyckelharpa! We have five different products for you — two brands of playing strings and three versions of understring sets.

Playing Strings

The "playing strings" are the four largest strings, the ones that you actually touch with the bow. We have two brands to choose from, both manufactured in Sweden:

PRIM brand strings are made by an old Swedish string manufacturing company. Their fiddle strings are popular among folk musicians, and are available widely in the US. Their nyckelharpa strings are basically the same as their cello strings, except that they are the correct length for nyckelharpas instead of about a foot too long. All four strings are wound. The A-string is .020" (0.50 mm) in diameter.

JÖRPELAND brand strings are made by a gammalharpa player and artist named Ingvar Jörpeland. He makes strings for the gammalharpa too, but the ANA carries only strings for the modern 3-row nyckelharpa. The set is called "Jerker Special," which admittedly doesn't sound so good in English. The man who first taught Ingvar to spin strings (Nils Eriksson) was nicknamed Jerker (YERKER), and the strings are named after him. The A-string is plain, and the rest are wound.

Sympathetic Strings

We offer three versions of understrings, described more fully in the January 1998 edition of *Nyckel Notes*. Basically, the three sets can be called 6+6, 4+4+4, and 12-step. There's actually some logic here:

6+6 is

- 6 wound strings .021" (0.53 mm) in diameter
- 6 plain strings .014" (0.36 mm) in diameter

4+4+4 is

- 4 wound strings 0.24" (0.61 mm) in diameter
- 4 wound strings .021" (0.53 mm) in diameter
- 4 plain strings .014" (0.36 mm) in diameter

12-step is

- 12 strings, varying from .025" (0.64 mm) to .014" (0.36 mm), by steps of .001". The lower 6 are wound, the higher 6 are plain.

Order Form

Prices are listed for ANA members/non-members.

Price includes shipping in the US.

Add an appropriate extra amount for international orders.

String Set	Qty	Price	Cost
Prim Playing Strings	_____	\$53/\$60	\$_____
Jörpeland Playing Strings	_____	\$43/\$50	\$_____
6+6 Resonance Strings	_____	\$20/\$25	\$_____
4+4+4 Resonance Strings	_____	\$20/\$25	\$_____
12-step Resonance Strings	_____	\$20/\$25	\$_____
<i>(Make checks out to "ANA")</i>		Total:	\$_____

Name _____

Street _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Send this form, with a check made out to the American Nyckelharpa Association, to:

Tim Newcomb
P.O. Box 51, Montpelier, VT 05602



Upcoming Nyckelharpa Events

Check the ANA's web page for the most current scheduling information

Peter "Puma" Hedlund Nyckelharpa Workshops at Scandinavian Folk Festival September 5-7, 2003

World champion nyckelharpa player Peter "Puma" Hedlund will be performing and conducting workshops at the Scandinavian Folk Festival, September 5-7, 2003 in Jamestown, New York. There will be workshop sessions for nyckelharpa players of all experience levels. Details will be announced in the near future.

EVENTS IN SWEDEN

13-15 June 2003:

Nyckelharpa Stämman at Österbybruk

The annual Stämman (folk festival) at Österbybruk is one of the biggest events for nyckelharpa players, with concerts, dances, courses and of course lots of jamming. For more information, see nyckelharpa.just.nu.

22-26 June 2002: Ekebyholm

Residence course the week following midsommar every year, from Sunday to Thursday, at Ekebyholm castle, just north of Rimbo, Uppland. This course was started by Eric Sahlström, and is the most well-known course for learning Uppland music. Most participants are nyckelharpa players, but it's open to fiddle players as well.

The course is for nyckelharpa players at all levels, and all but beginning fiddle players. Cost for 2000 was 3300 SEK, which includes tuition, room and board, lessons and evening programs. The application period is about 20 Mar to 15 Apr 2003. Don't send any money yet, as only 75 students will be accepted.

Fiddle teachers are selected from the likes of Sonia Sahlström-Larsson, Anders Liljefors, and Tore Lindqvist. Nyckelharpa teachers include Ditte Andersson, Peter Hedlund, Cajsa Ekstav, Sven-Olof Sundell, Esbjörn Hogmark, Leif Åhlund, etc. As usual, Eva Tjörnebo will be teaching Swedish folksongs. The course leaders are Sigurd Sahlström and Lars Lindkvist.

For more information, contact:

Lars Lindkvist
Aprilvägen 43
177 61 Järfälla
SWEDEN

Tel. +46-8-58 03 16 21
lars.lindkvist@jarfalla.se

August 2002-May 2003:

Year-long Nyckelharpa Course at ESI

For the fifth year in a row, the Eric Sahlström Institute (ESI) is offering a course in nyckelharpa, in Tobo, Uppland, Sweden. For this course college credit is possible. Head teachers will be selected from the likes of Olov Johansson, Ditte Andersson and Sonia Sahlström but you will meet other teachers, Niklas Roswall, Gunnar Ahlbäck, Andreas Berchtold, Hasse Gille, Johan Hedin and Esbjörn Hogmark among others.

