



THE  
**SCANDINAVIAN**  
CLUB of TOLEDO

OLAV GJESDAHL, founder

APRIL, 2015

ERIC SLAWSON, editor

# THE VIKING SWORD



*Our April meeting  
will be held at the*

***Way Public Library, in Perrysburg.  
on Sunday, April 19th, at 2 PM.***

**Program** :: Technological advantage allowed the Vikings to spread their influence throughout northern Europe, and even down into parts of the Mediterranean. We know them for their masterful sailing ships, but lesser known, today, is that they were also ahead of the competition in Battle Swords. This month, we view “**Secrets of the Viking Sword**”, a PBS video on the manufacture of the Ulfberht Sword, with explorations into why this weapon gave them the edge they needed.



**Menu** :: This is a Semi-Potluck affair. Small sandwiches, cheese & hardtack, desserts, coffee and tea will be provided. You're invited to bring something light for our smörgåsbord — whatever you like. Let's have a Fika!

**Reservations** :: Please contact our treasurer, Kris Johnson, at [cjohnson143@woh.rr.com](mailto:cjohnson143@woh.rr.com) or at 419-836-7637. Let Kris know your name and how many of you will be attending, so that we know how many to expect. If you know what dish you'll be bringing, leave that information too.

**Location** :: **The Way Public Library**, is located in downtown Perrysburg, Ohio, at the corner of Louisiana & Indiana Avenues.

**DIRECTIONS:** The library is located in the third block from Front St. (which comes from the Maumee bridge one way, and turns into River Rd. the other way). Turn onto the main old downtown business district (Louisiana Ave.), and just after the tracks turn left into the library's parking lot, which borders the railroad track that runs through town. Park in the lot, come in, and take the elevator to the basement. Our room is just around the corner from the elevator. Restrooms are located next to the elevator.

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

I have to start off this edition of the President's Corner by stating my regrets for those members who were unable to attend the March meeting and culinary treat. Who knew the Finns could make such food? Now, admittedly I am married to an Englishwoman whose forebears prepared the same food, pasties for those who were not in attendance, but to have the whole crew participate in their creation was a treat, along with the very tasty pasties.

It finally looks as if Spring has indeed sprung and the weather is getting warmer. I will be heading South for a week long vacation on Saturday the 4th to engage in and observe my other hobby, golf. I will have a chance to see the warm ups at the Masters' Tournament and may get a chance to say “Hej” to Henrik Stenson, who will surely be there.

I also plan to see all of you on the 19th at the Way Library in Perrysburg for a program on the Viking Sword. It should prove to be interesting and a preface for my trip to Chicago for the Viking Exhibit in May.

Tack, John

## Club News

**Next Month's Meeting:** *Spring Brunch Buffet at Belmont Country Club, Sunday May 17 at Noon.*

**Midsommar Fest:** *June 21, Sunday afternoon, at Eva's.*

## Club Contacts

**John L Jacobson, President**

Lois Staber, Vice President

Kris Johnson, Treasurer

Katherine Thompson, Secretary

Members at Large:

Jan Wahl, Ruth Alteneder, and Judy Jokinen Nickoloff.

**[scandinavian-club@hotmail.com](mailto:scandinavian-club@hotmail.com)**



**VIKINGS EXHIBIT:** On display at the **Field Museum of Natural History**, in Chicago, is a show called “**Vikings**”. Visit their interesting website and explore the sections on Farmers, Traders & Craftspeople, Voyagers, and Believers. The show concludes on October 4, 2015. The Field Museum is open from 9am to 5pm every day. Visit their website: [www.fieldmuseum.org/discover/on-exhibit/vikings/](http://www.fieldmuseum.org/discover/on-exhibit/vikings/)

**VIKING FESTIVAL:** The Annual Viking Festival, in Asheville, Ohio, is on for the weekend of April 25 & 26. Saturday, the 25th, is the better day to go, and the festival is open until dark. It is located in the tiny town of Asheville, which is about 20 miles south of Columbus, OH, so is a good day-trip. The entry fee is a food item to be donated to the town’s food pantry. Visit their website: [www.ashevillevikingfest.com](http://www.ashevillevikingfest.com)

# S150elius

**JEAN SIBELIUS 150: Finnish Music Day** is held on December 8, the composer’s birthday. But this year is the 150th anniversary of his birth, and so is being celebrated during all of 2015 with events in Finland and around the world, from Iceland to Swaziland. Here is a listing of the many events you can attend at: [www.sibelius150.fi](http://www.sibelius150.fi)

**MORE ON THE VIKING SWORD:** The Vikings did not invent high-carbon, crucible-steel, but through trading, they were able to acquire this superior metal from which to make their swords. The lack of brittle impurities in this pure form of steel made swords made from it less likely to break in battle and thus were superior. The Vikings made the tip longer and sharper than the roman version, enabling it to pierce its opponent’s chain-mail armor. Vikings also made their swords lighter by thinning down the center of the blade. These improvements gave the Vikings superior odds in battles with any other Europeans of the time.

The **Volga Trade Route** went from Lake Malaren (Stockholm) all the way through Russia and down almost all the way to Iran, and was used to trade with Central Asia. Islamic coins, a Buddha, and other far away objects have been found in burial sites across Scandinavia. The Vikings, it is presumed, used this route to acquire Crucible Steel, while the rest of Europe did not acquire this technology until the 1800s.

Crucible Steel is made by melting various elements in a big ceramic pot, or crucible. Carbon, added to molten steel, makes it harder. Charcoal is a common source of carbon, but animal bones, or the bones of one’s ancestors, could also be used, thus adding an element of spiritual power to the sword.

Conversely, enemy’s swords were heated and the tip bent back to the handle and buried with the victim, to take away the spiritual power of the sword, so the enemy could not harm them in the afterlife.

# Lagom

—noun /Swedish Culture/  
Pronounced: (Laaw-gohm)

A term that refers to an appropriate quantity of something; just the right amount. The archetypical Swedish proverb “Lagom är bäst”, literally “The right amount is best”, is also translated as “Enough is as good as a feast”, or as “There is virtue in moderation”. —Wikipedia

## How Scandinavians Find Balance

Scandinavian countries consistently rank among the happiest in the world. Why is that? Read this interesting and funny article about an American woman trying to understand the meaning of **Lagom** while living in **Malmö, Sweden**, at <http://pinetribe.com/lagom-how-scandinavians-find-balance/>

## Sverd i Fjell (Swords in Rock)

Three enormous swords are seemingly run right into the solid rock, as if by giants. These stand as a monument to the Battle of Hafrsfjord in the year 872, when Harald Hårfagre (Fairheaded Harald) united Norway into one kingdom. The 10 meter-tall (30 foot-tall) bronze sculpture, by Norwegian artist Fritz Rød, was unveiled by Norway’s King Olav in 1983, a mere 1,100 years after the event, and now represent peace, unity and freedom. The largest of the three swords represents the victorious Harald, the other two the lesser, defeated kings. They are located on a small rock outcropping, next to a fjord, near the southwestern city of Stavanger, Norway.

—from: visitnorway.com and stavanger-web.com



**Sverd i Fjell,**  
Stavanger,  
Norway.

For scale, notice the two people next to the rocks at the shoreline, directly beneath the largest sword.