BAIKI

THE INTERNATIONAL SAAMI JOURNAL

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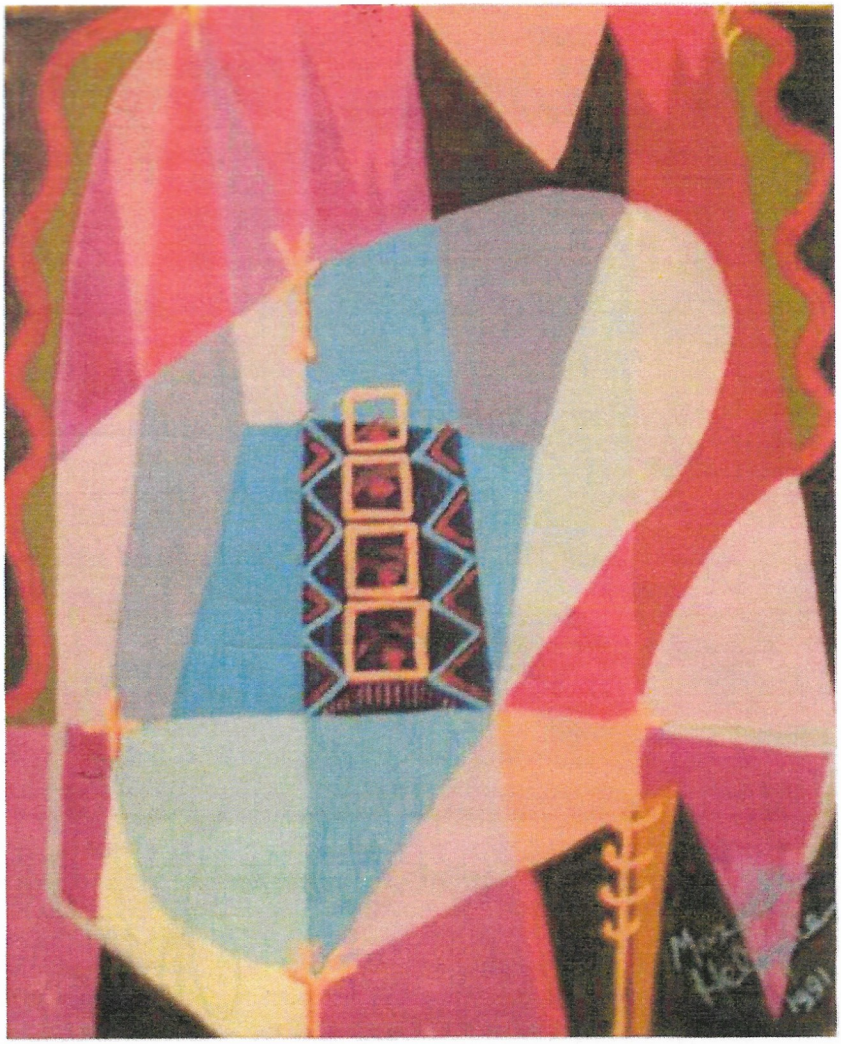

Dennis Helppie: "Northern Lights Landscape," acrylic on canvas, 1991

OUR SPIRITUAL RELATIONSHIP WITH NATURE

• ***Kurt Seaberg:*** *the Importance of Place* • ***Elina Helander-Renvall:*** *Animism* • ***Carol Staats:****The Rituals* • ***Christina Johnson:*** *A Musician Finds a Njuorggonas* • ***Paul Stonehill:*** *Lake of the Mountain Spirits* • ***Rauna Kuokkanen:*** *The Gift* • ***Colleen Reynolds:*** *Through Our Elders' Eyes and much, much, more*

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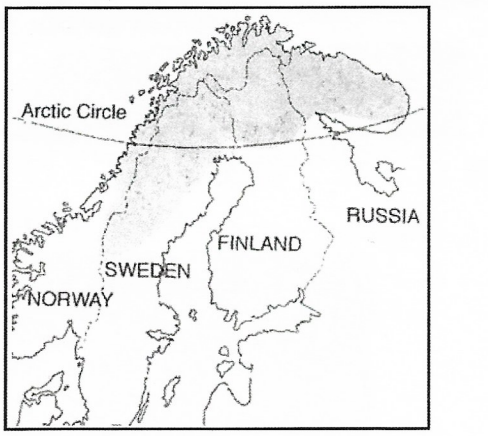
Please visit www.baiki.org.

WHO ARE THE SAAMI AND WHAT IS *BÁIKI*?



MAP OF THE SAMI AREA TODAY

Source: *The Saami: People of the Sun and the Wind,* Ajtte Swedish Mountain and Saami Museum, Jokkmokk.

"Báiki" [bye-h'kee] is the nomadic reindeer-herding society's word for the cultural identity that survives when people move from one place to another. *Báiki: the International Sámi Journal* grew out of the search for Sámi connections world wide by people in North America. After its appearance in 1991 the Sámi presence in the United States and Canada was finally acknowledged. The *Báiki* logo was designed by faith fjeld, *Báiki*'s founding editor and publisher, using pictographs from Sámi Drums. The reindeer symbolizes subsistence, the *lavvus* [Sámi dwellings] symbolize the extended family, the mountain behind symbolizes spirituality, and the *njalla* [storage shed] symbolizes traditional knowledge kept for future generations.

The "Sámi" [sah-mee] — also spelled "Saami" or "Sami" — are the Indigenous People of Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Russian Kola Peninsula. The Sámi area in the North is called "Sápmi" [sahp-mee], and in the South "Åarjel Saemieh" [war-yel sah-mee-eh]. The nine Sámi languages are related to the Samoyedic, Uralic and Altaic language groups. There are about 80,000 Sámi People living in the Nordic countries. It is estimated that there may also be at least 30,000 people living in North America who have Sámi ancestry. Some are the descendants of the reindeer herders who came to Alaska and Canada in the late 1800s and early 1900s, and some are the descendants of Sámi immigrants who settled in the Midwest, the Upper Michigan Peninsula, the Pacific Northwest and parts of Canada during the same period.

The Sámi refer to their spiritual belief system as "the Nature Religion." Sámi society has traditionally been organized into *siidas* or *samebys* — semi-nomadic extended families who hunt, fish, farm and harvest together according to Nature's subsistence cycles. This worldview and way of life is still a part of Sámi society wherever possible.

The history of Sápmi and Åarjel Saemieh parallels that of the world's other Indigenous Peoples. Colonization and genocide began in the Middle Ages after contact with European missionaries. Sami areas were divided by national borders. and Sámi children were removed from their families and placed in boarding schools where they were taught to think and act like the colonizers. Conversion by the church and assimilation by the state set the stage for the abuse of the Sami natural resources.

Today the Sámi are incorporating new technologies in the revival of their languages, the *yoik,* and other traditional arts, and the Sami are in the forefront of the worldwide post-colonial renaissance of Indigenous voice and vision. Moreover, having their own parliaments in Norway, Sweden and Finland, the Sámi relationship with their former colonizers is improving as well.

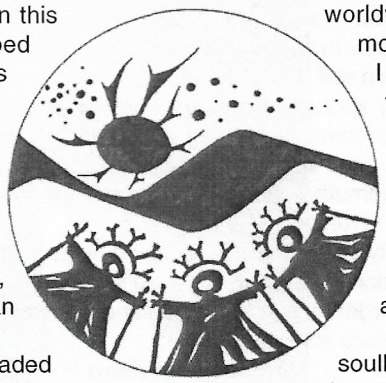
BÁIKI EDITORIAL PAGE

KURT SEABERG: THE IMPORTANCE OF PLACE

Notes on Ecology, Culture and the Native Worldview

From time to time we print articles that have run in previous issues. A longer version of this editorial was first published in Báiki *Winter Solstice Issue #9, 1993. It was the first of Kurt Seaberg's many contributions of art and writing to this journal since then.*

As a young boy growing up in the suburbs I was always fascinated by stories about Indians. Through the distorted lens of Hollywood, the images of a wild and free people living close to the earth both enchanted and terrified me. Enchanted me because the spirit of the Indian was still very much alive in the woods and the fields near my home where I used to wander. I could easily imagine a village made of bark or a hunting party moving silently through the trees. Terrified me because this spirit was regarded as a threat to the modern world that I was being groomed to enter. In this world, where the earth was being reshaped daily into four-lane highways, shopping malls and acres of asphalt parking lots, Nature, at best, was just so much scenery waiting to be removed. At worst, it was a dangerous place where a kid could disappear and never be heard from again. In the end, enchantment won out over terror and we boys were drawn, in some mysterious way, to the ever shrinking wild spaces, rather than the carefully managed playgrounds.



Years later, my boyhood fantasies were traded for reality and Indians became flesh and blood human beings who laughed and cried and ate hamburgers just like everybody else, and the word "Indian" was replaced by "Native American." I was still required to think of "them" as being somehow fundamentally different from me and I wondered why the word "native" could only be applied to the descendants of the First Peoples but not to someone like me who was also born and raised in this land we call North America. Then it dawned on me that perhaps I was being conditioned by my schooling and my culture to be something other than Native, for in my school, we — the children of immigrants — pledged allegiance to the flag and to the republic for which it stands but never to the earth beneath our feet.

In 1986 I became involved with a grassroots movement known as the Big Mountain Support Group. Big Mountain is a place in northeastern Arizona that is occupied historically by Hopis — an agricultural, mesa-dwelling people — and Navajos or Dineh — a semi-nomadic, pastoral people. Unable to clearly define the boundaries between the two nations, the federal government simply called the place the "Joint Use Area." This complicated things for resource-extracting corporations like Kerr-McGee and Peabody Coal, who needed to know what "legally belonged" to whom and which tribal council they needed to manipulate in order to gain rights to the resources buried beneath. So a "dispute" between the Hopis and the Dineh was manufactured and the government stepped in with a "compromise." They redrew the boundaries and moved the Dineh. Trouble was the Dineh considered Big Mountain to be their home, the place they and their ancestors had occupied for centuries. It was dotted with sacred ceremonial sites and burial grounds and according to their traditional spiritual practices one could not separate oneself from the place of one's birth anymore than an unborn infant could separate itself from its mother, bonded as it were by a spiritual umbilical chord.

I spent a couple of months living with traditional Dineh elders, herding sheep, chopping wood, and hauling water. This clarified for me the vast gulf that exists between the worldview held by Native Peoples and that of modern, industrial society and I learned that if I were ever to become "native" I was going to have to learn the importance of place.

According to the Western paradigm place is relatively unimportant and Western religions and societies tend to celebrate people and events. Historical figures like Columbus or St. Patrick and the dates of their discoveries can be transplanted anywhere.

Western science views the world as soulless, to be exploited at will to serve human ends, and this fits handily into the ethics of capitalism. Land equals resource, resource equals money, and money makes the world go around. Couple this with the undeniable history of European-Americans whose forbears, for reasons of poverty or political persecution, were forced to leave the land of their ancestors behind along with their sacred, ceremonial sites and burial grounds. So you have a formula for restlessness and confusion about our proper relationships to the rest of Creation. This rootlessness, with people moving from city to city and job to job forever chasing the elusive pot of gold called "opportunity," is a very recent phenomenon — a pattern that runs counter to how human beings have inhabited the planet for more than fifty-thousand years.

Contrast this to the worldview held by Indigenous People. From the Sami of Sápmi to the Aborigines of Australia, to the Penan of Sarawak, to the San of the Kalahari. Thousands of nations are tied to a specific locality, a specific geography and the characteristics of the place inform their world. Their stories, songs and art revolve around the rhythms of their places of emergence as a People; how a particular mountain or river came to be; the significance of sacred sites, the rocks, trees and mountain ranges that are charged with powerful energies; how special animals and plants, such as reindeer, buffalo or corn, entered into a covenant with the People — offering the gift of continuous life.

For Indigenous People, the earth is a living, breathing, conscious being that gives birth to all living things. Human consciousness is perceived in relationship to the plants and animals, the earth and the sky. Without these things, life would be impossible.

*(**SEABERG** continued on page 17)*

drawing: Nils-Aslak Valkeapää

SAAMI CONNECTIONS

ANCESTRAL BONES

(*This is an excerpt from The Local: Sweden's News in English.*) A major project is under way at Uppsala University to try to return the remains of Sami people used for racial biology research. The university holds 57 Sami skulls and 6 Sami skeletons. "The problem is finding this material [sic] in the big pile of bones we have," said Geoffrey Metz, who leads the project. Uppsala was home to Sweden's Institute for Racial Biology Research until it closed in the 1950s. The Sami remains were used to test theories on the differences between races.

The university has so far identified two skulls likely to be Sami. They are being sent to the Áttje Sami Museum in Jokkmokk. But there are some question marks over even these bones. "They could also be the remains of Swedish settlers," Metz said."Racial Biology researchers were interested in the differences between Swedes and Samis."

The researchers used racial theories to justify the forced sterilization of Sami people and the plundering of graves for "remains" [*quotes added*] to use in experiments. Many feel that the bones symbolize colonialism and the historic repression of the Sami People. Metz says non-Sami remains also held by the university, such as those of prisoners, have not generated the same level of controversy.

