

DKG European Regional Conference Aug 5-8, 2015 in Borås

## **Famous Swedish Women inside and outside DKG**



William Sweetlove, "Cloned frogs on galadress"

# DKG European Regional Conference, Borås, Aug 5-8, 2015

## Famous Swedish Women inside and outside DKG

This booklet includes famous women from different parts of Sweden. Each of our Swedish DKG chapters has chosen one woman they want to highlight and who has worked or was born in the Chapter area. All of them have something to do with education and how to empower women. The European Regional Conference also want to highlight H.R.H. Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden who is Duchess of Västergötland the county where Borås is one of the cities. H.R.H. Crown Princess Victoria has helped others with reading and writing disabilities by talking about her own problems at school. Dyslexia is a very important topic that always ought to be included in the pedagogical work of schools and universities.

The women chosen by the Chapters can be defined as models for our daily educational work on different levels and in different fields. They show that women can reach high positions as principals, professors, authors, singers etc acknowledge by the national and global society if they are focused on results. They represent a long line of women from the middle of the 19th century to today who have had impact on society by being driving forces for equality and gender perspective.

They are also models for our students because their contribution have changed the hearts and minds for many. One of the goal of education is to make our students go out into society and use what you have learnt in a creative and innovative way and thus make a difference. Another goal is to make our students face and handle the complex problems of our world and to learn from both science and experiences.

The dress on the front page is a wedding gift from Borås city to H.R.H. Crown princess Victoria and Prince Daniel. You can see it in the entrance hall of the Textile Centre. The dress is made by William Sweetlove and the dress is called "Cloned frogs on gala dress".

We hope you will enjoy the booklet and your stay in Borås

Very Welcome to the 9th European Regional Conference

*Ingrid Stjernquist*  
Chair European Regional  
Conference 2015

*Marianne Skardéus*  
European Regional  
Director 2014-2016



# H.R.H. Crown Princess Victoria, Duchess of Västergötland



*Victoria:*

*"The letters jumped. Everyone laughed. Early on, I learned that it was not my fault.*

*Still, I had a hard time accepting it. I felt so stupid.*

*I have been crying and felt great frustration."*

*Tiina:*

*"I'd like to thank Victoria for being a honest person and bringing this matter to public, I've suffered same kind of symptoms and oddly it really help to know I'm not alone. Usually people just call me lazy and arrogant.*

*Lazy for bad spelling and misspelling or troubles in math. Arrogant for not greeting people I should know.*

*Really, I barely recognize my own family.*

*From V. Bengtsson, Föräldrakraft 13 FEB 2008*

Victoria, an ordinary young, Swedish woman but also H.R.H. Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden and Duchess of Västergötland has helped others with reading and writing disabilities by talking about her own problems at school.

Today no one can imagine her hidden disability. After years of hard work, she is still a slow reader, she says, and it is very hard for her to remember names and faces, which is a big minus in her representative role. Experts on dyslexia emphasize the importance that such a famous person as Crown Princess Victoria openly talks about her own difficulties, thus relieving the burden of many children and strengthening their self-image.

When working on solving the problems of dyslexia, you get a greater understanding for other disabilities, says the Crown Princess. As a result, the Victoria Fund started in 1997 in order to give support to the leisure and recreation for children with chronic diseases and disabilities and their families. Victoria, herself is often seen to take part in activities like riding, skiing and sailing to the children's delight.

Since childhood, she has been schooled into the role of Crown Princess. Just like her father, she was never able to choose a career.

The day when Victoria will become Queen of Sweden, she should have had time to do

Military service and become General in both the Air Force and the Army, and Admiral in the Navy. To this come university studies in Sweden, France and the US and an internship at the United Nations as well.

"I'm always afraid of not being sufficient, always afraid of making mistakes. I'm afraid of not living up to expectations. I'm afraid to put my foot in it out of pure ignorance," says Victoria in an interview. During a period of her life, this performance anxiety became too much for her and resulted in eating disorders. "I really hate the way I looked. I, Victoria, was not."

Now afterwards she is thankful for the experience which she says has strengthened her and has helped her to identify with many persons who feel bad in different ways. "I can help in a way that would not have been possible if I had not experienced a difficult time myself." says the Crown Princess.

Crown Princess Victoria is a committed, compassionate, young woman with a great integrity

– a role model for many!

