

# BAIKI

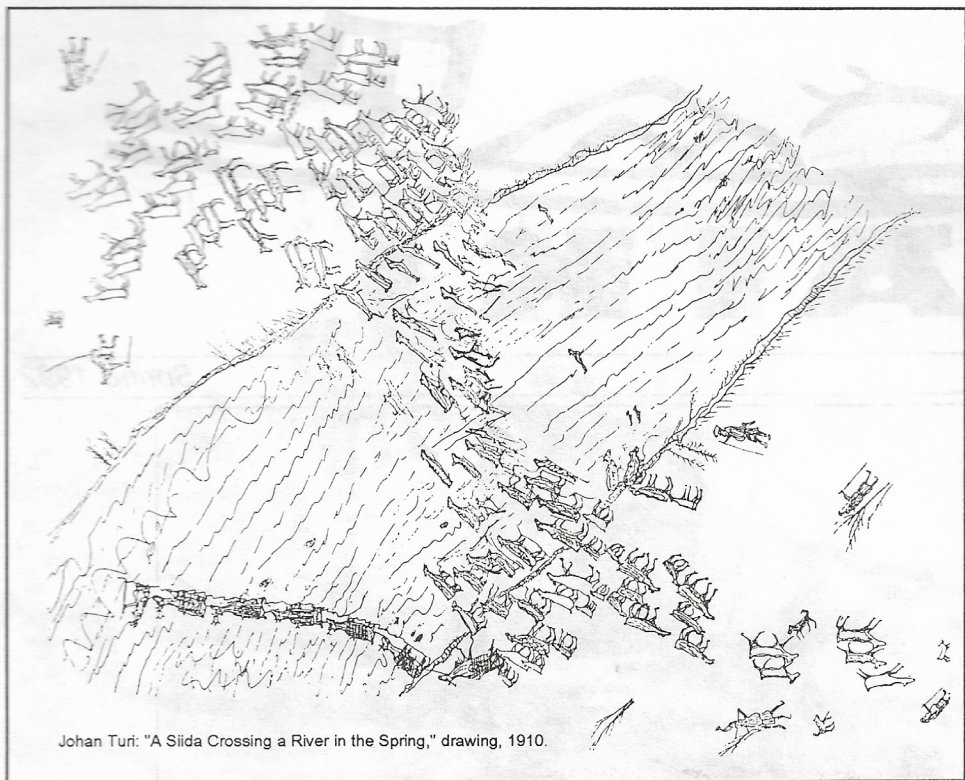
Issue 3

Spring 1992



*an American Journal of Sami Living*





Johan Turi: "A Siida Crossing a River in the Spring," drawing, 1910.

# GIITU

THANKS TO MARJORIE SIMERSON OF BELMOND, IOWA AND KEI KOBAYASHI OF TOKYO AND NEW YORK CITY FOR BECOMING BAIKI SPONSERS. WE ARE ALSO GRATEFUL TO THE GROWING NUMBER OF READERS WHO HAVE SUBSCRIBED TO BAIKI AND WHO HAVE REQUESTED THAT COPIES BE SENT TO THEIR FRIENDS.

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*Baiki* is published four times annually. Subscriptions are \$10. a year in North America, (\$6. for seniors and students) and \$15. a year in all other countries. Scandinavian and Finnish subscribers use Postgiro nr. 1 98 95 57. *Baiki*, Issue 3, Spring 1992 was designed and produced by Faith Fjeld with Maija Oberg Hanf, Arden Johnson, Rudolph Johnson, and Clay Kark-French. Desktop publishing consultant: Marlene Safay.

IT IS THE PURPOSE OF BAIKI: AN AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SAMI LIVING TO SERVE AS A MEDIUM OF EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION BETWEEN SAMI PEOPLE FROM NORTH AMERICA AND SAMI PEOPLE WORLDWIDE. WE BELIEVE THAT OUR CULTURE HAS SURVIVED THE ATTEMPTS TO DESTROY IT AND THAT THE PUBLICATION OF SAMI ART, LITERATURE AND POETRY, AND THE PROMOTION OF SAMI MUSIC WILL HELP US TO REDEFINE OUR SAMI IDENTITY FOR OURSELVES AND FOR OTHERS. WE SEEK TO REAFFIRM OUR CULTURAL AWARENESS AS A SOURCE OF PRIDE IN WHO WE ARE AND WHERE WE ARE FROM. AS THE PEOPLE OF THE SUN WE BELIEVE THAT OUR INDIGENOUS ROOTS CONNECT US TO EACH OTHER AND TO THE EARTH.



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## WHO WE ARE: SÁPMI

# THE SAMI IN AMERICA

### Part three:

There is growing evidence that a large number of Sami ("Lapp") People came to North America as "Norwegian," "Swedish," and "Finnish" immigrants, hiding their indigenous identity. But the Sami People who immigrated to Alaska in 1894 and 1898 came specifically because they were Sami, and they followed the reindeer. The presence of these Sami People in Alaska was the work of one man, Sheldon Jackson, a Presbyterian missionary and the General Agent for the Alaska Bureau of Education. In 1890, he began to look for funds to teach reindeer-herding to the Inuit ("Eskimo") People, describing his project as an attempt to "convert the nomadic tribes of hunters and fishermen into raisers of reindeer [and to] elevate a self-supporting race to become friends and auxiliaries of the whiteman."

Jackson's first idea to import reindeer and Chukchi herders from Siberia was not successful, apparently because the Chukchi and the Inuit did not get along. So Jackson turned next to Norway. In 1893 he chose William Kjellman to assist him in recruiting Sami reindeer herders to manage the 418 Siberian reindeer the Chukchi left behind. Kjellman was a Sami-speaking Norwegian immigrant who had grown up as a reindeer herder in Finnmark.

The first Sami group arrived in 1894, under contract to the U.S. Department of the Interior. The following news item ran on May 13, 1894 in *The New York Times*: "A number of Laplanders who have been engaged by the United States government to instruct Alaskans in the art of driving and herding reindeer, arrived here yesterday on board the steamship 'Island.' The party numbered sixteen... They were all clad in their native costumes and...excited much comment. The men [wore] tightly-buttoned coats of reindeer hide and their feet were encased in moccasins. Their woolen trousers fitted so tightly around the ankles that many wondered how the wearers managed to get into them. The caps were fashioned of a gaudy-hued material and shaped somewhat like a 'mortar board.'"

"[They are] much smaller in stature than the average American. All have light blue eyes and high cheekbones. The women are not likely to take part in any beauty show. Mr. William A. Kjellmann, Superintendent of the Government Reindeer Station at Port Clarence, Alaska, was in charge of the party. He said that the members were under a three-year contract and were to receive \$27.50 per month and board.

The party left for San Francisco [by train] last night. From that city they will embark for Port Clarence, Alaska."

