
INKLINGS and IDLINGS

The Newsletter of the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association

313 East Third Street • Galesburg, Illinois 61401 • (309) 342-2361

Holiday Issue, 2000

The name, "Inklings and Idlings," comes from the title of Carl Sandburg's first column, printed in the **Galesburg Evening Mail** under the pseudonym "Crimson", in 1904.

The newsletter welcomes articles, particularly about Carl Sandburg, Galesburg, and Knox County. Space limitations may require that they be edited. The articles should be sent to:

Inklings and Idlings
Carl Sandburg Historic Site
Association
313 East Third Street
Galesburg, IL 61401

Barbara Schock
Editor

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Welcome to Our New Members

It is always a source of real pleasure to welcome new members to the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association. They are:

Grant Bullis
Rex Cherrington
Tomas Junglander
Marilyn Lehning
Lynn McKeown
Penelope Niven
Richard Pearson
Mr. and Mrs. John Watson
(Marguerite)

If you have joined the Association recently, and your name is not listed above, please notify **Inklings and Idlings** of the omission so it may be rectified.

Songbag Concerts

The last of the autumn Songbag Concert Series was held on November 9th at the Carl Sandburg Historic Site. The evening's program was given by the group Hammer and Pick. It presented traditional favorites on the hammer dulcimer, guitar, bass and mandolin.

As usual, the concert was well-attended, and thoroughly enjoyed by the audience. Among those present was Tomas Junglander, of Stockholm, Sweden. He is an admirer of Carl Sandburg and his works, and had come to visit the Site. Mr. Junglander is very personable, and many of those present sought the opportunity to meet and converse with him.

After a two month hiatus, the Songbag concerts will resume in February. John Heasley, the coordinator of the Series, has been busy determining which artists will be invited to perform. They will be announced in the near future.

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From the Superintendent

The new exhibits are still not done and the completion date has been moved to April, 2001. We will have a grand opening--possibly during the Sandburg Festival Days.

Work has been completed to rough in the addition to the barn, including plumbing the two new washrooms, and a new wood shingle roof. Construction will continue through the winter and by spring the barn

should be ready to use. The target date for completion is set for late summer. Then the building will be ready for use year-round as an exhibit hall and multipurpose activity area. We are already planning special events for the new facility.

Exhibits, new construction, new projects and additional events will keep us busy over the winter. Drop in to visit and see what we are doing. If you have any ideas for new projects, tell us about them.

Happy holidays!

- Carol Nelson

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Sandburg Items Make Great Gifts

New this year at the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association museum store are Christmas ornaments with a picture of Carl Sandburg and a quotation on the reverse side done in red and gold. The price is \$8.50.

Two new books have been published recently: **Galesburg Illinois in Vintage Postcards** by Carley Robeson and **The Movies Are** compiled by Arnie Bernstein. Mrs. Robeson's book shows many scenes of Galesburg at the turn of the twentieth century.

Mr. Bernstein's book is a collection of Carl Sandburg's film reviews written between 1920 and 1926. The postcard book is priced at \$18.99 and the film book costs \$17.95.

We have lots of great children's books by Carl Sandburg as well as the classic and new editions of his poetry and books about Abraham Lincoln. We do accept mail orders; please add 15 percent to cover shipping and handling costs. We will send you a catalog on request.

Remember, all proceeds from the museum store go toward improvements at the Carl Sandburg Historic Site.

Three "Stars" at the Sandburg Site



(Shown in the photograph above are Steve Holden, Site Interpreter; Carol Nelson, Site Superintendent; and David Hartman, narrator and former "Good Morning America" host, along with a young Carl Sandburg.)

We had a great time being a part of the filming of the television program "The Song and the Slogan" which was produced by WILL-TV in Urbana-Champaign. Steve Holden and Carol Nelson were interviewed by David Hartman and filmed for the program speaking about various periods in Carl Sandburg's life.

The program is part narration by Mr. Hartman and part musical interpretation of Carl Sandburg's poetry. The work was composed by Dan Crafts and sung by opera star Jerry Hadley, who was also here for the filming on November 15th and 16th.