Ingela Högberg, Chi Chapter

# Ulla Assarsson Eklöw

## chosen by Alpha Chapter, Stockholm



Ulla Assarsson Eklöw is the woman whom Alpha Chapter of Stockholm would like to introduce. Our Alpha Chapter member Ulla Assarsson Eklöw was born in 1925 in Stocksund.

Ulla belongs

to an academic family where both her parents were teachers of natural science. Ulla's mother came from the town of Norrköping where in those days only boys could pass higher school examinations, so she had to go to the university town of Uppsala to attain her science degree in private. Ulla herself went to primary school in Stocksund, and secondary school in Djursholm, always by bike. The classes she attended had both boys and girls and Ulla never felt any rivalry or bad feelings in relation to the boys.

During the Second World War Ulla devoted herself to civil work helping the many refugees who came to Stocksund. One very vivid memory is when she, as a scoutmaster, was instructed to deliver fire to Estelle Bernadotte, (married to the Swedish diplomat Count Folke Bernadotte, stationed in Berlin, the first UN mediator in the Israel - Palestine conflict, assassinated in 1948.)

Ulla Assarsson and Sven Eklöw married in 1955. They had gone to the same schools and graduated at the same time. They got two sons and the family lived in different places in Stockholm. They possess a small farm in Gränsö, in the archipelago of Östergötland. –“I can row a boat.” Ulla says, and “make oats...”

Ulla studied for a long time and worked as a teacher in various schools, where she really liked to be. She especially remembers the Whitlock School, where the pupils had famous

and very busy parents. Those children were often in need of a little extra care from the teacher. Ulla attained the degree of Bachelor of Arts, had ten grades and preferred to teach Science.

Later she worked as a principal and director of studies in Södra Latin and the Kista School of Graphics. In Bromma Upper Secondary School, famous for all its animals, she worked as a principal. Ulla became an active member of the principals' trade-union. Being a principal meant good and important contacts and relations with people. She loved these schools. – “There were constant challenges”, she says. “One had to make decisions, and it is impossible to please everyone. I have learnt to respect that people are different. Therefore it is important to have live contacts with colleagues, students and tasks. I wanted to be the first in place in the morning. I like finding solutions to problems. But never forget the importance of having fun in the midst of all seriousness. Never let difficulties dominate.”

In 1972 Ulla was introduced to DKG. After some hesitation she accepted and became one of the founders of the Alpha Chapter of Sweden. She has been deeply committed to DKG and has been president of Alpha twice. She has participated in conferences in Sweden and Iceland and has taken care of American members visiting Stockholm. Alpha Chapter has had funny parties and meetings in her house and she has amused us with some daring songs. Ulla was very active in the Northeast Regional Conference in 1997. Thanks to her good relations we were invited to the City Hall with a buffet and guidance. It ended with Ulla leading us all to dance “The Small Frogs.” A wonderful memory.

In May 2015 Ulla and Sven celebrate their 90 years' birthdays and 60 years of marriage with family and friends. They are both active members in different societies.

Ingrid Palmqvist & Alpha Chapter

# Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson

chosen by Beta Chapter, Gothenburg



Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson is professor and coordinator for early childhood education at the Department of Education, Communication and Learning, Göteborg University, Sweden. She has a background as a preschool teacher and got the first chair in early childhood education in Sweden in 1996

Her research mainly deals with how children create meaning and make sense of different aspects of the surrounding world, in the context of preschool (day care and kindergarten). Another research interest is teachers' professional development.

Professor Pramling Samuelsson has been consulted by the Ministry of Education, the National Agency for Education, and the Department of Social Welfare and Health concerning questions about children. She is also World president of OMEP (Organisation Mondiale pour l'Éducation Préscolaire). In 2005 she was both appointed Honorary doctor at Åbo Akademi, Finland and honoured with the Swedish Fridtjuf Berg Award. She also holds an UNESCO Chair in Early Childhood Education and Sustainable Development.

# Elin Wägner

chosen by Eta & Tau Chapter, Växjö & Kalmar



Elin Matilda Elisabet Wägner (May 16, 1882 – January 7, 1949) was a Swedish writer, journalist, feminist, teacher, ecologist and pacifist. From 1944 she was a member of the Swedish Academy.

Wägner's books and articles focus on the subjects of women's emancipation, civil rights, votes for women, the peace movement, welfare, and environmental pollution. She is best known for her commitment to the women's suffrage movement in Sweden, Swedish Society for Woman Suffrage, for founding the Swedish organisation Rädda Barnen

(International Save the Children Alliance) and for developing the women's citizen school at Fogelstad. Fredrika Bremer, Wägner is often seen as the most important and influential feminist pioneer in Sweden.