Thanks to:

Marilyn Jackson
Oakland, California
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MEMORIES FROM NOJO

What joy to receive the beautiful spring 2009 *Báiki* issue. What a wonderful piece of journalism it has become, so professional and welcoming. Not that the old issues did not have some good writing and information. I can't remember who guided me into the struggling circle of interested Sami when Báiki was done in your home in the Powderhorn area of Minneapolis. I remember well the discussions on the making of the flag and what the different colors and designs represent.

I attended a gathering of Sami people at the Minnesota Zoo where we wore our various ethnic clothing (I in my North Norwegian *bunad*) and experienced such warm fellowship. That seems to be my last Sami contact till now.

My mother and father were immigrants, my father from Sweden and my mother from the Lofoten islands near a town called Reina. It was when a cousin came with the Norwegian cross country ski team to Mora, Minnesota that I found out that their grand mother was Sami. Their families kept it "hidden in the closet" and my mother and cousin still do not admit it in their contacts. They spoke in Norwegian but I was able to understand what they were talking about and so I asked my cousin about their grandmother and he cautioned me not to get "involved."

My sister and I then started digging into a wonderful revelation about the Sami. I enclose my order for a subscription and look forward to future issues.

Norma C. Johnson
Minneapolis, Minnesota
<nojo@basicISP.net>

FAN MAIL FROM NORWAY

Thank you for sending me a copy of *Báiki* Issue #32. It is beautiful with its color and colorful contents. I especially appreciate seeing my new book, *Imagining Place,* reviewed by Anne Dunn. Congratulations on the good work. Yes, it does its part for the world today and that is so very important. Best wishes to all,

Carll Goodpasture and Gro Heining
Gjettum, Norway
<gro@heining.no>
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FINDING SAMI FLAGS

We asked SwedArt's Margareta Lidskog where to find Sami flags online. Thanks Margareta. Here are some links:

http://www.flagline.com
http://www.flagsonline
http://shop.cafepress.com/sami-flag
http://www.custom-flag-makers.com/world-flags/Sami-flag.htm

Margareta Lidskog
Concord, Massachusetts
<margareta.lidskog@verison.net>
www.info@swedart.com

VESTERHEIM MAGAZINE

The current issue of *Vesterheim Magazine*, published by the Norwegian-American Museum, Decorah, Iowa, features the Sámi. Articles include "Who Are the Sámi?" by Nathan Muus (who also took the cover photograph) and "The Alaska Sámi: a Reindeer Story," by Faith Fjeld. The Keviselie map "Sápmi: Homeland of Sámi People Within Four Countries" is a featured illustration along with photographs of North American Sámi community activities and archival photographs from the Reindeer Project. We have been told that the issue is one of the most popular ever published and many readers have indicated that they had no prior knowledge about the Sámi. *Báiki* is very grateful to Laurann Gilbertson, Chief Curator, and to *Vesterheim* editor, Charlie Langton.

A CORRECTION

The most recent issue of *Báiki* looks great! Just something I noticed: the bio after my article indicates titles of two different books *Reshaping the University,* and *The Logic of the Gift*, but they are one and the same. I also have another book out in Sami: *Boaris dego eana: Eamiálbmogiid diehtu, filosofiijat ja dutkan* [*As Old as the Earth: Indigenous Knowledge, Philosophies and Research*]. It is the first ever book on these topics in Sami!!

Rauna Kuokkanen
Toronto, Ontario
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SAAMI CONNECTIONS

GEASSI/SUMMER SIIDASTALLAN 2010

photo: Marlene Wisuri

A siidastallan is a gathering of Sami people and, at least in spirit, reindeer. It has been more than two months since the siidastallan in Duluth. I am remembering with such pleasure the friendship, meaningful discussions, good food, and just plain fun that were shared by the group. About 35 people were in attendance at one time or another during the weekend with a number of additional folks viewing the movie *Suddenly Sami* at the cafe Tak for Maten on Friday evening.

Many thanks are in order for everyone who contributed the good food that fed the group all weekend with wholesome, nutritious meals and snacks. Special thanks are in order to Chris Pesklo who made three wonderful lavvus that graced the space on the shore of Lake Superior. And thanks to the Creator who gave us a gentle rain on Saturday and glorious sunshine on Sunday and spared us thunder and lightning, cold temps, and strong winds.

With no formal activities planned, people spent time in good conversation, preparing and eating meals, exploring the lakeshore, sitting around the campfire, viewing the *Kautokeino Rebellion* on Chris' computer, and engaging in discussions about genealogy and DNA and so many other things. There was an opportunity to see faith fjeld's and Nathan Muus' excellent articles in the latest *Vesterheim Museum Magazine*. An informal govat (Sami marketplace) provided the opportunity to view and purchase artwork, books, and CDs done by siida members. A number of side trips included a trip to the Quarter Master Buffalo Ranch in Esko to purchase meat for the camp stew and continued throughout the weekend with visits to Sally Johnson's home, Rudy Johnson's *sieddi* on Lake Superior, the Báiki Office (in faith's home), and to silversmith Brad Nelson's *stabbur* and gift shop in Larsmont. One of the impromptu and magical moments of the weekend came about when we all became members of the "Birch Bark Headbands," compliments of Charlie Mayo, as we all sat together laughing in the moonlight.

We were especially pleased to have Sally Johnson, our respected matriarch and elder, in attendance both Saturday and Sunday. Her lavvu with Mel Olsen's banner flying in the breeze was a centerpiece of the grounds: see photo.

Our siida meeting on Sunday opened with joiks and remembrances of our ancestors and dear members who have passed over. Topics of discussion included the preservation and storage of our archives and personal collections, the use of technology to bring the group closer given our spread-out geography, and the continuation of siida activities in the future. I think there was agreement that having a siidastallan without the general public present had been worthwhile this time.

As re-elected siida point person, I will try to keep communications open. If you have an issue that needs to be discussed or an event that needs to be to publicized, email Jennifer Harkonen Wagner <denom001@umn.edu> for posting on Facebook; to post items check out the siida on-line newsletter *Árran* (http://home.earthlink.net/~arran2/north-american-sami.htm), or *Báiki: the International Sami Journal* and its web page (www.baiki.org).

Email <mwisuri@cpinternet.com> or <faithfjeld@q.com> for additional information.

We thought about and missed those of you who couldn't make it this time and hope to see you at another event in the future.

Marlene Wisuri
Duluth, Minnesota
<mwisuri@cpinternet.com>

*(**SAAMI CONNECTIONS** continued on page 14)*

Elina Helander-Renvall: "Celestial Reindeer," acrylic, 2008

"Animals and birds and plants. Nature, all this. My sisters and brothers. I am a part of Nature and live on Mother Earth. Surely Nature teaches. The reindeer determines where and when to go. And I only follow. It is a joy, the joy of life. Nature, powerful Nature." — Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, Sami shaman, poet and artist, in an article published in *ReVision Magazine*,1998.

ANIMISM
THE WEB OF LIFE

by Elina Helander-Renvall, Ph.D.

Human beings have a need to affiliate themselves with Nature. At an early stage in human history, people were very close to their environment, but the advancement of modern society has caused a fundamental separation between Nature and people. Today nearly half of the people in this world dwell in urban areas and the gap continues to widen between human beings and their natural settings and many people think that the value of Nature depends on how much it benefits industrial development. Furthermore, the erosion of biodiversity is increasing, which leads to fewer possibilities for people to reach out to the natural world. Many people do not even know how to relate to Nature. However, modern society may need this kind of split where ecological conditions of human life are hidden from view, because as biological resources decrease, and many species become endangered, people may start to feel pity for the animals and plants. In this way their need to reconnect with the natural world may be enhanced.

There are many opportunities for reconnecting with Nature and the best way to start is in childhood. Research shows that those children who play in Nature-based surroundings show a greater affection and sensitivity for such places later in life. In addition, those people who have personal connections to Nature-based environments are more eager to protect such places. In the subsistence activities of fishing and hunting, picking berries, and fetching material for handicrafts, and by walking in and listening to Nature, Indigenous people connect with their environment. When discussing our world view we emphasize relationships — the feeling of interconnection with other natural beings. This is an expression of positive attitudes and practices regarding Nature.

The Sami words *bassi* [sacred; holy], *áldá* [sacred location] and *sieidi* [sacred stone] express that something is holy and that everything is a part of a wider circle, part of a living chain.

The Sami word for Earth is *Eatnan*, which means "my Mother." According to a Sami story, a long time ago our Creator hid treasures, "natural resources," deep in Mother Earth for the Sami People — the Daughters and Sons of Sun who were soon to come and dwell here. As we Sami understand it, these treasures still exist and must be taken care of.

OUR ANIMISTIC WORLD

What does it mean to live in an animistic world? Animism, the universal Indigenous worldview, attributes life and soul to animals, trees and celestial bodies. It is the means of balancing the interaction between human beings and Nature. The Sami female High Spirits *Máttáráhkká*, *Sáráhkká*, *Juksáhkká*, *Uksáhkká* and *Boaššoáhkká* support this interaction between the activities of the Sami and *Eatnan*, especially in the context of sacred ceremonies, subsistence activities and family relationships. They are links to Nature, and they help us feel at home with the natural world. Here are some examples of animistic relationships.

Traditionally, reindeer Sami live with their herds. We Sami are very careful to follow what happens to the animals in our environment; the Northern Sami word *ealli* used for animal and game also means alive, and living. The herding lands are considered to be sacred. Swearing at the reindeer, the lands or humans is not allowed. By using rough language, a herder condemns her/himself and as a result of this, calamities start taking place to grazing lands, animals and herders. It is important for some reindeer herders to negotiate with the Spirits such as the *Gufihtar*, the Earth Spirits, in order to get permission to use a particular location for herding.

Reindeer herders have strong links to their ancestral lands. The lands are perceived as living entities on which active relationships between humans and animals take place. In order to talk to and listen to the lands and the Spirits who protect them, there exists a special dialogue that consists of prayers, ceremonies, and dreaming. Through *yoik* [song], place names and story telling, the lands become even more alive. They nurture and sustain human beings. Johan Turi, the nomadic Sami herder who wrote the first book on Sami spirituality, wrote that lands are so beautiful that they laugh and when people are sad the lands, the stones and the trees cry with them.

THE SAMI DRUM

The Sami shaman Drum [*meavrresgarri, govadas, rumpu*] is an expression of Sami cosmology, our cultural and spiritual worldview. The Drum is part of Sami *noaiddástallan* [shamanism]. The *noiadi*, the shamans, are healers who have had much power in Sami society. Shamanism is a living tradition despite attempts by non-Sami researchers and institutions such as churches, schools and universities to capture, explain it and kill it. Some of the old drums are still maintained and protected by Sami families and some are hidden in the wilds.

Today the popularity of the so-called frame drums has increased and many Sami are producing drums to be used as art pieces, musical instruments, or commercial objects. Also, what is known

(**HELANDER-RENVALL** *continued overleaf*)

(HELANDER-RENVALL continued from page 7)
as "The Drum Time" continues, and some Sami use the Drum in a sacred manner according to our spiritual tradition: for healing, shamanic journeys and to foretell future events.

The Drum can set different powers in motion as illustrated in the following story: A long time ago, the Sami were hunters and fishermen. Then later they started to combine hunting with the domestication of reindeer. At the sacred sites, offerings were made to the Great Spirits of the Sky in order to impact their daily reality, and the shamans used the Drum and *yoiks* to attract wild reindeer. Let us make a journey to the mountains of the far north to see what happened to a Sami hunter/herder who respected the old beliefs.

As our man walked through the tundra, he unexpectedly found a shaman Drum. It was the very same Drum that in old times was used to attract wild animals from the tundra and the forests of the far north. He knew that such Drums can have much power because their sounds penetrate the Spirit World. He also knew that Drums can reveal things that are normally unseen by people. "Wait, I need to sing a song," he said to himself. To reinforce the sounds of the Drum, he began to *yoik* from the depths of his heart:

"This they must have drummed,
the Old Ones in ancient times.
They used magic on reindeer,
Ancient Elders,
Deceased Grandfathers."