A year after the arrival of the Sami, the Inuit had become so interested in the potential of reindeer herding that applications for Jackson's reindeer project came from all over the country. Jackson, however, kept control of the part that both the Sami and the Inuit herders played, distributing the herds among the various Christian missions. The herd's increase became the property of the missions in return for feeding and clothing the Inuit and Sami participants. So Alaskan reindeer management was not based on the extended-family siida system. Over the next few decades, the church and a few private individuals gained increasing control over the growing number of reindeer as well as the profits.

In 1897, gold strikes brought a great influx of prospectors to the north. Some of the Sami turned from herding to mining. (One of them, Jafet Lindeberg, is generally credited with the discovery of gold that led to the founding of the city of Nome.) Jackson suggested that the growing number of miners would lead to a food crisis, and since reindeer could provide meat, sent Kjellman back to Norway to recruit reindeer as well as more herders.

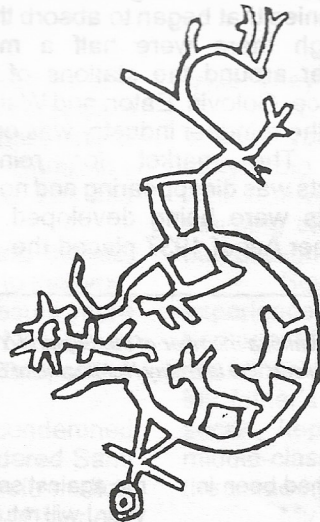
Early in February 1898, 87 Sami herders and their families, from Kautokeino, Karasjok and Bosekop [Alta], along with 10 Finns from Hammerfest and 15 Norwegians from Kaafjord, left Norway on board the "Manitoba" bound for Alaska. The group included Samuel Balto, who had been a part of the Fridtjof Nansen Greenland expedition.[See letter below.] Also on board were 537 reindeer with 4000 sacks of moss to feed them, as well as 418 pulkas [Sami sledges]. After docking in New York, the group, which had been promoted as "The Lapland-Yukon Relief Expedition," travelled by train across the U.S., stopping in Chicago, where they attracted much attention.

Arriving in Seattle, they discovered that no ship waited to take them on to Alaska. The U.S. government, busy mobilizing for the Spanish-American War, had received word that the Alaskan miners were not starving, and that the Expedition was not needed and would be cancelled.

Jackson suggested that the reindeer were the only way to get into gold country and that those Sami not needed as herders could serve as laborers to build the reindeer stations.

While the group waited, the reindeer were taken to Seattle's Woodland Park where crowds of people gathered

(continued overleaf)





(continued from page 3)

to see both them and the Sami. The expedition finally left for Alaska on two different ships, one in March and one in April. Sources say that of the 537 reindeer, only 200 survived the trip.

The Sami were put to work at Unalakleet on Norton Sound, moving supplies and building the station. The business of reindeer herding was spreading widely. The introduction of the pulkas made remote places accessible to miners and gave Sami reindeer-driving postmen the chance to blaze new routes. The distance between Circle City and Juneau, which had formerly taken 60 days, took only 5 or 6 with a pulka-drawing reindeer. So the Sami played a part in "opening up" Alaska. When the second group's two-year term of enlistment expired, 26 returned home, but the rest remained in Alaska as miners or settled farther south in the Seattle/Poulsbo, Washington area, where a Sami colony exists today.

By the turn of the century the Alaskan herds had increased to 7000 and there were a dozen reindeer stations. The November 1901 issue of *Skandinaven* [the leading Norwegian-language newspaper in America], published an article on the Alaskan

Sami illustrated with a photograph of a woman in gakti [traditional dress] carrying a baby on her back in a cradleboard. The photo was taken at the main reindeer station at Eaton. The article stated in archaic language, that "...the Lapp women played a vital role in training the Eskimo in the reindeer culture. They taught the natives how to make clothes from skins and butter and cheese from milk and how to cook and dry reindeer meat. Eskimo women gathered at the various stations, often coming from a distance of 100 miles or more, to receive instruction."

By 1918, the so-called "heyday of the reindeer industry," there were an estimated 70,000 to 100,000 reindeer in Alaska. Annual fairs featured competition in herding skills and races brought herders together. But small reindeer-herding operations could not compete with the large well-financed companies that began to absorb them. Although there were half a million reindeer around the stations of Port Clarence, Golovin, Eaton and Wales in 1930, the reindeer industry was on the wane. The market for reindeer products was disappearing and no new markets were being developed. The Reindeer Act of 1937 placed the

management of the herds under the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), restricting ownership of reindeer to the Inuit, leaving out the Sami entirely.

Even so, the Sami impact on Alaska has been significant. Close, ongoing ties have developed between the Sami and the Inuit People. The Sami presence as herders has been a determining factor in the policy of Alaska toward its indigenous Peoples.

In the autumn of 1992, NRK Sami Radio will send a team to Seattle/Poulsbo and to locations in Alaska to film a documentary on the Alaskan Sami and their descendants. After a preliminary visit to these areas, Johs. Kalvemo, a member of this team, observed that the Sami descendants of the two Alaskan expeditions show a strong interest in Sami culture and history. He said, "To me it seems they are more family conscious than many of us in Samiland..."

*Faith Fjeld is editor of BAIKI.*

*A copy of the diary of Wilhelm Basi, a member of the second expedition, can be ordered from the Finnish-American Historical Society of the West, P.O. Box 5522, Portland, OR 97208. Names of the members of both expeditions are given. Ask for item nr.4, \$2.00 postpaid.*

*The following is an excerpt from a letter written by Samuel Balto, a member of the Lapland-Yukon Relief Expedition, to the explorer Fridtjof Nansen. Permission for publication in BAIKI was granted by Balto's niece, the late May Huntington of Seattle, Washington. Translation by Arden Johnson from the original Norwegian.*

Good old friend Nansen,

I received your letter on September 7. [It] had been in the mail for one year and five days.

We came to Alaska July 27, 1898, to Unalaklid...We travelled seven miles upriver where we built seven houses and a big three-story farmhouse [where we could spend the winter]. I was the master builder. Up to the time when we started building, we received, according to our contract, "good and sufficient" food. In November the Superintendent [William Kjellman] began to sell our provisions to the Eskimos, and he put the money in his own pocket. For us [Sami] there was less and less each month. Finally there was hunger among us and many came down with scurvy.

Now we are all free men, having left government service. We have travelled 200 miles westward from the station to the place where there have been many gold finds, Anvil City [Nome]. We made the trip here by reindeer at Christmas time. I staked three claims. One of these is pretty good, I think. I have been up in Balto Creek and prospected my claim up there. The creek is named after me by an American. I couldn't get to bedrock there was so much water. I am thinking of prospecting this winter with the help of fire. The Americans who were with me say there should be gold there. One man offered me \$1000.00 for the Balto Creek Claim, but a Norwegian advised

me against selling for that price. If I can sell all these claims next year I will return to Norway next fall. A lot of gold is found along the sea. One can wash up "rockers," getting up to \$100.00 per day per man. Two of the Sami that travelled here five years ago were lucky. They have good claims. Between these two brothers there is millions in Norwegian money.