A prolific writer, Wägner wrote novels, articles in various daily newspapers and screenplays for a number of films. Among Wägner's novels are: "The Penholder", 1910 and "Alarm Clock", 1941

Wägner was born in Lund but moved back to her roots in Småland where she had a house built called Lilla Björka, not far from Växjö, and many of her novels are located to this area. Wägner has recently been translated into English with Stockholm Stories (2002), which contains two of her wittiest novels: Men and Other Misfortunes and Stormy Corner. Many of her books have previously been translated into French, German, Dutch, and Russian.

# Kerstin Stråby

chosen by Gamma Chapter, Umeå



Kerstin grew up in the northern parts of Sweden and graduated in 1954 in Östersund. In Uppsala she continued her studies in chemistry and mathematics. She specialized in biochemistry and

microbiology as a student of Prof. Hans G. Boman at the Department of Biochemistry led by the Nobel Prize Winner Arne Tiselius and took her Doctor's degree in 1968.

Kerstin was one of the first female in Sweden with a Doctor's degree in Science. Later on she worked as a Professor in Molecular Biology at Umeå univ. She was deeply in teaching and in the development of the Department of Microbiology. As she was collaboration with many researchers abroad she travelled a lot, mainly to England and the United States. She was also a member of the NFR, Science Research Council. In this capacity she participated in the biotechnical European cooperation in Heidelberg. She also did a great work in supporting female researchers and in improving their possibilities. After her retirement she continued her research and guidance within her field.

Kerstin became a DKG-member in 1977 and she participated regularly in DKG activities and she was the mainstay of the Gamma Chapter in Umeå. From the very beginning she was a very active member. Very soon she realized what DKG could offer women educators like network, further training and international contacts. Kerstin has recently passed away, but we remember her deep involvement in our Society and her unselfish support of DKG-members. We remember her powerful lobbying for our own region - the Europe Region. She taught us how to argue in the American way and how to vote at the Conventions. She was familiar with our International Constitution and Standing Rules.

Kerstin was not only active within her chapter but was also involved in activities nationally and internationally. Here should be mention her great work for Europe to have its own region. For this she cooperated med Dorothy Haley from Great Britain. During the biennium 1989-91 Kerstin was on the Administrative Board of Sweden State and 1991-1993 she was deputy State President. In the years of 1993-1995 she held the office of State President and the two following years she chaired the Swedish Nomination Committee. She was also involved in the international work of DKG and was on the Scholarship Committee (1998-20), on the Nomination Committee (2000-2004) and the Fellowship Committee (2006-2008).

Kerstin was well-known and respected in the USA. North East Regional Conference in 1997 was held in Stockholm, the first regional conference outside the USA. This thanks to the infatigable work of Kerstin. The success of the conference was to a great extent due to Kerstin's hard work, her great experience and all her contacts.

Europe Regional Conference in Oslo was the last conference to be attended by Kerstin. She was happy to be able to participate and feel the intellectual fellowship of DKG and content that Europe had got its own region with conferences of its own.

Kerstin had an ability to realize the potential of DKG-members and make them run for different assignments. Traditional solutions of problems were not Kerstin's cup of tea. On the contrary she was clear-sighted, bold and had the strength and the will to carry out change for DKG. She stated: - The content of DKG must have a direction that addresses the educators of today and tomorrow

Kerstin's thoughts are clearly visible in the suggestions for SAP – Strategic Action Plan to be discussed at the State Board Meeting in Stockholm in 2014.

We remember Kerstin's good sense of humor, friendship and friendliness.

Marianne Skardéus for Gamma Chapter

# Britta Holmström

chosen by Delta Chapter, Lund/Malmö



Britta Holmström was born in Sävsjö on 8th April 1911, the daughter of Alma and John Ringius. After primary school in Sävsjö and an elementary girls' school in Jönköping she moved to Lund where she passed the University entrance examination and later acquired a degree in political economy, philosophy and history of religion, all chosen with a view to future social work. In 1936 she married Folke Holmström, a lecturer of theology, and they had six children.