Course content is concentrated on nyckelharpa, but will also cover music theory, transcription, arrangements, folk music history, nyckelharpa history, folk singing, folk dance, playing for dancing, instrument knowledge and maintenance, playing on stage, etc., etc.

Students live in the Institute's modern annex, adjacent to the lecture hall. The cost is 3400 SEK/month for a double room, 4000 SEK/month for a single room. That includes the monthly rent, breakfast, lunch, dinner and coffee (of course - it's Sweden) on weekdays. You buy your own food for the weekends. Teaching is free for Swedish citizens, and maybe for non-citizens too, but you must pay for your own paper, pens and you might have to buy a few books, and other incidentals such as small trips.

The first semester starts the last Monday in August and ends the third Friday in December. The next semester starts second Monday of January and ends the last Friday of May. There are some weeks of holidays (one in November, one in February and one in April).

For more information, contact:

Eric Sahlström-Institutet
Bruksgatan 3
S-748 50 Tobo
SWEDEN

Tel +46-295-342 93
Fax +46-295-342 99
esitobo@algonet.se
www.ESItobo.org

From the Editor

Nu är det vår...

The daffodils are blooming here in St. Louis and the trees have pushed out their first leaves. All of a sudden, it's spring. (Whatever happened to that long, gray, snowy winter—good riddance!) Spring seems to catch me by surprise every year. The changing of the seasons is a gradual thing that sneaks up on us for weeks until—pow!—we realize that Things Are Different and we wonder why we never noticed it until now.

What I'm getting at here is this: time passes, oftentimes unobserved and unremarkably. But what does that have to do with publishing *Nyckel Notes*? Well, just as spring follows winter, the issues of this newsletter are supposed to land in your mailboxes as the seasons turn, like clockwork—but that has not been easy of late, and we realize that our production schedule has seen some hiccups. Those of us here on the production staff of this newsletter—the writers, editors, layout artists and board members of the ANA—want you to know that we are aware of this problem and are taking steps to resolve it. Here's what you should know:

Publication schedule

First off, we have set firm editorial deadlines for future *Nyckel Notes* issues. Starting with the next issue, the

publication schedule will be as follows:

- Summer issue will appear in June (submission deadline May 31)
- Fall issue will appear in September (submission deadline August 31)
- Winter issue will appear by December 25 (submission deadline November 30)
- Spring issue will appear in March (submission deadline February 28)

The issues will continue to feature the same mix of musical tips, nyckelharpa tunes, reviews, commentary, reports from the field and so on. If, under this new schedule, it happens that one issue is shorter in length than the previous one—well, odds are that the next one will be stuffed to the gills. In the end, it all evens out. We just want you to be confident that the issues you paid for will be arriving on time.

Free year's membership to the ANA

The articles and submissions that appear in these pages have been sent in by you, the readers. This newsletter is an educational service for the members of the ANA, and as you surely have realized, we can learn a lot from each other's experiences (and besides, it's fun to hear what is going on in the nyckelharpa world around the country and around the world)! Submissions by our readers are the lifeblood of this newsletter—and our blood is running a bit thin lately. Therefore, we would like to make the following offer, which we hope will increase the participation of our reading audience: the author of any article, commentary, report, CD or musical review, (and so on) that is published in the pages of *Nyckel Notes* through the end of 2004 will receive a free one year's membership (or extension of membership) to the ANA. Get something published, get a free extra year membership and—of course—a free year of *Nyckel Notes*. This one-time offer applies only to first-time authors—to persons who have never had anything published here before—and will be awarded only if a piece appears in print. (But most everything does, so have no fear about that!). In a nutshell: we want to hear from you, learn how things are going with nyckelharpa playing from your perspective, and add your voice to the greater community.

I think this newsletter is a great thing, and I hope you do too. Please drop me a line if you have any questions or comments. (And let's get those submissions rolling in!)

Warmly,
Bill Layher, editor
wlayher@artsci.wustl.edu

The American Nyckelharpa Association

The ANA is a non-profit organization dedicated to fostering the nyckelharpa, its music and its dance in North America. We sponsor and produce music and dance workshops across the country featuring the traditions of the nyckelharpa.

Membership dues in the ANA are \$10/year, which includes a subscription to this newsletter. Send to the address below, and please indicate if you play the nyckelharpa and if we can publish your name in our roster.

ANA Web Page

Source of information about the nyckelharpa, nyckelharpa players, a history of the instrument, nyckelharpa events and more! The URL is: <http://www.nyckelharpa.org>

Nyckel Notes

Published quarterly, edited by Bill Layher. Send submissions to *Nyckel Notes* at the address below, or to: nyckelnotes@nyckelharpa.org

The American Nyckelharpa Association
P.O. Box 661, Labaska, PA 18931-0661