One member of our expedition [Japhet Lindeberg] was the luckiest. He was supposed to travel to Siberia and spend the winter with two other Samis, but he refused to go. So our boss Sheldon Jackson got angry with him and he lost his job. Immediately he took a steamship north to Golovin Bay. From there he and two Swedes [John Brynteson and Eric Lindblom] took a boat and came here to prospect. They found this place, Anvil Creek, which is very rich. They were able to get from \$100.00 to \$1800.00 a day by sluicing.

If you write to me, it's not worth writing before April. The steamships don't come here in the winter. Live well, dear Nansen. Greet your wife. I don't have time to write anymore.

Respectfully,  
Samuel Johanesen Balto  
Anvil City [Nome], Alaska, North America  
September 9, 1899





Eldon Mollanen: "The Conversation," woodblock

## SAMI STORYTELLING AND IDENTITY

*Grey Eagle (Ken Jackson)*

**W**e have always needed stories to tell us who we are. Stories help us understand, accept and appreciate ourselves and our People. This is especially true of indigenous people and explains why so many Sami, like Native Americans, want to recover and recreate lost and stolen stories.

The Sami once had thousands of living stories, passed on through retelling from one generation to the next. One man alone, Norwegian J.K.Qvigstad, collected more than 600 Sami myths, legends and folktales. Now many Sami have not heard one traditional tale actually told, so the loss in cultural material is enormous.

The loss began with missionaries who condemned the telling of "heathen" stories. The clergy considered Sami creation stories and accounts of shamanism, transformation and healing the work of the devil. But the concept of the devil was brought by the missionaries to the Sami, along with feelings of shame and guilt for their animistic beliefs. It is ironic that Sami storytelling was stilled in the name of a religion that was itself based on oral tradition: Jewish myths and legends and the parables of Jesus.

But the Sami have proved that stories can reach across boundaries and cultures and have shown that they can be successful in efforts at recovering their treasure of traditional tales. When I first lectured on oral tradition at the University of Tromsø in 1988, a few Sami students showed up. One of these received permission to record my talk, which included several Native American stories. [The student was artist Elle Hansa, *Báiki* Issue #2, p.5-6.] His cassette recording of my stories was circulated and when I returned to the university the next summer both storytelling lectures had overflow audiences. I was invited to Kautokeino where I told stories in a huge lavvo [Sami tent]. The next summer I returned there to conduct a two-week storytelling workshop at the Sami college. Most of my 36 students insisted that they didn't know any traditional Sami story they could tell, the final assignment in the workshop. So they went to the library for their material and then were able to come up with suitable

tales. They presented these Sami stories skillfully.

At the World Council of Indigenous Peoples in Tromsø several Sami told me of their renewed interest in storytelling. One young woman embraced me and said she was making storytelling her dissertation topic and her teaching career; a Northwest Coast Indian legend I'd told had brought to life a story she'd heard as a child.

Several students told me that they had shared my experience of first losing and then trying to recover ethnic heritage. My Indian heritage is Anishinabe (Ojibwe) through my father. I didn't learn I was part Indian until I was grown. My father's Indian blood had been treated as a shameful secret, kept hidden because the family lived in a white middle-class community. Some students said they had much the same history with their Sami ancestry.

My interest in storytelling developed as I traced back many of the stories I had heard from my father. These stories had clarity and power once I knew of his native background. The same holds for many Sami, including those in this country, who are searching out and then retelling their stories to document their identity.

Sami are recovering their stories despite the drowning deluge of electronic and printed material alien to their culture. Stories are another tool in the Sami's impressive efforts to connect with other indigenous Peoples and the rest of those with whom they share this fragile planet.

[Traditional and contemporary Sami stories will be presented by Grey Eagle in forthcoming issues of *Báiki*.]

*Ken Jackson (Grey Eagle) teaches communications and American Indian Studies at the U. of Washington. His book *Raven Speaks, with parallel texts in English and Sámiigiella* (translated by Harald Gaski) is being published by DAT this summer. He is the director of the Sacred Circle Story Tellers, 2314 22nd Ave. East, Seattle, WA 98112, (206)324-0071.*



# SAMI CONNECTIONS



## FESTIVALS TO WATCH FOR

■ **DULUTH,MN: FINNFEST '92, JULY 23-26.** THE FIRST SAMI-AMERICAN SIIDASTALLEN and the largest gathering of Finns in America. Baiki will have a table at the tori and present a program on the Sami during the conference sessions. Come, let's meet each other!!! Write: Finnfest USA '92, P.O.Box 762, Duluth, MN 55801.

■ **DECORAH,IA: NORDIC FEST, JULY 24-26.** This year's theme is "Nordic Nonsense." Norwegian-American Music, theatre, art, crafts, lectures, films, and antique displays. Write: P.O.Box 364, Decorah, IA 52101, (319)382-9010.

■ **MINNEAPOLIS,MN: FESTIVAL OF NATIONS, APRIL 30-MAY 3.** Marvin Salo (a Baiki sponser) and Ken Salin will demonstrate birchbark weaving and love spoon carving. Marvin has demonstrated his crafts at the Festival since 1976. A perennial favorite. Stop by and say "hello."

■ **MINOT,ND: NORDHOSTS FEST, OCTOBER 13-17.** The Grand Daddy of Scandinavian-American Festivals. 65,000 people attend this event. World class entertainers perform daily. Write: P.O.Box 2111, Minot,ND 58702, (701)852-2368, FAX:(701)838-7838.

## ADOPT A REINDEER AT THE MINNESOTA ZOO

■ While I was at the Zoo for the Reindeer Festival, it struck me that it must expensive to keep the reindeer fed and watered and their barn and yard clean, much less pay for the vet bills and the zookeepers' salaries. When I mentioned this to Dede Schadeegg, zookeeper in charge of reindeer, she said perhaps we (namely Sami) would like to contribute to the ADOPT program and designate money toward the care of a reindeer. I thought it sounded like the perfect match for us. Here is how it works: A share sponsorship donation is \$25. Make a check payable to "ADOPT, Minnesota Zoo Foundation, 13000 Zoo Blvd., Apple Valley, MN 55124. You can contribute more or less, depending on your budget. Sponsors will get a bunch of good stuff in the mail from the zoo. You will also get the satisfaction of knowing you are contributing to the support of the reindeer. The zoo does a great job of educating the public about reindeer and the Sami. We can help.

## NEW ITEMS

■ **DULUTH,MN:** Call for artists. **KOTIA ETSIMASSA-LOOKING FOR A HOME**, a juried invitational exhibit of contemporary Finnish-American art will be held July 18-August 3 at the Duluth Art Intsitute. If you have at least one Finnish grandparent you may submit up to five entries. Slides are due May 1 with results mailed out June 5. Write: Duluth Art Institute, 506 West Michigan St., Duluth,MN 55802, or call (218)727-8013 for more information.