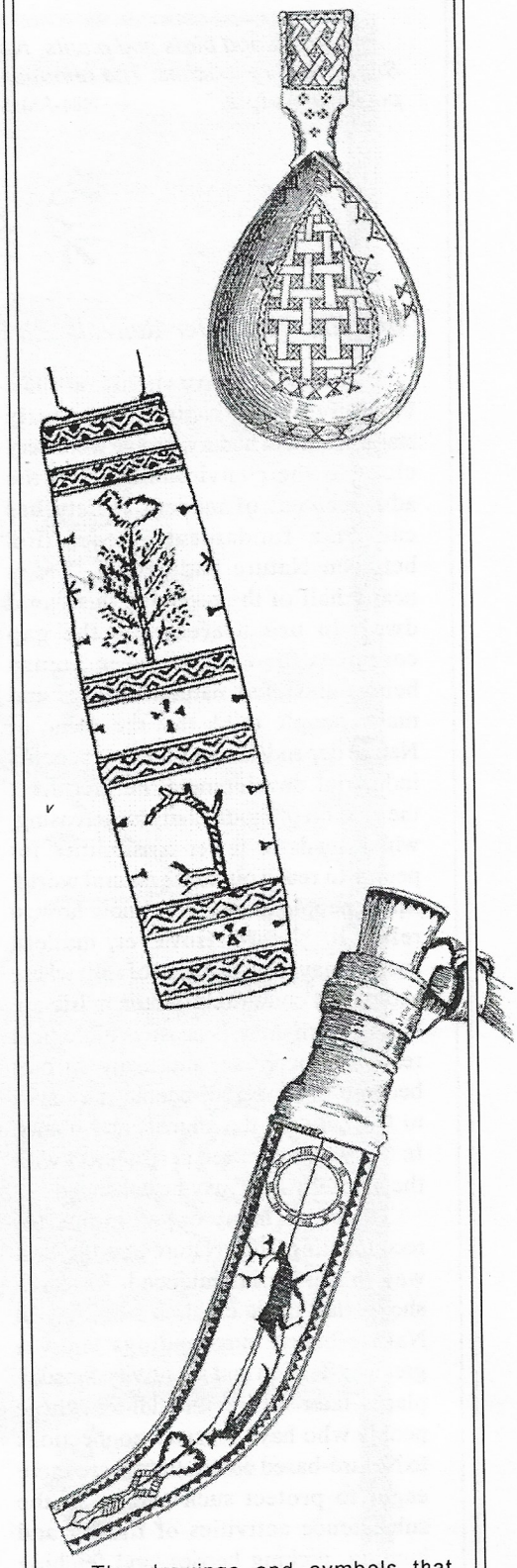
He did not have to wait long. Wild reindeer began to show up from all directions. First, a white female reindeer appeared and approached the man, grunting in search of her calf. Next, a huge reindeer herd appeared before him and indeed, wherever he looked, wild reindeer were running freely. The herder was very scared. "Oh, no! What is this all about?" he asked himself. "What is going to happen to me?" He stopped drumming and yoiking and a few seconds later our man became dizzy and fell unconscious to the ground. The sun turned and turned. After the herder had been in the dream world for some time, he woke up. All the reindeer were gone and the herder did not want to use the Drum anymore. This story has now come to an end but I can assure you that after he had left the place where this happened, our man knelt on the ground and said: "I thank you, Sacred Spirits, for showing me the powers of the old Drums and *yoiks*. I thank you for the timeless moment with the wild reindeer, and I thank you for the times yet to come! I thank you for everything!"

Today the Sami live a life that is a blend of the traditional and the modern. It is important to understand that not all Sami, or all herders, follow the traditional spiritual rules of life. Between ten and fifteen percent of the Sami population work as active reindeer herders and by living in Sápmi and following the subsistence lifestyle, many are still involved in activities that relate them to Nature. Some of them make spiritual alliances with its inhabitants and live respectfully in their environment, acknowledging certain obligations towards the sustainability and existence of each natural being.

We are not alone. We share our places with animals, birds, trees and Spirits. The animistic world is an integral place in which many animate beings are awake and alert. The lands communicate with people, giving them good or bad luck and so it is crucial to follow certain rules when gathering firewood and medicinal herbs, and when camping and hiking. People must once again learn to live in unity and peace.

In this article I have explained some of the human connections in the web of life.

Elina Helander-Renvall, Ph.D. is a Sami reindeer owner from Utsjoki, Finland. She works as a senior scientist at the Arctic Centre, University of Lapland. She is the author of numerous articles and books on Sami spirituality and environmental issues and is a frequent contributor to Báiki. *Her book* Silde:Sami Mythic Texts and Stories *has been translated into many languages.*



The drawings and symbols that embellish Sami hunting equipment and household utensils are more than just beautiful designs. They are the Sami way of giving thanks to Nature for the gifts they need to survive in a harsh climate.

A STORY BY CAROL RUOTSALA STAATS

THE RITUALS

Sami pictograph of the
Sun's Wheel and Nature Spirits

On October 23, 2004 I attended the funeral of Carol Staats in Wasilla, Alaska. The service was conducted according to the customs of the Mormon Church, which seemed to be the religion of her family. During the service I wanted to thank Carol for sharing her poetry with our readers. I also wanted to pay respects to her Finnish and Saami ancestry and to acknowledge her deeply spiritual relationship with Nature, but the program's schedule did not allow time to do this. Several weeks later I remembered how I had first met Carol. It was in the early days of Báiki *when I was still questioning whether our ancestors' ceremonial connection to Nature had survived the challenges of conversion and immigration. Then, in a book called* Sampo the Magic Mill, *a collection of Finnish American writing, a story by Carol Staats called "The Rituals" not only provided the answer, but led to a close friendship for which I will always be grateful. — faith fjeld*

Anja Saminen sat in the comfortable living room as she had so many times before. From the tile floor, the light reflected across the round-log walls, darkened and mellowed by age and smoke from the wood fire. Between the narrow windows were the wall hangings, tangible evidence of her friend's legacy. Here were Saani's *ryijy* weavings of Lapland under Northern Lights, and the golden Wheel of the Sun Chariot whirring in the night blue sky.

Like the summer tundra, the walls bloomed with color. Intricate tapestries depicted country scenes of weddings, harvests, dancers under Midnight Suns, a reindeer drive bright with Lapp folk dress, mosses, flowers, ferns, and birds and berries.

Laughing, singing Lapland joiks (the little songs), weaving magic with her flying hands, Saani had sat before the loom — now silent in the pale light of early spring.

Now, momentarily silent too, was the living room. The sudden stillness startled Anja out of her reverie. She looked around at Saani's family, the Heikkiläs. There were Martta and her brother Juhani, the middle children so like their mother, short, wiry and swart. Then their sister Maija, the "baby," and Heikki the oldest, in his clerical collar, both of them tall, lithe, and fair like their father Erkki, who sat rocking, plummeted into despondency by his wife's death.

Juhani's fist slammed down on the table. Stubbornly he persisted, picking up where the argument had ended. "It was her wish. That's all I know. None of your fancy theology — just her wish."

Heikki's clerical collar seemed to be choking him. "She was my mother too and a simple Lutheran burial is what is necessary." His point was made in a harsh whisper. "A simple country woman, however dear and lovable, a simple Lutheran funeral — that's all."

Martta turned to Anja. Look!" she said. "My two brothers arguing over what to do with my mother's bones!" She looked at Heikki scornfully. "Why any question? What did *she* want done?" They sat silent again, Erkki rocking aimlessly, Maija wringing her hands on her lap.

Anja waited. Finally she said, "Your mother was like a sister to me. Your father has been like a brother, and you are all my friends. But I know you, Heikki, are used to taking charge in such matters as these and I don't want to interfere. But never would I want it on my shoulders." She shivered. "Never would I ignore the wishes of the dead!"

"Anja, her wishes are nothing but superstition!" Heikki was adamant, and Anja could see that her words only reminded him of his position. "Barbarism! Paganism! *Lappalainen* ritual indeed!" he said. "This is the twentieth century, a modern world with ways that are modern — not a village of Lapp *kotas*, moving with the seasons, full of charms and superstitions. As cleanliness is next to Godliness, a sauna is nothing more than preparation for church, just a bath and nothing else!"

Anja, though she was a Christian, gasped. Such blasphemy to dismiss the sauna ritual so! Quietly she said, "Perhaps for you, but your mother was born in a sauna. She gave birth to you all in a sauna, and she wanted to be prepared for the grave in a sauna — made ready by loving hands, not shipped off to the city like a carcass to be pumped full of wax and handled and molded by strangers. Surely you can see that. Juhani and Martta nodded.

Then Juhani, watching Heikki's expression, said, "What about a plain pine box and her own coverlet!" Martta nodded again.

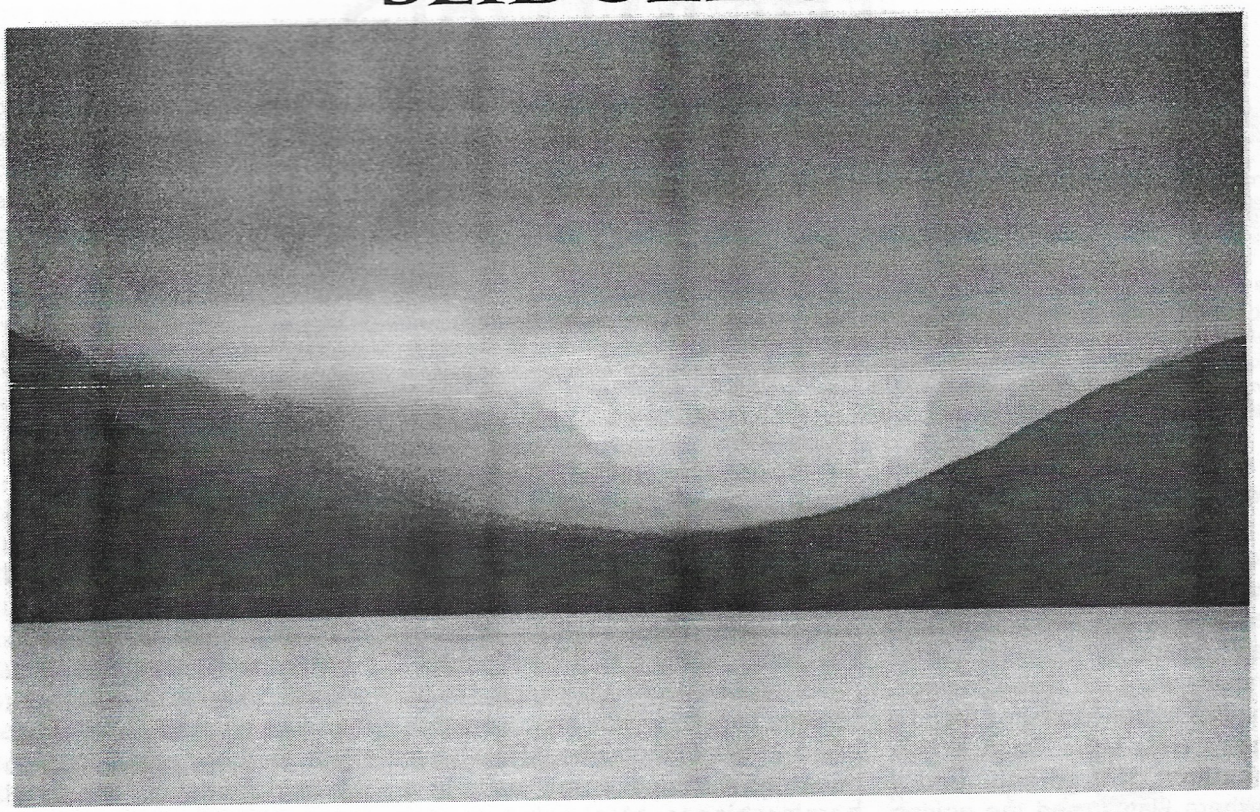
Heikki frowned. "What would the villagers think," he asked, "if we who could afford a bronze or copper casket lined with velvet and satin, buried our mother in a pauper's box? Think, brother, think! The family's reputation!"

Juhani curled his lip. "Ah — now where is the 'simple country woman's' simple funeral? The fact is that the pine box must be ordered from Kuusisto if it is to be ready. He will build it, but we've got to decide."

Maija went to fix coffee. The rest of the family sank back into their

(*THE RITUALS continued on page 18)*

SEIDOZERO



LAKE OF THE MOUNTAIN SPIRITS

by Paul Stonehill

This article was first published in FATE Magazine *in 2005 and it will be a chapter in the author's forthcoming book* Paranormal Mysteries of Eurasia.

The Kola Peninsula occupies the rim of northwestern Russia and the major part of the peninsula is located above the Arctic Circle. It lies between two seas, the White Sea in the south and the Barents Sea in the north. Here a number of anthropological, climate-related, natural and mystical enigmas co-exist.

Native Saami tribes have been living in this area for thousands of years. This is where they have worshipped their gods. According to their legends, a great *choom* [a tent made of skins or bark] was placed at Seidozero Lake, and offerings from the nomad Saami camps were brought there. They were quite valuable and included gold nuggets. The great choom was burned down during an invasion led by King Haakon of Norway. The *noaides* [Saami shamans] were able to hide the treasures collected through the ages in the deep waters of the mysterious and sacred Seidozero Lake. There are rumors even nowadays about strange rituals performed by noaides in the vicinity of the lake.

Seidozero Lake is located in the center of the Lovozero tundra. Mesa-like mountains surround it and the lake's beauty is breathtaking. The area around the lake is the center of many legends and modern-day paranormal activities.

The surrounding mountains do not protect the lake from the hurricane-like winds that blow through the Seidozero basin. Rain and clouds are frequent guests of the lake, but there is an isthmus that is called Motka and above it the sky is always blue. Huge waves sometimes make sailing on the lake virtually impossible and it is very difficult to reach the lake by water or by land as it is surrounded by thick, almost impenetrable taiga that separates it from the mountains. In the winter the Saami leave the lake for their settlement at Lovozero.