The film will be broadcast on many Public Broadcasting Stations around the country in about a year. Showing of the film will give good publicity to the Carl Sandburg Historic Site.

According to Carol Nelson, David Hartman was a delightful person and spent time between takes telling behind-the-scenes stories of his years interviewing celebrities on "Good Morning America."

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Wrinklings and Wild Things

Dear Walt,

Thankx for naming us what you did.

Mickey and Minnie

With the change-in-weather cold snap, all sorts of critters have attempted to establish residence in our 1874 home. However, I'm unaware of any schizo-rodents with stumble-tongue names, as described in the following Sandburg tale. As with all of his childrens' stories, it must be read aloud.

THE THREE NICE MICE

Mr. and Mrs. Cat sit in their home in nice easy chairs. And a fat little mouse comes out of a hole in a corner of the room and looks around looking for something.

Mr. Cat sits quiet and says to Mrs. Cat, "I notice Anaxagoras is paying us a call this evening." "Yes," replies Mrs. Cat. "It is nice of Anaxagoras to call on us and I hope Anaxagoras will visit our home again."

While Mr. and Mrs. Cat are saying this the mouse stands on his hind legs and listens to every last word of it. Then he whisks himself back into his corner hole in a flick of a feather and a flish of a flash.

The next night again Mr. and Mrs. Cat sit quiet in nice easy chairs. And again a fat little mouse comes out of a corner hole and looks around looking for something.

And now Mr. Cat sits quiet and says to Mrs. Cat, "I notice Alcibiades is paying us a call this evening," Mrs. Cat replying, "Yes, it is nice of Alcibiades to call on us and I hope Alcibiades will visit our home often."

While Mr. and Mrs. Cat say this the mouse stands on his hind legs and listens to every last word of it.

Then they hear him saying, "It was Alcibiades came here last night. It is me, it is I, it is whoever you are listening to now, who is Anaxagoras and I bid you good evening good evening good evening." Then he whisks himself back into his corner hole with a flick of a feather and a flish of a flash.

Now on the third night again Mr. and Mrs. Cat sit quiet in nice easy chairs. And again a fat little mouse comes out of a corner hole and looks around looking for something. And Mrs. Cat says to Mr. Cat, "I wonder whether it is Anaxagoras or Alcibiades who pays us the honor of a call this evening." "Well," says Mr. Cat, "it must be either Anaxagoras or Alcibiades."

And the mouse, of course, stands on his hind legs and listens to every last word of this. Then they hear him saying, "I am sorry I must tell you that you are both mistaken. For I am Anonymous, the youngest brother of Anaxagoras and Alcibiades. You were wrong about each of them and you are wrong about me. So I bid you good evening good evening good evening." Then he whisks himself back in the corner hole with a flick of a feather and a flish of flash.

From then on, from that night on, Mr. and Mrs. Cat sit quiet in their nice easy chairs and when a fat little mouse comes out of a corner hole, they both say to it in a polite voice and with much respect, "Will you be so good and kind as to tell us your name so nobody makes a mistake and nobody is wrong when they call you either Anaxagoras, Alcibiades and Anonymous?"

And from then on, from that night on, the mouse stands on his hind legs and listens to every last word of this. Then he tells who he is, which one of the three mice brothers. Then he says good evening good evening good evening and whisks himself back into his corner hole with a flick of a feather and a flish of a flash.

And every morning at breakfast and every evening at supper Anaxagoras, Alcibiades and Anonymous--one mouse who has three namems--says to himself as though he is three themselves, "We sure look alike."

(This story was published only in **The Sandburg Range** in 1957. The book is a wonderful selection of Sandburg's writing under one cover and is available in paperback from our museum store.)

- Steve Holden

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Carl Sandburg Laments Lost Reunions

(Editor's Note: The following article by Dr. Richard Sandburg first appeared in **The Rockford Review**.)