■ **FARGO,ND: MARVIN and CAROLYN SALO** will demonstrate birchbark weaving and other crafts at the Gate City National Bank as part of the **SCANDINAVIAN DAYS** celebration June 25-28.

■ **QUEBEC,CANADA: THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF ARCTIC SOCIAL SCIENCES** will hold its annual meeting October 28-31, 1992. A number of Sami scientists will join the congress, discussing a broad range of topics in human behavior, history, environment, politics, the arts, etc. You are invited to attend or deliver a paper (20 minutes maximum). Write: Ludger Muller-Wille, IASSA, McGill U.,805 Sherbrook St.W., Montreal,Canada, H3A 2K6, tel 1-514-398-4960.

## SAMI MAGIC

■ **OSSEO,MN:** *Baiki* has connected nine women. Film maker **JOYCE SAMBATARO** (Seattle) told **FAITH FJELD** (San Francisco) that **ETTA NORWOOD** (Minneapolis), who works with cultural diversity programs, was interested in *Baiki*. Meanwhile, **CAROL AENNE** (Wayzata,MN) called Faith for a copy of *Baiki*, and Faith gave her **MARY OBERG's** name (Bayport,MN). Carol works with **SUE MYERS** in cultural diversity programs too. Over coffee, Carol and Sue discovered that 1) they both knew Etta and 2) they were both Sami! And so they held a **SAMI NETWORK MEETING**. Present were Carol, Sue, Etta, and Mary, and **BARBARA TAN, KAREN BRUCE, and BARBARA JOHNSTON**. After sharing their interests, the group watched "The Pathfinder." Future meetings are planned.

## COMING UP IN BAIKI

Baiki has been featuring a general introduction to the Sami culture. The series "Who We Are:Sapmi" will conclude in the next issue. The following issues of Baiki will feature topics pertinent to the contemporary Sami community. **Issue #5, "The Sami People and Ecology,"** will include articles on Sami traditional beliefs concerning nature and the environment, as well as the Alta/Kautokeino conflict, and the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. **Issue #6, "The Sami People and Spirituality,"** will include articles on the Sami nature religion and traditional ceremonies, Laestadianism, and the Apostolic Lutheran Church.

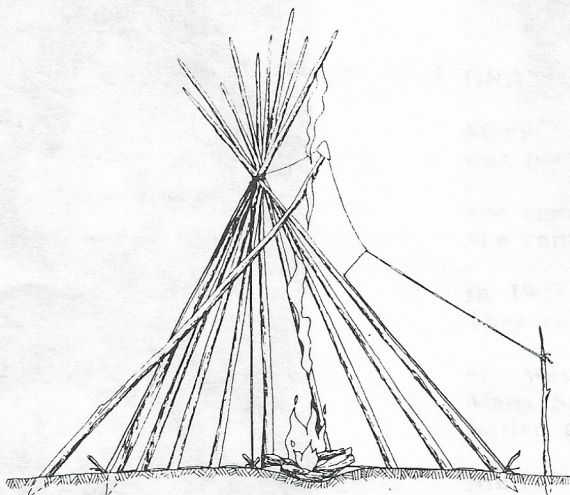
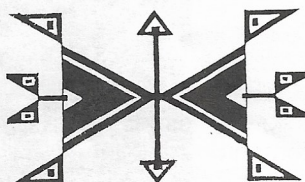
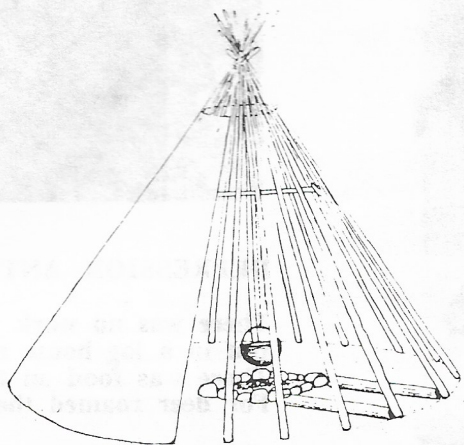
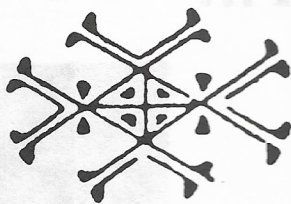
## SAMI MASTER LISTS

Subjects of interest to our readers will appear in future issues as a series of master lists. This will include Sami family names and their Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish equivalents, sources of information for genealogical research, and bibliographies of Sami books and magazine articles written in English. These lists will reflect requests for Sami information which have come into the Baiki office.

## DO YOU HAVE A NEWS ITEM FOR SAMI CONNECTIONS?

Send clipping or information to: Maija Oberg Hanf  
340 South 4th St. Bayport, MN 55003 (612) 439-8055





ABOVE: Sami carved bonework/lavvu construction.  
BELOW: Crow Indian beadwork/tipi construction.

Sami visit to the Crow Reservation, Montana.



PHOTO: C. Patrick Morris

## TANA TO MONTANA: the Sami-U.S Indian International Educational and Cultural Exchange Program

*C. Patrick Morris*

I had just gotten off the plane from Washington, D.C. and had come to New York to give hometown support to a friend, George Horsecapture, who had just been appointed by President Carter to the Museum Services Board. He was being inducted into this prestigious organization at a reception at the Brooklyn Children's Museum. I was in a hurry so I asked a redhaired fellow if I could share his cab and he amiably agreed.

As we rode towards Brooklyn I guessed that my companion might be Scandinavian and knowing their interest in American Indians, I told him I was a professor at the Center for Native American Studies at Montana State University and began to tell him of my dream to launch an international exchange program for American Indians. I had no sooner finished talking than he announced that he was Leiv Ellingsen, Educational Attache for Norway, and that he had translated a number of films on American Indian cultures for Norwegian television. He immediately expressed great interest in the exchange program and we agreed to work together to make it a reality.