There is a tundra near the lake that is called Nepeslogchorr. A Saami legend has it that one time three women with special powers, a mother and her two daughters, stopped there and were turned to stone.

A *siedde* is a sacred stone or rock of the Saami that is said to contain spirits and souls of deceased noaidi. There are thirty sieddes in the vicinity of the lake and

some are located on islands in the lake. Such sieddes are believed to possess magical powers. Offerings are made to them. They are also used to foretell the future. It is not the sieddes that actually possesses magical powers, but the spirits who live inside them. If a siedde is not given proper respect, the spirits will leave and the rock will become an empty vessel. When Saami sail past the Kuiva siedde, for example, they are afraid to make loud noises or curse, because the "Old Man," as they call Kuiva, might overhear them. They do not pollute the waters of the sacred lake lest the Old Man take the fish away, and when they fetch water from the lake they use a clean pail and then pour it into their cooking pots.

The trees here are the tallest on the Kola Peninsula and one can find black currants in the taiga and wild grapes in the foothills. There are trails in the taiga along the northern shore of the lake. The climb to the top of Ninchurg, one of the mountains, is both difficult and fascinating. The higher one climbs the more beautiful the mysterious lake that lies below becomes. Strange signs are found on the vertical sides of the steps, carved in the rock. Some are very complex, incomprehensible and eerie. On the way to the top of the mountain there are rocky monuments made of stacked up stones that are placed at an equal distance from each other. This is truly an enigmatic place.

There are "healing zones" and other mysteries such as gigantic geometric plates — huge rocks that are bored through by some unknown and enormous drill, and there are strange wells and underground tunnels with seven pillars one right next to the other like a wall. Who built these? Was it Stalin's slaves looking for uranium? This was one explanation suggested by Soviet scientists who did research in the area. They were not only looking for answers to its many puzzles, but they were also hired by the local authorities to discover the reason behind the disappearance of tourists and others. So far no explanations have been found for the mysteries of the lake.

According to legend, the lake has a double bottom. Expeditions in the 1920s sponsored by the Soviet secret police explored an underground cave under the lake. In 1998, an expedition led by

Mikhail Dyomin discovered a ritual well and mysterious signs and writings in the cave. Ruins were also found of an ancient observatory with a 15 meter-long [50 foot-long] groove that points to the sky. In 2001, using radar, a new expedition led by Dyomin discovered another huge cave at the lakeshore. The next year they found more surprises including panels made from rock by metallic tools that dated back to 8000 BC.

A recent article in the Russian newspaper *Anomaliya* (Issue 1, 2005) revealed that Nazi intelligence agents were at the lake too. The article, written by Igor Gusev, claims that some tourists found Nazi insignia on winter clothing in a cave by the lake with rations hidden inside the garments. Hitler was very much interested in conquering the Kola Peninsula. It is possible the *Ahnenerbe Forschungs und Lehrgemeinschaft* [Ancestral Heritage Research and Teaching Society] founded in 1935 with Hitler's blessing — he merged it with the SS two years later — was active in the area. The Ahnenerbe's mission was to provide evidence to determine the origin of the "Aryan" race. Some Nazi racial theory ideologues believed that the answer lay in the lost city of Atlantis. Their Atlantis was the mythical land of Thule, lying between Greenland, Iceland and — according to some — the Kola Peninsula. From the spring of 1940 until the autumn of 1944 Germany had their hands on the North — with the exception of the Kola Peninsula. The Nazis knew the strategic importance of the ice-free Kola seaport of Murmansk and the vast natural wealth of the Kola Peninsula. Perhaps they knew about the paranormal phenomena there too. When the Nazis prepared to attack the Soviet Union, they planned to take the Kola Peninsula because of the large nickel mines there, but the Soviets knew the importance of the area and defended it at all costs.

The Lake of the Mountain Spirits is a mysterious, pristine, remote and very hard-to-reach place. I hope it remains all of the above until the time comes to unlock its secrets. Until then, Seidozero should remain a remote destination, undisturbed by noisy and prying tourists.

Paul Stonehill is a Soviet-born researcher who has lived in the United States since 1973. He is a writer, television consultant, lecturer, and researcher of Russian, East European, Central Asian and Far Eastern paranormal phenomena..

He is the author of The Soviet UFO Files: Paranormal Encounters Behind the Iron Curtain *(1998), and with Philip Mantle, the co-author of* Mysterious Sky: Soviet UFO Phenomenon *(2006) and* UFO Case Files of Russia *(2010).*

Colleen Aukongak Reynolds

THROUGH OUR ELDERS' EYES

photo: Berry picking near Nome, July 1940
from the collection of Pete Larsen, jr, Nome, Alaska

"At the end of time people will remember where they came from."
— Sigfried Aukongak

Our elders live from their hearts as opposed to viewing the world from an intellectual standpoint. They have the uncanny ability to accept everyone, no matter who they are, what background they come from, or what disability they may have — whether it is physical, emotional or spiritual. They listen well, smile often and find humour in their own misfortunes. They are able to laugh at their own forgetfulness. Elders are more likely to turn to their Creator and offer up their troubles while this generation opts to spend time having fellowship with theirs.

I often hear the elders reminisce about the changes that have taken place during their lifetime. They speak of staying connected to a world that held a magic all its own, a time when life was simpler. During that magical time the people were connected with Nature. They were tied to everything that they depended on for survival: the animals, the fish, the beluga, the walrus and the geese. People interacted and worked together to bring in the harvest and to raise each other's children. Life was busy and full with no time to get into trouble.

Even today the elders understand their environment and are able to live from it. In English this is called a "subsistence lifestyle." By observing the weather and the seasons, the elders are able to utilize their knowledge of these two important factors to make their subsistence activities successful, to harvest the animals, plants and berries from the land. Our Creator has blessed us with a variety of foods to harvest at each turn of the four seasons, thus we never tire of looking forward to each season and what harvest it has to offer us. We endure the cold and discomforts of hard labor to get our food. We are a tough, proud and stoic people trained from an early age by our elders to withstand the elements that make this generation whine and complain. Our labor is more than paid in full when we are rewarded with the bountiful riches gleaned from the land that sustains us.

Our seasoned elder hunters can name hundreds of landmarks surrounding Elim, our village. Many of them can identify features so subtle that they could never be detected by a stranger. Every rise and dip and even certain rocks on the ground are unique and all have a story to tell. Our hunters are biologists in their own right. They possess detailed knowledge of the anatomy of each animal that they hunt and butcher. Each body part has its own name and its own use.

Our elders beckon us to spend time with them and to learn these things from them. They yearn for us to mirror their pace in life. "Do you sense my peace when a trying situation confronts me?" they ask "Watch and learn from me."

Images of our subsistence lifestyle become real when I view them in old photographs and we also keep memories alive through our oral tradition which is beautiful. Our hunting implements, jewelry, carvings and other objects are like an intricate web that is woven by an expert storyteller.

Our elders express their heartfelt thanks for the food they harvest from the land with one word: *quyana*. Quyana [coo-yah-nah] expresses the highest level of appreciation. That word alone is sufficient. It means that which was given was received gratefully.

We were thrown into adopting the western culture at a pace that would make your head spin. Our minds have been in a fog since we were stripped of our native languages, our dances and our traditions. When the elders look at me and at the youth, I see a puzzled look in their eyes. They see us running to and fro seemingly with no goal in life. I can almost hear them say: All the answers you seek in life are found in our traditional culture.

(**COLLEEN REYNOLDS** *continued on page 17*)

Rauna Kuokkanen

THE GIFT

As with other traditional Peoples, Sami livelihoods of hunting, fishing and reindeer herding are contingent upon a stable and continuous relationship between the human and natural worlds. Thus, knowledge of taking care of that relationship has traditionally been an integral part of social structures and practices, including spiritual practices.

The Sami cosmos consists of a complex, multilayered order of different realms and spheres inhabited by humans, animals, ancestors, spirits, deities and guardians, all of whom traditionally have had specific roles and functions in Sami cosmic order. An interesting, almost completely ignored aspect in the analyses of Sami cosmology and 'religion' is the role of the female deities in giving the gift of life (both humans and domestic animals, mainly reindeer) and the connection to the land. One could suggest that the Sami deity Máttáráhkká with her three daughters, Sáráhkká, Juksáhkká and Uksáhkká signify the very foundation in the Sami cosmic order for they are the deities of new life who convey the soul of a child, create its body and also assist with menstruation, childbirth and the protection of children.

Thus the most significant gift of all, a new life, is the duty of these female deities that often in ethnographic literature have been relegated to the status of wives of male deities (reflecting the patriarchal bias of these interpretations). Máttáráhkká could be translated as "Earth Mother" (the root word *máttár* refers to earth and also to ancestors). Words in the everyday Sami language are (*eanan)* for "earth" and (*eadni)* for "mother."

The Sami view of the cosmos is reflected in the Sami drum. Traditionally, the main users of drums in Sami society have been noaidis who were spiritual leaders of siidas, the Sami self-governing units of extended families. They were also healers and visionaries and thus were the first ones to be exterminated amongst the Sami by church missionaries and state authorities. Today there are still noaidis but their knowledge and practice exists mostly in hiding. Noaidis used a drum depicting the Sami cosmos with its various elements and deities both to foresee future events and enter a trance that took him or her into journeys in other realms. In this way, a noaidi was able to communicate with animals and departed ancestors.

The goodwill of the deities, spirits and guardians who share the gifts of the land with humans plays a significant role in their well being and survival. Relations with the spirit world and larger cosmos are secured by sharing the gifts of the land, returning the remains of an animal back to the land, and observing certain ceremonies and restrictions which guarantee the continuance of the social and cosmic order, and prevent serious, and often life-threatening ruptures.

One such example is the Sami "grave gift" in which the dead person is given a gift related to her or his livelihood while alive. Tobacco was also "put down in the earth to the departed" every time a person passed by a grave. The function of these Sami grave gifts is not economic but preeminently social and spiritual, ensuring the continuance of a congenial relationship between the deceased and her or his living relatives. This type of giving is often called an "offering to the spirit world."

Traditionally, one of the most important ways to maintain established relations and the socio-cosmic order has been the practice of giving to various sieidis. A sieidi, a sacred place, usually consists of a stone or wood to which a gift is directed. The common location for sieidis is in the vicinity of sacred lands, or fishing and hunting sites. Stone or rock sieidis are usually natural formations of unusual shapes that function as natural landmarks particularly in the mountains. Wood sieidis are either trees with the lowest branches removed, carved stumps, or fallen trunks.

In the past, some sieidis were satisfied if they received antlers, and others were content with all the bones, which meant every single bone, even the smallest ones. Fish sieidi did not demand any less than a half of the catch, then as much fish as people could collect would be directed to the nets. Some sieidis wanted a whole reindeer that needed to be embellished with all kinds of decorations, cloth, silver and gold. Even today, sieidis require regular attention and if neglected, the consequences can be drastic: a loss of hunting, fishing or reindeer luck, illness or at worst, death.

Although Christianity has severely eroded the Sami gift giving to and sharing with the land by banning it as a "pagan form of devil worshipping," sieidi gifting is still practiced. Bones are given back, the catch is shared and reindeer are given back to the Spirits of hunting and fishing represented by the sieidi sites. They are expressions of gratitude for their goodwill and for ensuring continuing abundance in the future.

In this sense, giving to sieidis is done for the protection and security of both the individual and the community. Sieidis are considered an inseparable part of one's social order and thus it is an individual and collective responsibility to look after them.

drawing: Vladimir V. Tjarnoluskij
from *Den Vilda Renen*, Äjjte Förlag, Jokkmokk, 1993

Rauna Kuokkanen, Ph.D. is Assistant Professor of Political Science and Aboriginal Studies at the University of Toronto. She is Sami from the Finnish side of Deatnu (the Tana) River. She is a frequent contributor to Báiki.

(SAAMI CONNECTIONS continued from page 5)

SAAMI CONNECTIONS

GREETINGS FROM PUKENUI

Liilian Hoika and three and a half Jack Russall terriers (one of the dogs is pregnant) enjoy white silicone sand and native grasses on the East Coast of New Zealand's Northland Peninsula.

I am doing HELPX again. I am in Pukenui (pook-eh-new-ee), a small village on the Northland Peninsula, North Island, New Zealand. Pukenui means "big hill" in Maori. I am on Cheryl and Karl's farm outside the village.

Cheryl and Karl are in their early 50s. They have only owned the farm for four years but have done an enormous amount of labor and creativity to make it productive. When they moved in the house was only a small one-room shack. Now there are outbuildings and a two-story house created out of the simple dwelling that was the basis for their home.

They absolutely love their property. The soil and climate are conducive to year-round vegetable gardening but tending the cabbages, beets, carrots, rutabagas and turnips is a big and ongoing job. Their farm pretty much produces all the veggies and meat they can eat.

Animal sounds here are: pigs squealing, chickens cackling, a rooster crowing, sheep and lambs bleating and birds calling. The only two bird songs I recognize are pheasant and wild turkey.