Carl Sandburg visited his hometown, Galesburg, frequently when he lived in Elmhurst, Maywood, and Chicago, Illinois, and Harbert, Michigan.

In his golden years, while his home was in North Caroline, his visits to the Midwest were fewer, and mainly when he attended an event such as a dedication of a school in his honor.

However, he enjoyed visiting with his family, consisting of his brother, Mart, and two sisters, Mary and Martha, with their children.

A "must" effort was a reunion with Spanish-American War buddies and remnants of the "Dirty Dozen" chums from his old southside neighborhood.

The meetings were held at the blue-collar White Elephant Tavern on Boone's Avenue, or "Alley" as it was commonly called.

As one approached the White Elephant, it was often necessary to step over or around a dozing figure seated on the sidewalk after a drunken orgy the previous evening. As long as the red-eyed creature didn't provoke anyone, the police

didn't bother him.

Inside, the tavern sported several large, round oak tables, which could accommodate ten guests. No table cloths or linen napkins, but an old fashioned multi-colored lamp overhead provided the light.

There were no menus, but hot and cold sandwiches were standard food along with large bowls of the soup of the day.

The bartenders waited tables and Carl was fascinated with their ability to interlock five or six large steins of beer and carry them in one hand without spilling a drop.

During the meal, accompanied by racy, ribald repartee and razzmatazz, Carl mellowed as memories of the war were recounted, as well as reminiscing of the rascally escapades during their youth. With each reunion, the tales became more magnified until they were almost fictional.

Their ranks in the Army or their civilian status carried no weight at the White Elephant. All were equal whether the man was a nationally famous writer, or just a nondescript hanger-on in society.

After the luncheon, Sandburg would gleefully review the nostalgic event to his family, and then lay plans for future rendezvous when possible.

Suddenly, the Galesburg downtown merchants decided it was necessary to upgrade the shopping area and provide more parking places. The White Elephant Tavern, along with Boone's Alley, were trapped in the Urban Development Program. The entire block was leveled to the ground making room for a parking area with attractive trees and wretched, repugnant parking meters.

A railroad museum was established near the Chicago Burlington & Quincy depot and a store-sized mural of Carl Sandburg smiling down on

passers-by on South Seminary Street was added.

Galesburg's largest hostelry, the Custer Hotel, was refurbished and two rooms were combined to form the Carl Sandburg Suite, which housed many prominent people during their stay in Galesburg.

Ironically, the Downtown Urban Renewal was precipitated by the newly established Carl Sandburg Mall and the Carl Sandburg College on the north side of Galesburg. The Mall housed over 80 businesses, including a Sears, Penney's and Bergner's as anchors.

The Carl Sandburg College naturally vied with established Knox College for respectability and students. A Carl Sandburg Drive has become a well-traveled thoroughfare on Galesburg's north side.

The next time I met Carl Sandburg in Chicago, I hesitantly asked him if he had heard of the Urban Renewal Program in Galesburg and the destruction of the White Elephant Tavern and Boone's Alley.

Carl's eyes opened wide and rolled back in his head. He looked down at me sadly and longingly as the memories of past meetings flashed through his mind. He paused a moment, and then possibly inspired by Jesus' shortest verse in the Bible, he muttered, "I wept."

- Richard Sandburg

* * *

The Smorgasbord

Smorgasbord is a Swedish word which has been adopted into the English language. To Americans, it means a large table filled with a variety of foods. The patrons go to the table and fill their plates which are then taken to a separate table for eating. They may return to the table as often as they wish.

In Sweden, the word *smorga* literally means bread and butter. It can be breakfast, a quick snack or a light meal. A slice of crispy bread with butter and whatever may be in the refrigerator can be the basis for an open-face sandwich.

The Swedish people have a tradition of putting all the food on a large table so all can help themselves. In rural areas, this has been done at family and community gatherings for at least 500 years. The American custom of pot-luck meals may be a descendant of the Swedish style of sharing food.