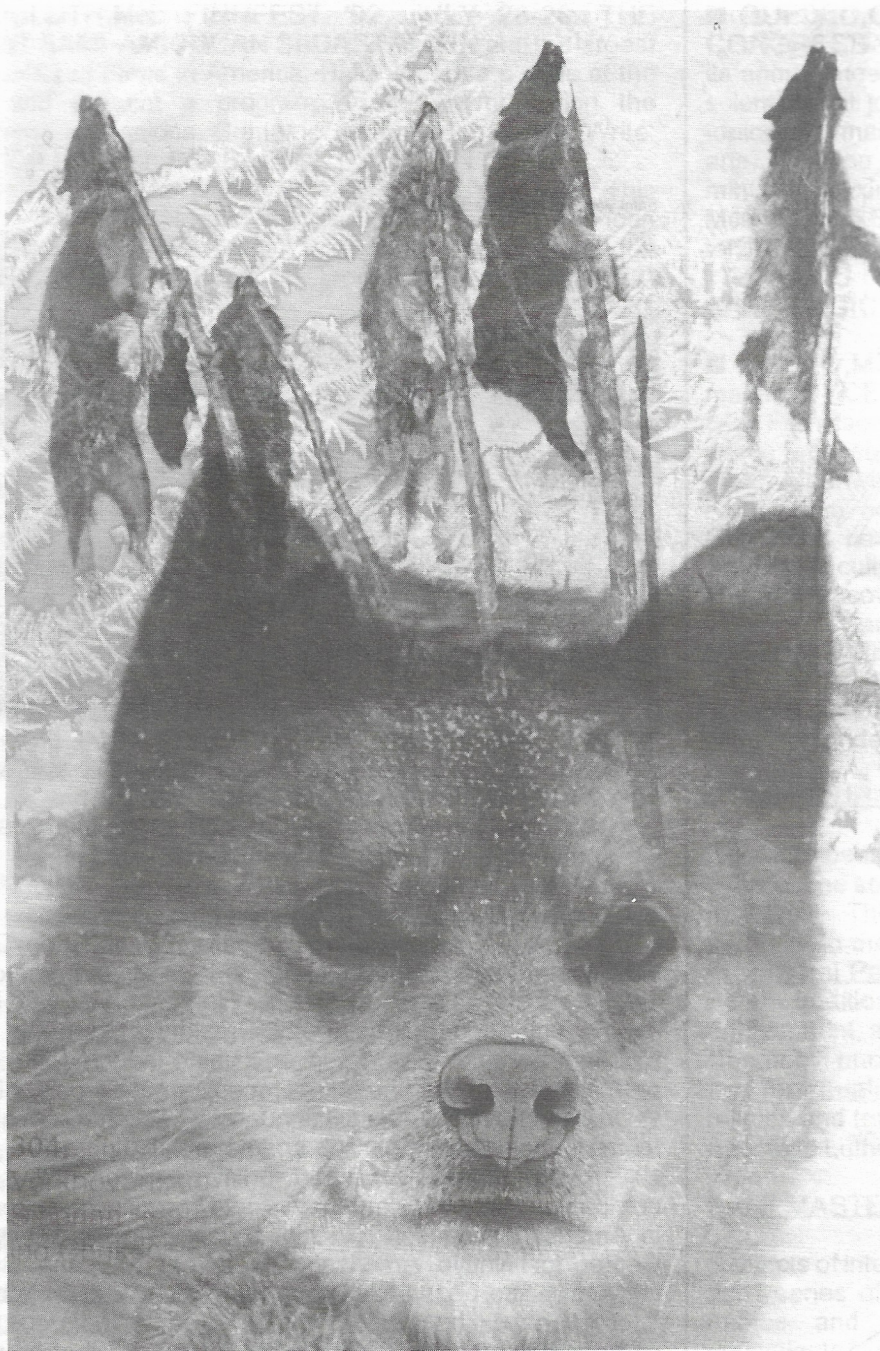
The Sami-U.S. Indian International Educational and Cultural Exchange Program began in the summer of 1979. Through the generous sponsorship of the Center for Native American Studies, Montana State University, the Montana

*(continued on page 12)*



# SHADOWS FROM THE PAST...

Photographs and Text by Marlene Wisuri-Aho



## THEIR SOULS HAVE FLOWN TO HEAVEN

With noses pointed to the sky  
And a spear thrust in the heart  
A good blow brought pleasure to the dieties  
And by their deaths benevolence was insured.

Will my soul fly heavenward  
Like those of the dogs  
With no ancient rites to guide it?



## DEPRESSION ANTLERS

There was no work for money in the  
But in a log house at the edge of the  
There was food on the table,  
For deer roamed those wet woods.

The fire burned brightly  
And semblances of the old country  
Flickered on the smoke-darkened wa







winter of 1932,  
swamp



### GRANDMA DREAMS ON HER DEATHBED

**Mary Christine Pekkola**  
was born north of Rovaniemi, Finland in 1873.

She came to America when she was sixteen.  
She came alone.

In 1903 she married Augusti Wisuri.  
They raised seven children to adulthood.

She was thought to be Sami.  
Many Sami "passed" when they came to this country.  
Native peoples face scorn world wide.

Ninety-two years later as she lay dying,  
she dreamed and talked of reindeer and lost children,  
her dead mother and betrayal by her father,  
and the old country.

Her granddaughter sat by the bed and listened.



## COCHRAN/TORNENSIS

I would like to receive the surnames and addresses of SHARON and KATHLEEN, the daughters of Mrs. MARGARET COCHRAN, whose mother was MARIT GRETE TORNENSIS of Seattle, WA. Marit Grete was my father's aunt. Yours sincerely,

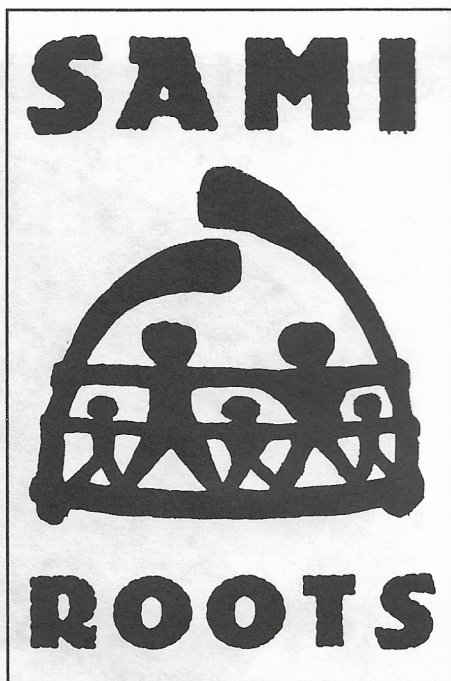
Mrs. Berit Oskal Heatta  
Boks 122, 8735 Stokkvagen, Norway

## S\*T\*A\*A\*R: The Stjerna Tribe and Associated Relatives Newsletter

Since 1984, a newsletter has been published for the more than 300 American descendants of a family whose history begins in Finland in the early 1500's. S\*T\*A\*A\*R LIGHT editor, Elmer Josephs, of Hopkins, Minnesota asks a question familiar to many of our readers: "Am I a Sami? Perhaps. Let me start at the beginning. Several years ago one of my cousins located the coat of arms of the Swedish family of STIERNA (STJERNA). Since my grandfather's name was Stjerna before he emigrated from Finland I was curious to discover whether this Swedish Stjerna was related to my Finnish Sami ancestors. A legend had been handed down in our family that one of our ancestors had been a soldier in the Swedish army. Did this soldier ancestor have a coat of arms? Who was he and how was he related to me? The search for the answer lead me into genealogy.