I think they have nearly 40 pigs. The Islanders often roast whole pigs on a spit, love fat young pigs and will pay from $100-$160 a pig. Both Karl and Cheryl truly enjoy their pigs who are free range with their own paddock. All the pigs are socialized and familiar with their caretakers. (Little do they know their eventual fate!)

The chickens are gorgeous, colorful and "mixed." The rooster is magnificent and friendly as well. They get at least a dozen eggs a day but I am not sure if they sell any. I do know we eat lots of fresh, free range eggs.

The sheep are mostly East Friesen milking sheep. Although there are thirteen lambs, Cheyl can look out over the herd and tell by name which lamb belongs to which ewe. Cheryl intends to make sheep's milk cheese. She tried it last year and apparently it was a huge success.

Another paddock has three friendly Holstein steers — gifts of Cheryl's dairyman brother. When I went to rake grass in a nearby paddock, they came galloping over to check me out and then galloped around their pasture with tails in the air.

This area of New Zealand is also one of the most productive avocado producing areas and there is an olive orchard of about thirty trees. I was feeling guilty about judiciously selecting a small avocado from time to time, assuming they were paying expensive prices to have these in their fruit basket. Then Cheryl arrived home with a whole container full. It turns out they get all they want for free — truckloads of windfall for the pigs! So I now eat avocado three times a day!!!

One Sunday we took a drive to the little community where Cheryl and Karl once lived and where she taught at a 100% Maori school, Te Kao. She has taken courses in the Maori language and knows much Maori history and legends. The Te Kao community invited her to participate in a membership ceremony into their *marae* (a place where Maori culture is celebrated). Consequently she is regarded with much esteem.

Cheryl loved teaching there. The Maori of that particular tribe place enormous importance on education. The kids come to learn and their parents are extremely supportive. Former members of this little tribal community hold Maori Party leadership positions in the New Zealand Parliament and other important leadership roles throughout New Zealand. Last year Cheryl and her students did an extensive study of all the Maori place names on the North Island. (Most place names here are Maori.) When one watches the Maori news broadcast on TV, they use only the Maori place names even for the cities with commonly-known English names.

I don't know how much the international press has covered the devastating 7.2 earthquake in Christ Church and surrounding Canterbury area on the South Island but It was hardly felt on the North Island. Christ Church has HEAVY destruction. It is amazing that no one was killed and that there were only a couple serious injuries. If the press shows heaps of bricks, debris, deep fissures and sinkholes, then you get a limited sense of what a MAJOR disaster this is. The quake was stronger than the Haiti tremor but perhaps the drama doesn't capture international attention because there weren't the casualties that occurred in Haiti. The infrastructure of emergency services was effective within minutes. The neighborliness and support that the citizens offered to one another is a wonderful lesson. The community organized youth groups to help, neighbors brought out tools, wheelbarrows, generators, and food, etc. to share with one another. They looked out for one another

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[Editors note: *HELPX is an internet site that brings "helpers" together with "hosts," for a few hours of work in exchange for accommodations and meals. See Lillian Hoika's "Saami Connections" letter about HELPX in* Báiki *Issue #32, 2010, page 4.]*

SAAMI CONNECTIONS

VEIKKO SIITONEN'S DREAM

Cari Mayo stands outside the *goahtti* of shaman Veikko Siitonen. They are relatives through a long line of succession that goes back to the 1600s. This photo was taken by Tula Helppie.

Finnish Lapland is ethereal. The *tunturi* — its forests and lakes are pristine and a huge lake may only have one cabin on it. Late this summer I sat on the banks of Lake Sattajarvi. Although I had been to Finland to visit relatives before, it was thrilling to sit where my ancestors had sat many times over the last 200 years. As I sat by the lake, the feeling I got was so strong that they were there dwelling inside of me. I had just attended a family reunion in Pasmajarvi with people whose Sami and settler ancestors had lived there for more than 500 years. They were all related and intertwined.

Then I met Veikko Siitonen. It was at a Finnfest in Marquette, Michigan that his name came up during a conversation with Juha Pentikäinen, the ethnographer of Sami shamanism. When I mentioned my Paivio family line of succession, Pentikäinen said to me: "Well, then you should meet Veikko Siitonen." Since then, I knew that I had to go back to Lapland one more time.

Veikko lives north of Kittila in the mountain village of Levi near the site where the original Paivio family lived. My relative Tula Helppie took me there to meet him and serve as our interpreter. He comes from a family of champion skiers. When Veikko was 33, an old man came to visit him. The man said he had seen him in a dream. "I dreamed that you are to be a *noaide*," he told Veikko, and he presented him with a Sami Drum. Veikko had had the very same dream. The incident changed his life! Now he works with herbal medicine to heal people.

Veikko cooks and sleeps in a *goahtti*, an underground Sami turf hut. His floor is lined with reindeer furs. Behind his *goahtti* is a sauna and nearby there is a deep natural pool and a lake. He fixed coffee for us and as we drank it he made a point of telling us that you do not receive the right to become a *noaide* by birth. "It's spiritual and it's passed from one *noaide* to another. So I am related to all the ones in the past," Veikko said. "We're tribal members and we're all related."

Cari Mayo
St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin

MY TRIP TO SWEDISH SÁPMI

[l-r] Jon Tomas Utsi, Bert Hansen and Jon's father Ola Utsi. This was the room at the Winter Market where Jon sold his *duodji* (Sami handicraft). Bert is holding "Herman," his pet hat. Photo taken by Melissa Hardy.

On January 25, 2010, an employee of mine, Anna Melissa Hardy, and I left Las Vegas en route to Chicago to transfer to an SAS flight to Stockholm. Being legally blind, I felt it would be beneficial to take someone along to drive a rental car. I had contacted Melissa's parents to see if she would be willing to go on a trip to Sweden and get paid for it. Melissa had worked for me at the High Scaler Café at Hoover Dam for several summers. She grew up in Sweden until she was 12 and retained the Swedish language. She used to sit in our employee break room and read Swedish books.

Our flight from Stockholm to Gällivare ["Yellivare") required that we stay in Stockholm for an extra day. This worked out fine because Melissa's aunt, uncle and a cousin joined us for lunch at Café Saturnus, famous for their cinnamon buns. We stayed at a hotel directly connected to the airport and since most Swedish hotels provide breakfasts for their guests I began to appreciate the breads, pastries and cheeses that are available.

When we landed at Gällivare, our rental car was brought out to the airport. Melissa turned out to be a good navigator but we were embarrassed when we stopped and asked some people where the Grand Hotel Lapland was and it was right across the street.

Gällivare is 125 kilometers north of the Arctic Circle so it stays very cold throughout the winter. Snow does not melt so it

(*continued overleaf*)

(continued from page 15)

SAAMI CONNECTIONS

Here is a picture of Herman and me at the Winter Market We had a good time in Jokkmokk and I think he misses his old stompiing grounds.

does not get dirty. One of the things I noticed was the ever present crunch, crunch, crunch of people and autos moving in the snow, like someone squeezing a box of corn starch. Snowplows keep the major highways open and no chemicals are used to melt the snow. As long as it stays very cold, there is traction on the roadway, but warmer temperatures can make driving a little tricky.

Our first trip out of town was to the Ice Hotel in Jukkasjärvi. In the spring blocks of ice are harvested from the nearby Torne River. The river water is so pure that the ice freezes crystal clear. Ice blocks are then stored in warehouses for the building of the hotel in the fall.

There are warm accommodations at the Ice Hotel, but tourists want to see the rooms where the beds are blocks of ice with reindeer hides spread across them and each guest is provided with a jump suit and an extra warm sleeping bag. In the Ice Hotel Bar all the seats and tables are made from ice and the beverages are served in ice rectangles with a round cavity for the drink and you get to keep the "glass!"

The real purpose of my trip to Swedish Sápmi was to attend the Sami Winter Market in Jokkmokk. It is always held the first weekend in February and the market was planned at a time so the Sami could travel across the frozen rivers and marshlands of Northern Scandinavia.

In Jokkmokk there were two hundred open air booths set up in the town square and along nearby streets that sold just about anything you could imagine. There was a booth where Hindu clothing and jewelry was sold. You could get your ears or other body parts pierced at another and food stands sold Thai food as well as traditional Sami reindeer meat.

A taxidermist sold stuffed animals and there was a stand that sold animal pelts and fur products where I bought a wolf skin hat that I immediately named "Herman." From then on I introduced my hat to people as "my new pet."

While looking through the displays I also noticed drums. Sami drums were used by families in their Nature religion but they were deemed "satanic" by Christian missionaries and most of them were confiscated and burned. Sami people today still carry a smoldering resentment.

I purchased a drum. It was made by Helge Sunna from Kiruna. He is a recognized Sami craftsman and I am lucky to have a drum made by him. He designed and built the famous "Duodji Pipe Organ" in the church in Kiruna. My drum is made from a hollowed birch burl with reindeer skin stretched over the opening. It is decorated with figures from life, heaven, and the lower world. The holes in the back of the drum that serve as a handle are inlaid with reindeer antler. The hammer is also made from antler. I had the drum shipped to Nevada and it arrived without damage.

Now I have this and many other items that I bought at the Winter Market displayed in my little apartment at home.

BERT HANSEN
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WHAT IS SHE HOLDING?

We are working on verifying some objects attached to three Sami dolls recently acquired through Don Larew of our theater department. He is a collector of dolls from around the world. It is housed in the Emily Reynolds Costume Collection at NDSU. I believe it dates from the 1970s. Can anyone identify the club-like instrument the doll is holding? Thanks for your help in trying to figure out what it might be.

ANN BRAATEN
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(**COLLEEN REYNOLDS** *continued from page 12)*

Colleen's Sami grandmother Mary Aukongak at the family's summer corral in Golovin. She is holding Nina, one of Colleen's sisters.

Why have you forsaken it? Return and you will be able to see the world as we see it and learn what has sustained us through the centuries.

I am not alone when I walk the paths where I pick berries on the tundra. When I seine the fish that swim in our rivers and when I catch the beluga that feed in our ocean the elders are with me so that these same paths will be there for my children and my children's children. It is a cycle that will not be broken if we continue to connect with and embrace our environment.

The elders' Spirits still walk with me. As I go about my subsistence activities year after year I hear their voices and laughter echoing in the valleys. I see their smiles and feel the same joy they felt when they were in the mountains. Thank you elders for shaping who I have become.

Quyanna.

Colleen Aukongak Reynolds lives in Nome, Alaska. She grew up in the reindeer hills of Solomon, Big Hurrah and East Fork just outside of Nome and for many years, herding was a part of her family's subsistence activities. This article is from her synthesizing paper "Cultural Knowledge of Native Elders," written in 2005 when she was taking classes to get certified as an elementary teacher. Her grandfather, Sigfried Aukongak, was married to Mary, the daughter of one of the Alaska Sámi herders. Mary's Sami name is as yet unknown.

(**SEABERG** *continued from page 3)*

Soon after the arrival of Europeans Native Peoples in this hemisphere were uprooted. The result was genocide: the withering away of the culture, the language, the spirituality and the identity that derived its energy and vitality from place. In the world of the Dineh, I often heard it said, "to relocate means to disappear."

In 1970, after the first Earth Day, a TV commercial was aired that depicted a Native American surveying a landscape overwhelmed by the trash of industrial society. He turns to the camera and we see a tear running down his face. With this image the soul of modern America confessed its sins before its own guilty conscience. The environmental movement, which began in response to the blatant excesses of industrialism, has deepened and matured. The environmental movement has begun to reevaluate the entire Western paradigm and offer more sustainable alternatives. In effect it has absorbed the wisdom of Indigenous People and translated it into modern language, science and political action and there is a spiritual basis to it as well. As Winona La Duke, an Anishanabe from Minnesota, has observed, "We must change from a culture based on conquest to one based on survival."

Wes Jackson, an ecologist who promotes sustainable farming practices, has noted that Western culture still operates more in the conquering spirit of Columbus or Coronado than in that of the Natives we conquered. Nature, he says, is regarded as something to be subdued or ignored, never honored or imitated. When we develop farming practices that destroy top-soil that took millions of years to evolve, when we deplete the water tables and poison the land with chemical pesticides and herbicides, our arrogant attempts to "manage Nature" has resulted in the impoverishment of the land, the economy and our spirits.

Native Peoples do not manage the natural world —they imitate and flow with it and draw upon the wisdom embedded in ecosystems. Indigenous People understand that every plant and animal has its proper place in the chain of being and to honor that place one must follow the law of reciprocity. You take only what you need and no more and you always give something in return. In so doing, you are part of the Circle of Life.

(**SEABERG** *continued on page 25*

(*THE RITUALS continued from page 9*)

private thoughts and Anja returned to hers. What could she say? She dwelled on the memory of Saani's face, ruddy and glowing after an afternoon of skiing; of her eyes when she spoke of a scene from her childhood: the spring drive of the reindeer to summer pasture; of her delight when the southern winds signaled the return of the birds. She understood the wanderers of the earth, even the seeds on the wind and the flowing of the streams. How strange that Saani's learnéd son should call her "a simple country woman!"

Maija brought in the coffee and offered some to her father, who shook his head and rocked furiously. The others moved to the table, helped themselves and ate some of Maija's good rye bread.