In the 1880s, the smorgasbord became popular because a greater variety of foods was available throughout the year. The canning of fish and other foods commercially and at home contributed to the increased number of foods that could be served. At the same time, railroad travel became more common and hotels were built to accommodate the customers. Travelers had to eat and an attractive table of food was an added benefit.

Great care is taken in setting the smorgasbord to get the most artistic effect. The color, temperature, texture, flavor and kind of food are taken into account when arranging the dishes on the table. Colorful table linens and dishes are also part of the artistic scheme.

In 1947, the Woman's Missionary Society of Trinity Lutheran Church in Galesburg published a cookbook. The ladies devoted one chapter to recipes which could be prepared for a smorgasbord. They gave this advice for arranging the smorgasbord table:

"The food itself forms a striking decoration--a high mound of delicately browned meat balls may be set off attractively by placing on one side a large platter of cold baked ham, garnished with alternate slices of sour beets and hard boiled eggs and on the other side a platter with several varieties of sliced

cheese. A bowl of brown beans may be surrounded by plates of anchovies, sardines and smoked salmon. The salad section is very colorful because fruits and vegetables in brilliant jellies make exciting combinations."

The old adage about eating with our eyes certainly fits the planning for such a well laden table as described by the church ladies.

With so much food to choose, the eater should be aware of the organization of the classic smorgasbord table. Herring in several varieties is the starting point for organizing the presentation. Boiled potatoes with chives or onion and sour cream are a good accompaniment for the herring. Other fish dishes are next in order. Cold cuts, ham, salami and liver pate, along with hard cooked eggs stuffed with caviar, and other goodies precede the hot dishes. Herring au gratin, meat balls and omelets are the most frequently served hot foods at a traditional smorgasbord.

Next, the cucumber salad, fruit salad, tomatoes, and relishes are arranged in colorful abundance. Crisp bread, limpa, and pumpernickel also accompany the meal. A large variety of cheeses is a likely addition to the table. Wine is never served with smorgasbord. Beer or bottled water are the most commonly served beverages.

Dessert may be set out on a separate table for those who still have some room to eat such things.

The best advice when eating from the smorgasbord is to take small amounts and avoid mixing too many different dishes on the same plate. The first plate taken should be composed of several of the herring dishes on the table. On the second trip to the smorgasbord, one can enjoy several of the other fish offerings. The meats and salads can be selected for the third plate and hot dishes last.

There can be a little bit of almost everything in the selections, but the true enjoyment comes from combining them in just the right way. Smorgasbord may be a gastronomic extravaganza, but it is not meant to be gluttony.

Here are several recipes which might be used for a smorgasbord.

Jansson's Temptation

(There is a story about this casserole that connects to the Galesburg area. It is said that Eric Janson, who was the leader of the Swedish families who migrated to Bishop Hill, Illinois, once was tempted to sneak a hidden taste of this dish. He was caught in the act and there were suspicions about the strength of his character. It is obvious Eric spelled his surname differently so the truth of the story may be doubted. If you like anchovies, this is the food for you. In Sweden this dish is as ubiquitous as pizza in the United States.)

2 onions, sliced
3 tablespoons butter
4 medium potatoes, peeled and cut into thin strips
About 20 Swedish anchovy fillets
1 1/4 cups cream

Saute onion in 1 tablespoon butter. Layer potatoes, onion and anchovy fillets in buttered baking dish. Pour over 1 tablespoon of brine from the anchovy can and dot with remaining butter. Add half of the cream. Bake in 400 degrees F. oven for 50 to 60 minutes. Add remaining cream after 10 minutes of the baking time. Serve hot from the baking dish.

Makes 4 to 6 servings

Lindstrom's Hamburgers

1 1/2 pounds ground beef
2 eggs
1/2 cup light cream and water mixed
2 boiled medium potatoes, mashed
3/4 cup chopped pickled beets

2 tablespoons chopped onion
2 tablespoons chopped capers
2 tablespoons liquid from pickled
beets
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper or paprika
3 tablespoons butter
1/2 cup water

Mix ground beef and potatoes. Add eggs and cream and water mixture gradually while stirring. Carefully mix in beets, onion and capers. Season with salt and pepper. Shape into patties 1/2 inch thick. Fry quickly in butter on both sides in a skillet. Place patties on a hot platter and garnish with parsley. Rinse skillet with water and pour drippings over patties. Serve immediately with boiled potatoes and a vegetable salad.