"I wrote to the parish in Kuusamo, Finland, our ancestral home, and learned that a young man named JOHAN TAVAJARVI, who was conscripted into the Swedish army, was given the soldier name of JOHAN STIERNA. I further learned that this Johan Stjerna was my grandfather's grandfather. This was the connection I was looking for. I resolved to trace my family line in two directions. I would try to locate all the descendants of Johan Stjerna, and I would trace my ancestors as far as recorded history would permit.

"Over a period of many years, and scores of letters, I was able to locate over 2000 descendants of Johan. Members of my family then suggested that a family association be formed to preserve our family traditions and perpetuate our family history. From



Kevinelle: "Oktavuotta-Unity-Unidad," lithograph, 1978.

this S\*T\*A\*A\*R (Stjerna Tribe and Associated Relatives) was born.

"One of the major projects of S\*T\*A\*A\*R has been the translation of the Finnish-language History of Kuusamo into English. With the help of Timo Riipa of the Immigration History Research Center at the University of Minnesota, the history was traced from its beginning in the 1500's to the mid-1800's when my ancestors came to America. From this translation I was able to answer my question. LARS TAVAJARVI, the grandfather of Johan Stjerna, was a Sami and an original settler and founder of the village of Kuusamo. My genealogical research had established that my grandfather, eight generations back, was a Sami!

This issue of *Baiki* is dedicated to May Huntington who passed away March 5 in Seattle, Washington after an extended illness. A beautiful tribute to May, "My Sami Grandmother," by Cynthia Balto Huntington, appeared in the first issue of *Baiki*. May was a descendant of Anders Johannessen Balto, whose picture is on our cover. Throughout her life May shared her love of her Sami People with those around her. Last fall she wrote, "I want to participate in getting the Sami in the U.S. to know one another, to appreciate ourselves and the gifts we have."

Does that mean that I also am a Sami? I would like to think so."

Elmer Josephs welcomes correspondence regarding subscriptions and back issues. Address inquiries to Elmer Josephs, 1030 Feltl Ct. #241, Hopkins, MN 55343.

## LAHIKAINEN/HAIGLER

My name is Sylvia Eileen Berry Rhoades. I am one-half Finnish and may also be of Sami descent. My mother, AILI MARIA LAHIKAINEN BERRY, was born on June 18, 1907 in Douglas, Alaska. Her story is quite sad and I do not know many details about it. Her parents were HERMAN and TEHILLA LAHIKAINEN who had been married in Finland and came to Alaska in 1898 at the time of the Gold Rush. They had seven girls, one of whom died young and was buried in the Douglas cemetery.

Herman, a miner, died of Black Lung disease. After his death, Tehilla adopted out my mother Aili, who was nine years old, to ELBERT and FRANCES RUTH HAIGLER, a local childless couple who had taken a liking to her. After this, Tehilla took the remaining five girls and returned to Finland. My mother lost all contact with her family and never saw her mother or her sisters again. She was not allowed to have anything to do with the local Finnish community and was not allowed to speak her native tongue. It was a very traumatic experience.

The Haiglers eventually left Alaska for California, where my mother Aili grew up. In 1935 she married an attorney, Reni Sylvanus Berry, and I was born the following year.

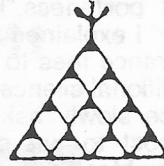
I have always been drawn somehow to Lapland. If I discover that this is indeed where my original roots began, then I will be proud to call myself a "Sami-American!" It is my firm hope if any of you, dear readers of *Baiki*, could give me any clue about my heritage, that you please, please contact me. Thank you!

Sylvia Berry Rhoades  
862 Galloway St.  
Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

***Baiki* welcomes genealogy correspondence. Send to:  
Sami Roots, *Baiki*, 2416 London Road nr.702, Duluth, MN 55812.**



# EDITORIAL EXCHANGE:



## Indigenous Chic

*Majja Oberg Hanf*

Recently at a banquet I heard the comment that it is chic to have indigenous roots these days. That pushed some of my buttons and I started explaining about the continued struggles that Samis have regarding reindeer-herding rights, Sami language education, unemployment, alcoholism, etc.

Then I thought that there is something bigger than this going on. All indigenous peoples of the planet struggle with a dominant culture to preserve their connection with the earth, whether it is in the jungles of the Amazon or on the tundra of Sapmi. And no one would describe these lifestyles as "chic." Then why, I asked myself, do people in America want to identify with their indigenous roots? What are we looking for? I believe it is a feeling of peace from the stress we experience in the dominant society. We look at our indigenous brothers and sisters and see the peace in their lives. We want this in our lives too but we have become disconnected and cannot find it. As we experience the pressure of a growing population on a limited number of resources we also experience fear - fear of extinction as we see ourselves losing control over our lives. We feel out of balance and look to the knowledge in the indigenous cultures to assuage our fears. But the answer lies within and will take a lot of work. Chic not.

We in the U.S. are sold the idea that our system is the best. We take pride in our individual rights and express them at any cost. We are told if we work hard enough and sell our souls to our jobs we can get rich and live the good life. We are taught to consume. And we do it well, with little regard to its effects. In producing all the things that we need, free enterprise pours tons of pollutants into the air, water and land, exploits cheap labor markets in Third World countries, spends billions of dollars in advertising to sell these products, and finally wraps the product in useless wasteful packaging that ends up in our landfills.

What is wrong is that the system is out of balance. Photojournalist Studs Terkel observed that we are a country of lonely individuals, nostalgically looking at the past for the connection we so desperately need. We gather to us things that we are told will represent happiness, success, wealth, etc. But in these things we find no peace from the evermounting expectations found in our jobs, in our homes, in our relationships. He suggests that what we need is to slow down, that less is more and that when we connect to each other we find peace.

"Connect." The acknowledgment of the interrelationship of people and all elements of the environment. A word that can bring us peace. My friend Cheryl, an Anashinabie, says, "We are the chosen ones. We must turn things around so there is something left for our children. If we don't, humans will be gone from this earth. Our time will be over." Personally the enormity of the clean-up job frightens me at times. My solution is to pray for the guidance to help solve the problems.

These problems "chic?" No. And in a system where money solves everything. I don't believe throwing money at these problems will change them. I believe we must have a major mind shift from consumption to connection, reclaiming the knowledge from our indigenous roots to ensure the peaceful future of not only people but all our animal, plant,

earth, water and sky brothers and sisters. We will have to dig very deep into our own souls to find the courage to examine our attitudes and change our ways. Then we must rise up and guide people so they can feel the connection and live in balance. Yes, we were born with a purpose. It is time to demonstrate what we know. We cannot let fear stop us. If we do, there will be no future for our children on this planet. If humans no longer exist on the planet, we know the earth will go on and heal from the damage. The great cities will be reclaimed and new species will rise to become dominant. Or perhaps, by the time we are done we will have permanently damaged the planet from our consumption and pollution will have created a sterile planet where no species can live. What a sad legacy for the human race.

Chic - no. Work - yes.