"Heikki," Juhani said, "we must decide. You and Maija have your ideas and Martta and I want to respect Mother's wishes. Anja, good friend though she is, has no vote. So it is up to Father — if we can get him to say.

Anja saw a brightening in Heikki's face, a certainty that his scholarly father would side with him and Maija and that all this nonsense would be over. Heikki tried to take Erkki's hand but Erkki drew back. Heikki spoke softly to him, slowly explaining everything patiently as if to a child. He tried to look into his father's eyes, but he could not bear to see the pain.

"What do you say, Father? What is it to be?"

Erkki's glance darted right and left like a wounded ferret. "To be?" as though he had heard nothing. Then, looking at Heikki as if he were a stranger, he said, "How should I know what to do? Leave me alone." He shrugged. "Do what you will — anything." He started rocking again. Suddenly he shook his head, his grey hair falling across his glasses. "No! Do everything just as she wanted."

"...but the family, think of the family..." Heikki started to say.

"Leave me alone! She's gone. Now leave me alone."

Martta put her arm across Heikki's shoulder. "Let Father rest. It is decided. We will honor Saani's wishes and have done with it."

"All right then," Juhani said, finishing his coffee. I'll talk to Kuusisto. He'll hurry to please us," and Anja said, "I'll stop by the *kuppari*'s, if you like." "*Kuppari*?" Heikki asked. "For the *Lappalainen* ritual," Martta answered.

"Oh." Heikki seemed lost in thought.

"What about Pekka" Maija asked. "Pekka?" Heikki repeated. "The dog?" "She wanted her dog at the service," Juhani said. "The dog?" Heikki couldn't believe he'd heard it. Anger rose in him. "Then you, Juhani, should bring the cow, and Maija can carry a chicken in each arm. Saani loved them too, you know. Martta you can take the dog and your husband can lead the pig with a fancy ribbon around his neck. And Anja can bring her goats. Then all we need is a horse and a couple of lambs and a judge from the county fair!" His laugh was bitter.

"Or maybe we should rent the inn and hire a band and everyone can get drunk. Heikki laughed at their expressions. "Why not? If it is to be a farce, make it a good one." He subsided into a cold silence.

Finally Juhani, putting on his jacket and cap, said "I'll go to Kuusisto's" and Martta said to Anja, "See the *kuppari* then and I'll go tell Old Auntie. She knows the others, the Pietists, the Orthodox — those who knew Mother.

"Pietists? Orthodox? And what else?" Heikki asked, his eyes blazing.

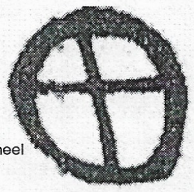
"Your mother was a friend to them all," Anja said, "and she wanted them to come if they liked."

"...and why not the people at the asylum? Let them all come. The whole world — beggars, crazies, animals, kings!" Heikki said angrily. Then his eyes rolled back into his head and he turned away. His steps were like a child playing soldier, his words were garbled. Anja listened closely. "He's speaking in tongues! Heaven help us!" Maija sank into her chair, while Martta and Juhani exchanged glances. Heikki's head was jerking. "Not tongues," Juhani said, helping Heikki to the couch. "It is only a fit. He has them sometimes when he gets too excited." He loosened Heikki's clerical collar. "Didn't Mother tell you?" The spasm stopped and Heikki lay still.

In a few minutes Heikki sat up and looked at Juhani, the mute question in his eyes. Juhani nodded and Heikki's neck flushed red. Then, without a word, he rose and put on his overcoat. His fingers fumbled with the buttons and in the end he let his coat hang open. He nodded to them all and to Martta he said, "I'll prepare the Lutheran service."

"But you'll come tonight, won't you?" she asked. Heikki shook his head. "Tomorrow." They barely heard him close the door.

"Maija, you keep an eye on Father. I'll be back as soon as I see Old Auntie." Martta pulled on her sweater and left with Anja and Juhani.



the Sun's Wheel

Anja sat on a stool in a dark corner of the sauna. The *kuppari*, the midwife, was there, head in hands, deep in prayer. The wooden buckets were clean, turned upside down until they were needed. The cedar whisks stood in the corner, and the old wine barrels, filled with clear spring water, were on their rack. The sauna was redolent with the fragrance of evergreen, a faint wine smell from the barrels and smoke from the birch fire that heated the stones.

Saani's body lay on the highest bench under the low ceiling. How many times they had taken a sauna, Anja thought — the burning birches lending the heat of the summer's sun to the coldest winter; the white granite stones of the earth also heated by the birch, their steam bursting in great puffs; the clear spring water cleansing, purifying, leaving the mind and the soul free.

Then a brisk slapping with the cedar whisks to send the blood racing beneath the skin, hastening the sweat that was streaming from every pore, carrying away all the poisons, the residues, and the accumulated debris of daily life.

Often they had spoken of the sense of belonging, of the wisdom of the sauna ritual. The women went together, sometimes women from one family and sometimes from many. In the sauna these women, usually known by their faces and hands, were their naked selves, unadorned, enjoying the same ritual. They were the generations, ailing, ancient, expecting. The sagging breasts and buttocks, the beauty, the flaws, the strength and weakness of the human body all made plain. The strange and natural oneness in all its ages and variety, the perishable flesh, the house of the soul.

It took but a few minutes for the midwife to cleanse Saani's body. At each side of the neck she made a small cross with her straight razor, then placed the cow horn over it and made the mark of the Sun's Wheel. On each wrist she did the same, and on each foot, and then over the heart. The *kuupari* invoked the spirits of the sun, the moon, the stars, the sky, the wind, the earth and all the good things upon it, the waters of the oceans, lakes and rivers, streams and springs. Then with linen sweet with cardamom and cedar, the women wrapped the body, and Saani, born in a sauna, was made ready for the grave.

Anja wept. She vowed to sing a lament as sweetly and full of heart as she had at her own mother's grave. "My friend, how I will sing! And then I'll ask you on your journey to give greetings to our Father, and finally, to speak our love to all our own beloved dead!"

POETRY BY LILLIAN STAATS

UNDERNEATH THE TIDE

"The way I reach God is through Nature. I am astounded when people say there is no God. It is right in front of them. Nature is absolute truth, absolute perfection. My Mother never told me what to believe — she showed me." — Lillian Staats

Lillian Staats is Carol Staats' daughter. She and her mother would often participate in poetry slams as a mother-daughter team and both have been published in numerous literary anthologies and poetry journals. Their work has also been published in Báiki. *Lillian works at the Arctic Wolf Camp on Alaska's North Slope.*

UNDERNEATH THE TIDE

(A funeral poem for Ma)

The sea combs my Mother's hair
While bears card berries from bush,
Kelp bulb and starfish will kiss her,
Hemlock and devil's club perfume,

A chanticleer of numberless moons
Sees purple ash, inverted shamrock
Dwarf arboreal dogwood, rank alder,
Decayed flanks swerlet flow,

Thrumless palisades of ice grow;
Canopy of Labrador tea held down
Wind shorn shines on fishes phosfor
She was born of sea, not earth.

Tide, carry my Mother
Carry my Mother
Home.

ANCESTORS

My schoolmates would always point
to Kings or Queens as their rightful kin,
and I would listen to long-winded accounts
of this or that Lord, in battles
fought on fruitful ground
until all the children
had spewed their family trees.
Then the teacher called to me,
"Who were your forefathers?
"Were they great and noble souls?"
And silent, long, I sat, until my tongue
would say,
"The raven told me who they were,
they fought with frozen hands
the bears of tyranny,
with starving belly, on icy path.
They are the Real People,
though some call them small,
wrapped in skins of reindeer.
Some think of them
as nomad elves and trolls
as if they have no understanding.
I call them *Samilainen*,
The people of my mother.

MOTHER'S BLACK HOLE

There seems to be a thing,
there in my Mother's house,
denser than a collapsed super nova.
We call it "somewhere,"
or alternately, "here— somewhere."
If we get real scientific we might say,
"I saw it here — somewhere — once."
Glasses and keys and last year's taxes
are precisely placed "somewhere."
But who saw it last and when?
Which brings us back to
the theory of the black hole.
We understand its awesome power,
yet find its logic lacking,
for we find useless things with ease —
hole-y socks and lids of jars long shattered,
littered copies of sundry sales
yellowed with invalidity,
rocks of a species called "Leverite,"
as in "leave 'er right there," which
Mom finds, like orphans, and kindly
gives them a home in
countless boxes that people the house,
stealing space and
bargaining for better pasture.
Broken pens,
tattered cloth, ancient articles
about past politician's crimes,
dog fur, cat fur, folk fur, fairy fur.
Why — we got fur fer any occasion!
All of which the black hole
spits out uneaten, which
brings us back to the original thing
which we call "somewhere,"
or alternately, "here — somewhere."
Or if we feel real scientific we might say,
"I saw it here — somewhere — once."

UNTITLED

The Porcupine herd just went by up here.
It was magnificent!

Reindeer herd, far as the eye can scrim,
Wind spun sun always playing
hide and seek.
I watch the calves and mothers surge by,
mosquito drive, grass bound sedge ponds,
it speaks to my stuttering heart,
and my muttering soul
one clear song.

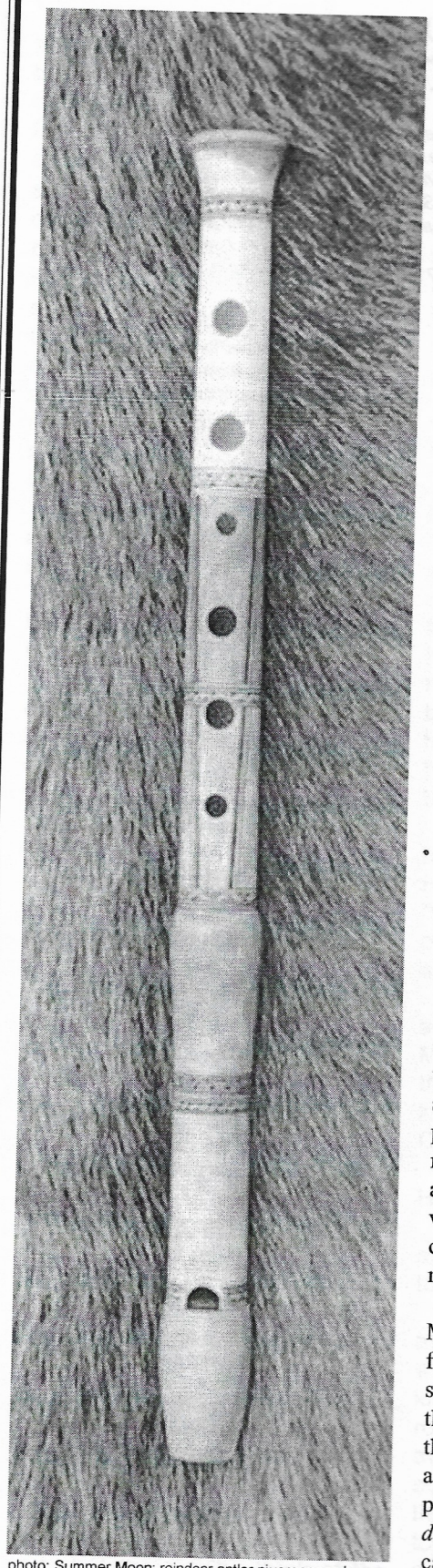


photo: Summer Moon: reindeer antler njuorggonas by Thomas Marainen

A MUSICIAN FINDS BEAUTY, ADVENTURE and a NJUORGGONAS at the JOKKMOKK WINTERMARKET

by Christina Johnson

My grandmother told us we were "Lapp" but it wasn't until 2003 that I learned that meant we were Saami and somehow it changed my life. I read all I could about the Saami people and Sápmi and when I learned about the Jokkmokk Wintermarket in Sweden I was determined to go. Jokkmokk is four miles north of the Arctic Circle and has a population of 3,500 people, most of whom are Saami. The Wintermarket has been held there during the first week of February for more than 400 years. After research on the Internet that began in 2008, flights, bus tickets and accommodations were secured. I would be joined by my ex-sister-in-law, Jill Johnson, who has a Ph.D. in ethnomusicology and lives outside Stockholm with her Swedish husband.

It was on the bus ride to Jokkmokk that I realized this would be no ordinary adventure. Snow was everywhere and in the winter dusk shadows became people to me. There were Spirits in the trees, in the bushes and at the end of the roads.

We had arranged for a host home with a Saami family, Henrik Micael and Anna-Sofie Kuhmunen, their four children and their dog. Three of their children were adopted from China. We were given one of the kid's rooms with two single beds, shelves of stuffed animals and books, and posters of horses. Anna-Sofie had set up a nook for coffee and tea and set out books and CD's for us. We had a nice bathroom with a shower down the hall. We were very comfortable there and it was just a twenty-minute walk from their house to the market.