Makes 6 servings

Readers wishing to explore further the world of Swedish cooking may find these books helpful:

The New Swedish Food, Greta Borgstrom and Birgit Danfors
Good Food in Sweden, Oskar Jakobsson
The Foods of Scandinavia, Time-Life Books
The Great Scandinavian Cook Book, J. Audrey Ellison (Editor)

- Barbara Schock

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Swedish Christmas

At the winter solstice, December 20th, the Vikings conducted rites to encourage the gods to hurry the return of the sun and make sure nature would grow in its natural abundance when the season came. In the ninth century the country now known as Sweden adopted a new religion, Christianity. The two traditions were combined and continued together.

The Swedes dearly love their holiday season. Homemakers bake traditional cakes and cookies to serve their

families. The shops are full of cheerful decorations and goods for giftgiving. Every effort is made to overcome the dark skies and stormy weather.

Christmas Eve is the time when gifts are exchanged and families come together for the Christmas dinner. The menu usually includes some of the traditional smorgasbord dishes such as herring salad, pickled beets, meat balls, sausages and liver pate. Lutfisk (often joked about in the United States) is served with cream sauce, boiled potatoes, mustard and green peas.

Dessert is usually rice porridge with a single almond in it. The person who receives the almond in his or her dish is supposed to get married during the year. Or perhaps, it will bring good luck if the person is already married or too young to be married.

Old family recipes are brought out for Christmas cookie baking. Pepparkakor are spicy gingerbread cookies and Mandelmusslor are tart shells baked in small fluted tins. The dough includes ground almonds and the baked shells are filled with jam and whipped cream just before serving. Saffron-flavored breads are served on Lucia Day, December 13th.

Christmas Rice Porridge

1 cup rice
1 tablespoon butter
1 cup water
5 cups milk
1 stick cinnamon
1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons sugar

Rinse rice. Melt half of butter in saucepan or double boiler, add rice and water and boil 10 to 15 minutes or until water is absorbed. Add milk and cinnamon stick and simmer 45 minutes or until milk is almost absorbed, season and add remaining butter. Serve with cold milk and additional cinnamon and sugar.
Makes 6 servings

Christmas Ginger Snaps

1/3 cup water
1/3 cup dark corn syrup
3/4 cup light brown sugar, packed
1/2 cup butter
1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon
1 1/2 teaspoons ginger
1 teaspoon cloves
1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda
4 cups flour

Bring water, syrup and sugar to the boiling point. Add butter and stir occasionally until butter is melted. Chill. Add spices and baking soda mixed with small amount of flour. Gradually stir in remaining flour until dough is very soft. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Turn dough out onto a clean surface and knead until smooth. Roll dough out to 1/8 inch thickness, using a pastry cloth, and cut cookies into round or fancy shapes with cutters. Place on greased baking sheet and bake in 400 degrees F. oven for 8 to 10 minutes. Let cool before removing to rack.

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Jul Kaka (Christmas Bread)

(This recipe was contributed to the Trinity Lutheran Church cookbook by Mrs. Peter Linderoth.)

1/2 cup butter
3 tablespoons sugar
2 cups milk
2 cakes yeast
3 eggs, well beaten
6 1/2 cups flour
1 cup raisins
1 cup currants
1 cup candied citron
1/2 teaspoon ground caramon seed

Dissolve yeast in 3 tablespoons warm water. Scald milk and combine with sugar and butter. Cool and add 2 cups flour. Beat thoroughly. Add yeast and eggs, then fruits and remaining flour and cardamon. Mix all together and let rise until double in size. Place in two greased loaf pans, brush tops with milk and sprinkle with sugar. Let rise until doubled and bake in 350 degrees F. oven for one hour.