## Sami-American Ethnicity

*Rudolph Johnson*

What is it we seek when we probe our ethnic ancestry? Yes, it means looking back in time because we feel that somehow we may have gotten on the wrong road, that technological society is in trouble, and we want to go back far enough to find the place where we may have taken the wrong turn. It is not that we want to revert to a previous stage of culture, something that is quite unrealistic, but we want to recall some of the older values that helped people survive for so many centuries.

Technological man himself is a cultural orphan, conceived by a computer and punched out by a machine, identical and replaceable. We are not products of a machine but bearers of an ancient and honorable history. "Ethnic," from the Greek *ethnos*, means tribal, and the new ethnicity can be thought of as a form of neotribalism. People have existed in a tribal stage for a much longer period than as nation/states. We come from a People without national boundaries, ethnic, but not ethnocentric; we prefer to live in peace with our neighbors.

As Sami People we are heirs to a profound respect for nature; it is part of our folk character. This respect for nature is an old peasant and tribal value, something we share with other peasant and tribal cultures, especially those of the American Indian Peoples. To be ethnic is to probe our racial memory and find deep in our consciousness life styles and attitudes that can help us to survive as inhabitants of planet earth, values that proved their survival potential through centuries of folk experience. Respect for nature is one such value, and along with it, there is love of home, love of one's valley, district and community. If we find roots in the land we will respect it and hopefully act to preserve it. In this way our ethnic heritage can have meaning for our lives and our future.

*Majja Oberg Hanf and Rudolph Johnson are members of Baiki's editorial staff.*



(continued from page 7)

Tribes, the U.S. Information Service, the Nordic Sam Institute, the University of Tromsø, and the Association of Norwegian Students Abroad, the exchange program was launched. From 1979 through 1983, students, teachers and community leaders from each indigenous culture travelled to the homeland of the other. Representatives from 23 American Indian tribes and tribal colleges and Sami from across Scandinavia shared a lifetime experience that no participant has forgotten. This author, along with Leif Ellingsen, directed the program. To our surprise our plan had succeeded. Today we both laugh and tell friends never to ride in a cab with strangers.

There are many similarities between Sami and Indian Peoples. When the visiting Indians looked out of the window of our rented van as it bounced along a road in northern Samiland they saw a *lavvu*, a Sami tent, with its white symmetry silhouetted against the green landscape of the Arctic summer; they were offered reindeer jerky, and they heard the vocable structure of the Sami joik. When the Sami came to the reservations of Montana they found white tipis dotting the green plains of Indian country, they found buffalo jerky and they heard the vocable structure of Indian songs.

Groups of ten Sami or American Indians alternated every other summer for each six-week visit. Because of funding requirements it was necessary for the Indians to attend the International Summer School at the University of Oslo for part of each trip. Sami in Oslo visited the school and shared those aspects of urban life that confront Sami people who have moved south for school or work. But the special part of the program was when the group went north and travelled from town to town. Like Indian People, the Sami are consummate hosts. They fed us more than we could eat, gave us more laughter than we could digest, and made us feel special and welcome wherever we travelled.

The following year a group of Sami came to visit various Indian reservations in Montana. They travelled to Yellowstone Park, followed the trail of Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce, and were guided to the shrines and monuments that are important to tribal history. The Sami participated in Sweat Lodges, learned Indian songs and attended pow wows. And they brought to their Indian hosts gifts from Sami artists.

Sami humour is like Indian humour; it surfaced frequently during these visits. I was driving the Sami

group in a van into Yellowstone Park and had stopped at the entrance. From the silence behind me I heard a voice ask with great politeness, "Pat, what are you doing?" I explained that I was paying the entrance fees to the Park. There was additional silence and then the same voice slowly asked, "How much will it cost to get out?" The explosion of laughter scared the Park Ranger, but I managed to drive off towards Old Faithful.

There was a serious side to the program too, revealing the special suffering of both the Sami and the American Indian People: the cruel impact of alcoholism and its association with social, economic, and political isolation, as well as the struggle to preserve a traditional way of life that is threatened by the economic expansion of the dominant societies. During the time of the exchange program the Norwegian Alta-Kautokeino hydroelectric project was the center of widespread opposition from Sami activists and Norwegian supporters; similarly the Kerr and Yellowtail Dam projects on Montana reservations were resulting in similar tribal protests. Sami and American Indians also expressed concerns regarding the lack of culturally-relevant curriculum in their educational systems. Both groups found, however, that there has recently been a revival of indigenous language usage and an increase in the number of indigenous college graduates.

The Sami-U.S. Indian International Educational and Cultural Exchange Program gave the participants the chance to compare their languages, history, literature, and their social, economic and political life. Unfortunately the program has ended due to a lack of funds. For such a program to continue, it needs the support of the national governments. Few indigenous communities have sufficient funds to maintain such a program by themselves and yet indigenous Peoples must find ways to maintain international links between their widely-scattered communities. Such an exchange program enriches everyone, both cultures and nations. There were tears streaming down the faces of the Samis when they were given an Honor Day by thousands of Indians at the Flathead Pow Wow. And the Indians cried when they left Samiland. This is what the program was all about.

*C. Patrick Morris is a professor, U. of Washington, Bothell. He taught for thirteen years at the Center for Native American Studies, Montana State U.*





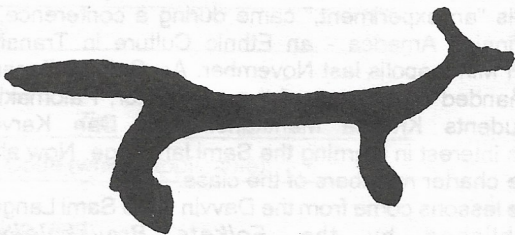
# SAMI-AMERICAN PROFILES:

## ERIC PELTONIEMI

GERRY LUOMA HENKEL



**"I STARTED JOIKING  
AND IT SEEMED TO FLOW OUT OF ME  
WITHOUT ANY EFFORT,  
AND I NOTICED THAT THIS JOIKING  
WAS VERY POWERFUL,  
ESPECIALLY HOW IT AFFECTED PEOPLE  
AND ANIMALS."**



**E**ric Peltoniemi, a singer and songwriter, was telling a story about a very special day at one of his favorite places, the Witch Tree near Grand Marais on the north shore of Lake Superior. He spoke in his quiet voice even though we were sitting in a busy restaurant.

"My wife Rosa and I went to the Witch Tree a few years ago. It's a very special place for me, so when I go there, I like to bring an offering to place at the foot of the Tree. As we were driving along, I realized I didn't have anything with me for an offering, so on an impulse, I pulled off the main road and drove down a little trail that lead to the lake. I got out of the car and walked to the shore, joiking in the same way I heard the Samis singing in northern Finland.