We went early to catch the Historic Market. The Historic Market is set up in a forested knoll above Lake Talvaris. It is separate from the main market and is only there for the first part of the week. Outside the Historic Market large ice sculptures of a bear and a seal were made for children to play on. Fifteen to twenty stalls were selling *duodji* (Saami handicrafts), skis, cheeses, candy, and woolen items. A silversmith sat next to an open fire hammering out silver pendants and spoons. Tall men in long bear and wolf coats stood talking. A café in a warm log cabin offered sandwiches, reindeer stew and hot lingonberry drinks. Out on the frozen lake as far as the eye could see, dogsled teams ran back and forth ferrying people around.

It was well worth coming early to be a part of this market and I bought my first reindeer hide during this first visit. The temperature was 19 degrees below zero Celsius but my Sorell boots were warm, my long woolen underwear did not itch, and my sister's down parka with wolf ruff was perfect.

There was an unusual log fire and I asked how it was made. Two pine logs about six feet long had been stripped and then flattened on one side. The flattened sides faced each other. Wooden spacers were added on each end to allow air between the logs that were stacked on top of each other. The fire was started with kindling from the curly outer bark that was placed between the logs. It was then fed with small pieces of wood until the logs caught fire. Reindeer pelts were laid on the ground on either side and you could lay sideways to catch the heat. The three men who were tending the fire said it could last up to fourteen hours.

There were many memorable experiences and the first one happened that night. Jill had recently purchased two Saami drums for the Scandinavian display at the new Musical Instrument Museum in Phoenix, Arizona. The maker of those drums was Sven-Åke Risfjell. He and his wife Doris happened to be presiding over an extensive and beautiful display of his work at the Ájtte Museum. Jill and I were very surprised and delighted to meet them. It was quite a coincidence.

I left Jill and went out on my own, making plans to join her later at the museum where there were to be open fires and storytelling.

I stumbled upon the opening ceremony of Jokkmokk's new Saami Duodji Gallery. By now it was around 25 below and the sandwiches that were laid out on a table had frozen solid, but I stood there in the cold, enthralled. I watched and listened as a parade of small children dressed in *gakti* (traditional Saami clothing) walked around a ring with wooden reindeer and sleighs. I watched a fashion show with young women in sleeveless gowns and short skirts modeling modern versions of traditional Saami designs.

Then a young girl named Katarina Rimpi yoiked and one yoik touched me so deeply I was moved to tears. It seemed as if an ancient memory was stirred and that the ancestors traveling with me had remembered and wept.

When the Saami Duodji opened we went in, a few at a time. I checked out the drums, the beautiful pewter and leatherwork and the reindeer carvings. It was then that I looked at my watch. I was late to meet Jill! I hadn't made it around the entire gallery but I needed to get going. Little did I know what the Saami Duodji would later offer me.

The Ájjte Museum was dark and locked when I got back there, but outside there were seven open fires in a snowy haze. People sat around each fire on reindeer hides that were laid on top of benches that had been carved out of snow. I went from fire to fire but couldn't find Jill.

I decided to sit next to a fire where some British women sat listening to Saami stories being translated into English. I stayed there for an hour listening to bear stories and yoiks while my hands and feet got colder and colder. Finally I got up and stood under the light at the entrance to the museum. I figured that if Jill was trying to find me she would look for me there. I had no idea which direction our host family was and I knew I would freeze if I tried to find it on my own.

Then up came a beautiful young man named Victor. "Did you call for a ride?"he asked. I said no, but I could sure use one. I was saved! He knew the Kuhmunens and where they lived and he dropped me off. I called Victor my angel! Jill had been very concerned. After that we agreed to keep in better touch.

The next day was the first day of the main market. During the market the town hosts up to 30,000 visitors and overnight more than 200 stalls had appeared on the streets of Jokkmokk. The first booth I came to was filled with hard candy! A few booths down I found a table of carved knives and cups. (I came back later for a hand-carved cup with reindeer etching). As expected there were booths that sold reindeer pelts and booths that sold sealskin hats and gloves, but next to a booth selling reindeer meat you would find a tee shirt booth or a booth selling Disneyland tutus for children — or else one selling kitchen gadgets for the local housekeepers. In that respect it reminded me of a county fair. The Wintermarket was not only for tourists but also for the local people.

In town many buildings were open with art, food and information and school cafeterias sold reindeer meals and crafts to the visitors.

Jill and I took a yoik workshop at the Ájtte Museum. The instructor, Per-Nilla Stålka, taught a room full of tourists the yoiks of different animals: the rabbit, the moose and the crow. He told us to imagine and listen to the animal first and that a yoiker is like a trumpet that captures sound without composing it. The yoik has many different levels. There are yoiks for trees, rocks, trains and even snowmobiles. We, as a group, flew like crows around the library cawing our crow yoiks. I've read that the yoik captures the essence of things, it has also been referred to as "the memory's means of expression." He said he was very private with his yoiks and sang them in his car, in the shower or alone in nature.

After the class Per-Nilla downloaded a mosquito yoik that some of us listened to with headsets. The mosquito yoik kept me up most of the night buzzing through my head and I woke the next morning tangled up in the bed sheets!

The museum also hosted a movie, *Rajd: a Year of Saami Herding*, filmed in the 1950s. A *rajd* is a reindeer caravan. It filled me with images of how herding life was lived and how people moved about with the herd. Later the image of the reindeer and the sleds would come back to me while I performed.

Down at the lake a track had been set up for reindeer races. The course was defined by orange plastic netting in the shape of a large oval. The race started when all the participants had gathered. I was one of the first to get there. I had heard that if someone who was signed up to participate did not show up, you could put your name on the list and so I asked to be added.

A fire had been built in a circular hole about two feet deep in the snow and a reindeer pelt had been laid on a sculpted ice bench beside it. I sat down by the fire and waited for the race to begin. It was so cold that day that my exposed hair turned white with frost, my camera battery only worked intermittently and when I tried to write in my journal the ink had frozen in my pen!

At last the reindeer came. They were smaller than I had imagined. They had wide hooves to help them walk on snow and I was told that they could sniff out and dig through as much as three feet of snow for lichen.

Reindeer lose their antlers every year — the males after rutting season and the females after calving. I saw that some of their antlers were still covered with velvet, some had only one antler left, and some had no antlers at all. One by one their owners led their reindeer into the ring. Some of the reindeer cooperated and some did not. I was very impressed when a young boy led his reindeer into the ring. From what I saw, the Saami culture is alive and strong in the youth.

Suddenly the race was on! There were seven participants. Everyone had showed up — so I was not in the race.

(**CHRISTINA JOHNSON** *continued overleaf)*

(**CHRISTINA JOHNSON** *continued from page 21)*

Each reindeer was harnessed to a small sled. A participant would lie belly down on the sled and hold onto the reins. Around the ring they flew except for one reindeer who got confused and turned its sled around! Afterwards, the winning participant was awarded a prize.

The Ájjte Museum was our favorite place to have a meal and hang out. The café there was always packed with people. Every day Jill and I ate reindeer meat prepared in different ways, dried and smoked, in dill sauce, in a stew with potatoes and carrots, and reindeer in wraps with heavy cream sauce.

The exhibits at the Ájjte Museum were extraordinary. On display were intricately decorated knives, sewing kits that hang from the belt called "needle houses," and purses made of reindeer hide with colorful felt trim and pewter embroidery. An English-speaking docent guided us through the exhibit of Saami history that went back 10,000 years, and an exhibit of Saami religion and mythology that was called "Drum Time."

There were numerous *noaidi* (Saami shaman) drums and there also was a noaidi's belt with knives, spoons, animal teeth and items that I could not identify hanging from it. Other exhibits included "Costume and Silver," "Life of the Settlers," "Getting By" (on the nomadic lifestyle) and "On the Move" (living with the reindeer). A wonderful natural history exhibit included the sound of mosquitoes (again) and other sounds from nature.

Saami National Day, February 6, occurs the same week as the Wintermarket. We went to the main outdoor Ice Theatre to listen to some yoiks and a speech about modern Saami politics by our host Henrik Micael Kuhmunen. I realized that there were decisions being made at the Wintermarket that the average tourist would not hear about — decisions that were crucial to the Saami People's future.

That night the Kuhmunen children put on their gaktis and went to perform at the school. If there was one thing I regret not doing, it is that I did not go to that.

Anna-Sofie Kuhmunen is a South Saami from the Norwegian side of Sápmi. She told me that gakti tells many things about the wearer (it is not a "costume," by the way). Her cousin's young daughter modeled her gakti for us in the kitchen. She had made the hat and her grandmother had made the dress. The hat tells where you are from. The South Saami hat is red with green piping and plainer than the hats of the north. The dress tells the region and the bands sewn on the sleeves and hem, depending on their placement, can tell if a person is married or single. Even the etchings on the bone tools indicate the region of origin, as do the shoe bands wrapped around the top of the boots. The South Saami bands are bright red, green and yellow. I asked Anna-Sofie to teach me how to wrap the ties around the boot tops and it took me a half hour to learn.

On Friday, the day before we left, I took Jill to the Saami Duodji. This turned out to be a very important visit. We were looking around at the beautiful things on exhibit when I ventured into a room I had missed a few nights before.

I was looking for a needle house to complete the gakti I have made for myself back home. I was searching for this when I was pulled, body and soul, over to one of the cases. There inside lay a *njuorggonas*, a hand crafted six-holed flute made from reindeer antler. Delicate etchings ringed each section. It was so beautiful that I instantly knew it was why I had been determined to come to the Jokkmokk Wintermarket. I called Jill over. "I found it!" I told her.

I asked the curator, Gunnar Östman Inga, if I could hold the njuorggonas. He unlocked the case and asked if I would like to play it. "YES!" He told me that it was made by the artist and yoiker, Thomas Marainen. Gunnar and Jill stood there while I played two or three songs. Each time, sad and haunting melodies came out of me and Gunnar said they sounded melancholy. But I was tapping into something deep within me. Would I like to return tomorrow and play it again? "YES!"

There were a few things for me to think about then. How could I afford the njuorggonas, how would I pay for it, and what would it do for me? I pondered these questions until the next morning. As soon as I was awake I put on my winter wear and headed out the door. I walked down the road and asked, "What should I do?"

The answer came when I looked up. I saw a power line on one of those giant structures with arms. The word "POWER" came into my mind and I asked myself, "What does the power line symbolize?" Controlled and directed power was my answer. On a personal level that was where I needed healing the most. Perhaps I could use the njuorggonas as an instrument to call out and heal my ancient spirit and then, hopefully, use it for some greater good. I thought of how power lines connect homes to villages and villages to the world. Later, I would reflect on how power lines have caused the relocation of the Saami, the disruption of their fishing areas and the alteration of the migratory paths of their reindeer. There was a lot of meaning and healing around this symbol.

As soon as the Saami Duodji opened I asked Gunnar if I could play the njuorggonas alone. He showed me downstairs to an empty office and left me there. I sat down in the quiet and began to play.

The first two pieces sounded like the hymns you might hear in church. The third piece sounded like a Native American song from the Southwest. All I remember about the next piece is a feeling of an ancient and powerful connection with a darkness in my mind. A wail came up and out of me, heaving and sobbing. Tears streamed down my face. I had tapped into something that had been held back and needed release. The final piece was a bird song that brought back the light for me.

I got up and joined Gunnar in the next room. He asked if I would buy the flute and I said, "YES!" He said I was

to come back that afternoon for a surprise. The artist who had made the njuorggonas was coming to meet with me! I went to find Jill. I was deep in thought. Again I asked myself, "How will I pay for it?"

The answer came when I looked down. There were baskets all around me; I had walked into a stall where they were being sold. A hundred of them surrounded me in stacks of three and four. "*What do the baskets symbolize*?" I asked myself and the word "FAITH" came into my mind. But what did faith have to do with baskets?

Then I remembered the Hopi who leave worry baskets or burden baskets outside their doors. It is there that you are asked to leave your worries before entering. I could leave my worries and have faith that I could deal with the cost!

Jill came back to the Saami Duodji with me — where Thomas Marainen, the artist and yoiker who made the njuorggonas was coming to meet me! I was excited to meet this great artist! When he arrived, we were led once again to the empty office where we sat and talked while Jill interpreted.

Thomas told us that for twenty five years he had been dreaming of making a njuorggonas. His idea was to make it from reindeer antler so it could be played in rain and snow without losing its tune. It was not until he made contact with Albin Faust, a Swedish bagpipe maker from Gothenburg, that his idea came into fruition. In their first collaboration they made four flutes. My njuorggonas was the first one to be put up for sale.

It was made like a simple duct flute in the key of D with six holes, and the fipple was made of oak. Because reindeer antlers curve so dramatically, only small pieces about two inches long were straight and round enough to be used, he said. He had carefully chosen seven two-inch pieces, carved them on a lathe and then drilled the holes to Albin Faust's specifications for size and spacing. Using a knife he had etched traditional Saami designs where the pieces joined.

Gunnar's son came to take photos of us together and I played a song for him. Then, to my delight, Thomas yoiked us. It sent a wave of energy through me that I remember vividly to this day. Thomas presented me with a CD of his yoiks and invited us to his concert that was being held that afternoon. And then he was off.

photo: Thomas Marainen, the njuorggonas and Christina Johnson

When I tried to pay for the flute with my credit card and some cash, the card would not go through. Jill offered to pay and said that I could pay her back when we returned to Stockholm. At that point the worry baskets told me "Take some money from here and some money from there and have faith that it will all work out!" which it did.