"When I knelt down on the rocks by the lake, I could see something coming to me through the water. It was a Canadian \$20 bill. I picked it up and took it back to the car. The next day I brought the \$20 bill down to the Tree. Both Rosa and I could sense that something special was happening. I started to joik with my eyes closed. When I opened them, I looked down and there was a chipmunk lying at my feet. Rosa said she had been watching the chipmunk running along the shore and when I started to joik, it 'froze,' she said. I also remember fog rolling in to the shore when I started singing, with a loon flying along on the fog's leading edge."

This is the kind of magical moment that Eric captures in the songs he writes and performs with the group Trova, a three-member folk/rock band composed of Eric, vocalist and guitarist, Ruth Mac Kenzie, vocalist, and Jeffrey Willkomm, vocalist and bassist. He is in his forties and has been writing story songs since his high school days. Trova has performed his songs at U.S. and Canadian festivals as well as in concert in Brussels and Amsterdam.

*(continued overleaf)*



(continued from page 13)

Eric Peltoniemi says that information about his Sami ancestry comes from family stories. Much of his Sami heritage has to be inferred or intuited. The Peltoniemis that settled in northern Minnesota near Wadena and New York Mills are a mixture of Swedish and Finnish immigrants. The Finnish side comes from near Kemijarvi. Eric has inherited a pair of Sami boots which belonged to his great-grandfather Karl Abraham Peltoniemi. "That doesn't mean he was Sami," Eric says, "...maybe he just liked the boots."

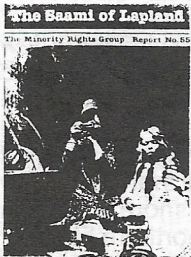
On his mother's Swedish side, Eric's great-grandfather lived in Roback, a town where many Samis lived. This ancestor, Per Ericksson, had a pierced ear and wore earrings, a possible sign that he too may have been Sami.

Before we left the restaurant that evening, Eric told us one more story that, he said, is one of his intuitive bases for knowing that he has Sami heritage. It was about a long midsummer night he spent in northern Finland with Lauri Martini (of the famous knife-making family). "Lauri, who is half Sami, showed me some photos of Sami people, some paintings by a famous Sami artist, and he played some tapes of Sami joikers. While he was doing this I had a strange sensation. Slipping into a transcendental realm, I had the feeling that joiking was real to me. I started joiking and it seemed to flow out of me without any effort, and I noticed that this joiking was very powerful, especially in how it affected people and animals." Since then, Eric has continued to joik, not as a performing artist, but for the satisfaction and the pleasure that it gives.

*Trova is available on Red House Records; CDs and cassette tapes can be ordered directly from: Trova, 1354 Osceola, St. Paul, MN 56105, (612)644-9047.*

*Gerry Henkel is editor of The Finnish-American Reporter.*

## BAIKI REVIEWS:



Beach, Hugh. THE SAAMI OF LAPLAND. London, Minority Rights Group Report No.55, 1988.

*Reviewed by Rudolph Johnson.*

This folio-size pamphlet of sixteen pages gives an encyclopedic overview of the Sami People. The author is a British anthropologist

who has lived in Swedish Lapland, conducted research, and has specialized in studies of circumpolar people. Included in the report is the full text of the very important United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. We learn that the children of Lapland have a right to mother-tongue training in the public schools, and that the Sami are not grossly impoverished and still maintain some control of their ancestral lands. A statement has been added to the Norwegian Constitution which calls for the government to take the necessary steps to enable the Sami to safeguard and develop their language, culture and social life. In both Finland and Norway the Sami now elect their own separate parliament to represent their interests in matters of state. The biggest problem for the Sami today is to preserve some of their distinctive ethnic identity in a rapidly changing world.

Order from Cultural Survival Publications, 53A Church St. Cambridge, MA 02138. Send \$6.00 for each copy. Add \$2.00 postage for the first copy and \$.50 each for additional copies. A complete catalogue is also available on request.

## SÁMEGIELLA COMES TO THE U.S.



PHOTO: Baiki.

*The Davvin Study Circle, above from left to right: (front row) Torild Homstad, Donna Palomaki; (middle row) David Tapio, Kristina Markkanen, Maija Hanf, Dan Karvonen; (back row) Arden Johnson, Chris Orlovky, Will Lahti.*

The Sami language (*Samegiella*) is now being taught at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. Called the "Davvin Study Circle," the first class was held on Monday, March 30. Nine students are taking the course for independent study credits, according to the instructor, Donna Palomaki, a lecturer in Finnish studies at the University. Each student takes a turn at leading the class and preparing quizzes. The idea for the Davvin Study Circle, which Palomaki calls "an experiment," came during a conference, "The Making of Finnish America - an Ethnic Culture in Transition," conference in Minneapolis last November. As *Baiki* staff member Maija Hanf handed out copies of the newsletter, Palomaki and graduate students Kristina Markkanen and Dan Karvonen expressed an interest in learning the Sami language. Now all four have become charter members of the class.

The lessons come from the Davvin 1,2,3 Sami Language Series published by the *Folkets Brevskole/Norsk Korrespondanseskole*. Both the Sami-Norwegian and the Sami-Finnish versions of Davvin 1,2 and 3 are being used.

This is not the first time that *Samegiella* has been taught in the United States. Classes in the Sami language have been offered occasionally at the Dept. of Finno-Ugric Languages at the University of Indiana, Bloomington. Prof. Gyula Decsy, a specialist in Uralic and Altaic Studies, has taught the course.

*For information, write Donna Palomaki, Dept. of Scandinavian Languages and Literatures, 200 Folwell Hall, 9 Pleasant St. S.E., University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455.*





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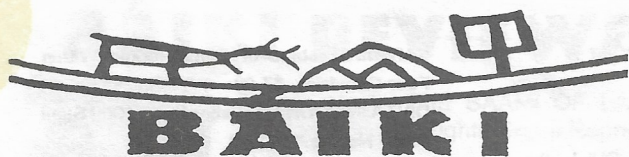
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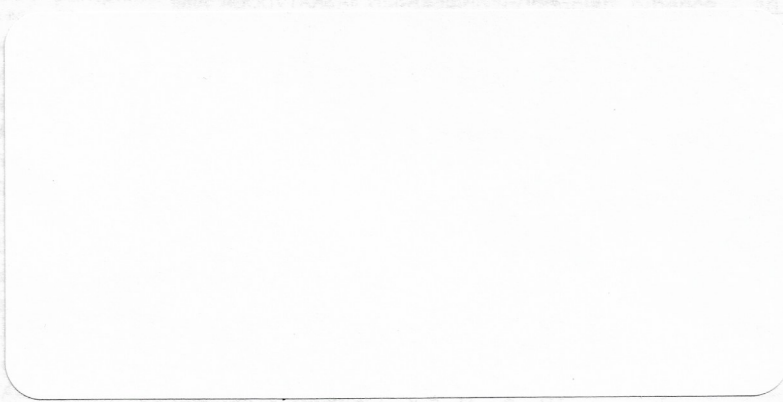




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