We went to the Ájtte Museum for Thomas' concert. The audience was filled with men and women in gaktis. I was very touched when Thomas asked if I would play the flute during his concert and after a few yoiks he invited me up to the stage. With Jill acting as interpreter I explained to the audience that I never knew what music would come out of the instrument — that I just played. It was Spirits in cooperation with reality, I said. The first piece I played was short and had a nice melody. The image that came into my mind while I played was of a bird flying above the world. After I played I described the image. Then I played another piece. This one was darker and I felt the weeping coming, but I pulled myself back from the dark and found myself walking beside a reindeer sled in the snow. I could see my boots and the bottom of my gakti.

When I sat down I did a most uncharacteristic thing. I passed the njuorggonas around the room. I thought that I would like these people to not only see and hear this instrument, but to touch it with their energy as well. It went around the room and came back to me just as I sat up startled, wondering what I had done! But I did not want this instrument to sit in a glass case in a museum.

That night our host Henrik Micael played the njuorggonas at the dinner table. He said it was like yoiking and it turned out that he had been taught to yoik by Thomas Marainen.

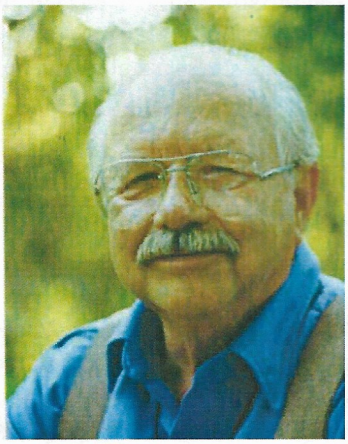
The next morning I was given a ride to the bus station, Jill had gone back the night before. Although I try to travel light, coming light and going back light are usually two different things for me. I was carrying two reindeer pelts, four books and many other things I had bought at the market — not to mention the njuorggonas that I guarded as the sacred object it was.

Later, when going through Customs and Duty at SeaTac Airport, I spent almost an hour explaining the njuorggonas to two customs inspectors while they tried to classify it. Was it a musical instrument or was it an animal product? Should they put a duty on it?

All the while I was smiling inside knowing it was so much more than anything they would ever find in any of their books...

Christina Johnson lives on a small island off the coast of Wahington State. She plays in a nine-piece band, "Tiempo de Lopez," and is currently working on a CD of music of the njuorggonas. She has been asked to record a sound track for a documentary being made about North American Saami elder Solveig Arneng Johnson — who happens to be a relative of Thomas Marainen.

ABOUT THE COVER



Cover artist Dennis Helppie

In the 1970s I was an instructor in the business department of Edmonds Community College, Lynwood Washington. During my vacations I worked as a human resource consultant in Alaska and spent time in Kotzebue, a small Inupiat village above the Arctic Circle. I was also a long distance runner and racer at the time.

One December evening (it was minus 15 degrees) I decided to jog out onto the solidly frozen Kotzebue Sound. Following the "Willow Trail," willow branches frozen into the ice that were used as a guide, I ran about two miles. I stopped and looked back at the now -dim village lights. Sled dogs were howling in the distance — were they dogs or wolves?

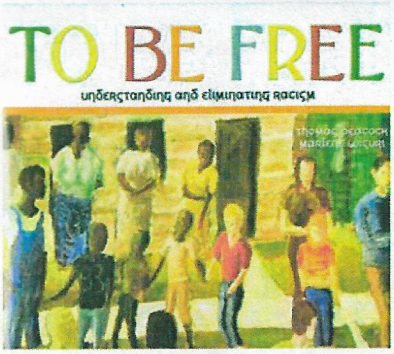
Suddenly the clouds cleared. Above me the sky was filled with undulating northern lights that looked like a multi-colored river! I was alone, no one knew where I was, the sky was flickering, and the sled dogs were howling. There was moonlight and it was midnight now! It definitely was time to get back to the hotel and safety.

Even today I can vividly recall this unique event! Was it my Finnish Sami ancestry dredging up ancient fears of the unknown, or just plain fear?

One day back in my art studio I produced the painting "Northern Lights Landscape." It still brings back vivid images of a foolhardy but exciting episode in my life. Northern lights...may I somehow, some way see them again...Maybe only in my art.

[Editor's note: *Dennis and his wife Sharon live in Boise, Idaho. His work has been included in North American Sami art exhibits at Siiddastallans in Spirit Mountain and Grand Marais, Minnesota..*]

Anne Dunn: *BÁIKI* BOOK REVIEW



***To Be Free: Understanding and Eliminating Racism.* Thomas Peacock and Marlene Wisuri, foreward by Eric Jolly. Afton, MN: Afton Historical Society Press, 2008, 115 pages.**

The topic of racism is difficult to confront but Thomas Peacock and Marlene Wisuri's new book *To Be Free: Understanding and Eliminating Racism* offers opportunities for discussion and activities to help eliminate some of the embarrassment and discomfort. Recognizing that denial is unhealthy, Peacock urges readers to confront racism, heal, move on and grow. Each chapter is followed by a review of themes and activities to promote understanding. The book is being distributed to selected Minnesota schools.

Modern racism has its roots in Europe and Christopher Columbus began a campaign of genocide almost as soon as he arrived. The mass killing of Native Peoples was based on insatiable greed and the need to expand empire and possess private property.

All people tend to believe that their culture is superior to others. This belief has been used to discriminate, persecute and even annihilate others based on culture, religion or social behavior. In this way the whites justified slavery, mass removal and the genocide of Native Peoples in the Americas.

Native Americans made it possible for the early European settlers in Virginia to survive. After the newcomers learned how to cultivate tobacco, it became their chief export crop but a lot of land and intensive labor was needed to produce it. Since Native Americans still outnumbered whites and refused to tend the settler's fields, African slaves were brought in to work the plantations. It would take a civil war to abolish slavery, but the book points out that the struggle for true equality continues today.

Peacock explores the difference between prejudice and racism. Prejudice occurs when we form an opinion or make a judgment about others based on stereotypes, distortions or omissions. Racism is founded on the belief that physical and behavioral diversity in humans is determined by their genetic makeup, and that these differences can be ranked on a scale from higher ability and potential to lower ability and potential. Racists believe that physical characteristics, and creativity are genetically related, fixed and unchangeable.

Racist beliefs manifest themselves in different ways. Some of these ways include white privilege, institutional racism in schools and governments, racism that is raw, angry and uncompromising, and internalized racism which is a form of self-hate.

There are inherent privileges in being white in America. This results in misinformation and stereotypes about people of color. In American society certain traits — being white, thin, male, young, Christian and having wealth — are more valued than others, which means other traits are less valued.

One observation: the photo on page 50 that is captioned, "One of the Indian victims of the massacre at Wounded Knee, 1890" appears to be staged. The rifle in the photo is well-polished and placed in such a manner that it gets a lot of light. It is my understanding that the people who died at Wounded Knee were disarmed before the slaughter. If this photo was staged, the caption should say so.

Publisher Patricia McDonald asks, "What if we decided to acknowledge racism and talk about ways of preventing, reducing and alleviating it? And what if we began the discussion among young people — before they solidify their beliefs about people of other races?" Most people of color would say these are questions worthy of serious consideration.

DONNA MATSON 1952-2010

In mid July we received the sad news of the passing of our dear friend and collaborator, Donna Marie Matson Jönsson, the result of a tragic accident. Her memorial service and dinner complete with spoken remembrances was attended by a host of friends and family.

She was *Báiki*'s genealogy expert and "Our Gateway Ancestors" columnist. She last visited the *Báiki* library in Oakland a month before her passing.

Donna was full of interesting stories — especially how she found her Sami and Finnish relatives. Her family names include Kalantasa and Esko (yes, she was related to the Minnesota Eskos) and when she went to the Tornio and Sodankyla area and visited the church graveyards she would discover family names, and then the dusty old church record books would come out and relatives would too.

She was born August 22, 1952 in northern Michigan. Her parents were Robert Matson and Dorothy Mulvehill. She graduated from Hibbing High School on Minnesota's Iron Range where her father was a mining executive. She was steeped in the history and stories of the Sami and Finnish experience and spoke and read Swedish and Finnish as well as English. Donna was also editor of *The Tupa Times*, the newsletter of the Los Angeles Finlandia Foundation.

She earned a B.A. from Syracuse University and an M.A. in Cinema Production and Screenwriting from UCLA. After that she wrote corporate commercials and her clients included Toyota, Lincoln and Lexus — for which she won a Telly Award.

Donna was co-creator of the award-winning film *My Life as a Dog* with her then-husband, Reidar Jonsson — a well known Swedish film writer. She also co-wrote the cult horror film *Terrorgram* and recently was working on an original screenplay *Children of the Sun* for which she received a Finlandia Foundation grant. The script was about a young Sami American boy who grew up with Ojibwe friends in northern Michigan.

Always passionate about her Sami and Finnish heritage she served as Vice President and President of the Los Angeles Finlandia Foundation from 2006 until her passing.

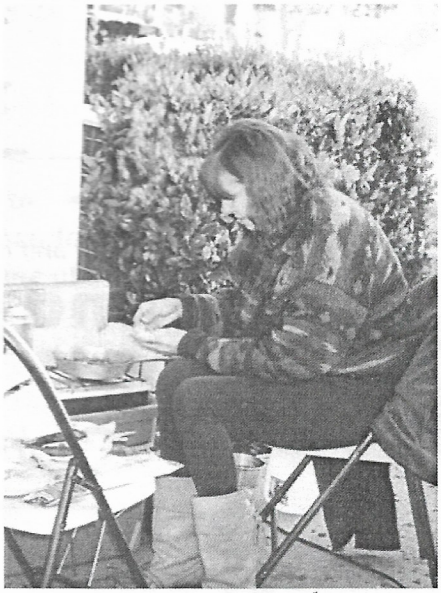


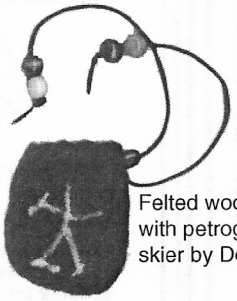
photo: faith field

Donna Matson prepares a meal for participants in the Saami Camp at the Scandinavian Festival,Thousand Oaks, California. Over the years she was a spirited fixture at these events and her presence will be deeply missed.

Donna also had an interest in knitting and felting and she designed and produced a collection of Sami-inspired pouches and handbags. Her input influenced the design of the latest *Báiki* reindeer tee shirt.

Her son Aiden Jonsson survives her. From his childhood, he participated in many memorable West Coast Sami community events alongside his Mother. He was an Eagle Scout and is now an engineering student at the California Maritime Academy in Berkeley.

Donna had a great sense of humour and one of her favorite quotations was from Isaac Asimov: "If my doctor told me I had only six minutes to live, I wouldn't brood — I'd type a little faster." For these and many other reasons, Donna, you will never be forgotten. — *by Nathan Muus*



Felted wool pouch with petroglyph skier by Donna Matson.

*(**SEABERG** continued from page 17)*

Everything gets recycled and nothing is wasted. Native People understand how you relate to food: you sing to it, you pray to it, and then you enjoy it.

Among the Iroquois there is a code of ethics known as the "Seventh Generation." Whenever a policy is being considered they ask how that decision might affect humans seven generations after the ones making it have passed on. If such a code was a part of the Western paradigm, we would not have nuclear weapons nor would we be dependent on fossil fuels. We would not have oil spills, ozone depletion or global warming. We would not be clearing away the world's rain forests at the rate of one acre per second per day, and ten thousand years' worth of topsoil would still be in place.

Modern society is dazzled by fast food, fast cars, fast money and fast living. Without a sense of permanence all life becomes a commodity to be consumed and discarded. Many of us are waking to the insanity of this and we are taking up the task of turning it around. We realize we can no longer simply pack up and light out for the territories because there is no more "out" to get to.

Many Native Peoples speak of a time when their ancestors wandered great distances before arriving in their proper place. When my Swedish Sami grandparents pulled up their roots and came to this country they left behind a language and a culture that was well-adapted to the soil and climate of their ancestral home and they tried, as best they could, to acclimate themselves to the new one. Reeling from the shock of the transplant they drifted about like tumbleweeds in a storm seeking friendly soil. Like millions of other immigrants, they became servants to the rich and slaves to the bossman — they became foot soldiers in the war against Nature . But I honor my grandparents for their courage and determination to survive. They cared for the meager piece of land they earned, they raised a family and they passed along their stories. The memories I carry with me of their simple hard-won lives I cherish as the oral history of my family. They came to this land as seekers, they learned how to live on it and love it and they gave themselves up to it. The soil that now holds their bodies is sacred soil, the land of our emergence. It is our place.

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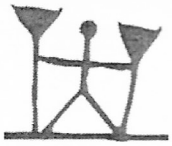

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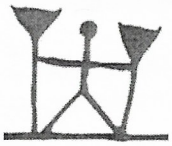

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