On 30th September 1938 the wireless informed the world that Hitler had annexed the Sudet area in Czechoslovakia. There had long been turbulence and there was risk for war. Now the great powers had yielded to Hitler's requirements and created "peace in our time" as Chamberlain, the British prime minister, expressed it. It was proclaimed far and wide that peace was secured, and everyone was happy. But to Britta Holmström and to many others this sounded like cruel mockery. They knew that thousands of people that morning fled from their homes in fear for their lives. Then the idea of IM, Inter-European Mission - at the beginning called the Prague support, was born. The tasks increased in warfaring Europe, and a stronger organisation proved necessary. In May 1944 the first governing board of IM was elected and soon Britta Holmström herself became its chair person. After the end of the war in 1945 there was intense activity above all in Poland and in

Germany, where aid centres and so called Schwedenheime were organised - the needs were immense.

Britta was long ahead of her time by starting out from the needs of individuals and finding the way forward together with them. It is the closeness to and a dialogue with people in exposed situations, outsiders and poor, which is the starting point. Britta has said that aid should be given eye to eye. This statement implies respect for other people and that support is given in cooperation with those who need it in having their rights satisfied, that we are basically equal even though we live under different conditions. Today we are talking about supporting the rights of human beings, but the starting point is the same. "It is from faithfulness in the small that wing power develops towards the great", is a highly appreciated quotation from Britta.

In 1950 Britta Holmström received the prize of Svensk Damtidning "for magnanimous initiative and inspiring achievement in service of humanity". In 1961 she was appointed Doctor of medicine h.c., in 1973 she became Knight of the Order of the Seraphim, in 1977 the Pope personally handed over the Benemerenti medal to her. On two occasions she is said to have been suggested as a candidate for the Nobel Prize.

The mission started by Britta Holmström at the age of 27 is still, after more than 75 years, in full vigour. The activity has grown the whole time so that an extensive support work is now carried on not only in Europe but also in Asia, Africa and in Latin America. IM is a world organisation highly corresponding to the name of Individuell Människohjälp (individual human aid). IM - Swedish Development Partner, <http://global.manniskohjalp.se/>.

# Ulla Myhrman

## chosen by Epsilon Chapter, Uppsala



This is the story of Dr Ulla Myhrman. She was born in a small town in the west of Sweden, near the Norwegian border, where the common knowledge of different possibilities of future professions

for women was very limited. However, Ulla liked school and was fortunate enough to have several brilliant teachers so she decided that teaching would be her future professional life. Being a scientist at graduate school Ulla made up her mind to study mathematics and physics and was admitted as a student to Uppsala University where she graduated as MSc. These studies were followed by a one year professional teacher training after which she decided to take a sabbatical year and study what she liked best at the university: modern physics. So Ulla started exploring theoretical physics and was completely captured by this subject. She ended up as a PhD in Theoretical Physics. Along with research she continuously worked as a teacher at the university.

After several years as a teacher and director of studies at the department of theoretical physics Ulla decided to widen her perspectives and started a career as director of studies at the faculty of science. In that position she had the opportunity to participate and influence the development of several new study programs connecting the education to the continuous development of research in different areas. It was a very creative and interesting period of her life. However, noticing how few women there were at the faculty of science in the "hard core subjects" she thought it would be important to recruit more girls to the study programs. The students were the ones to develop our common future and the influence of both women and men is necessary to have a society suited for all of us. So contemporaneously with ordinary work Ulla

took part in a laboratory project for 15 year old girls aiming to make them realise the fun of physics.

Uppsala university is a complete university with all faculties represented except dentistry. So when a position as head of the department of education and research at the rector's office was vacant Ulla applied for it and was appointed. The view was now the whole university and the responsibility was large. The position involved responsibility for the university activity plan, the annual report to the government as well as most of the current university issues in education and research. Preparing the different issues Ulla had the opportunity to cooperate with all the deans, the students and the faculty staff. The results were presented to the rector and the university board for decision. The continuously developing research, the changing recruitment demands and the desire to find the university at the forefront of research and education gave a stimulating and creative environment to work in. After some years Ulla changed her position and became planning director of the university, the responsibility being the same. She retired in 2008.

After retirement Ulla was elected head of Uppsala University of the Third Age. That position she held for three years but she still has a seat at the board.

As for the engagement in DKG, Ulla was introduced as a member 1982. During the years to come she held several different positions as head of chapter Epsilon in Uppsala for two periods, as auditor on the national level for three periods and as a member of the World Fellowship Committee 2008-2010. DKG is spreading its ideas over several continents and many countries. The spreading of ideas is important for the women involved but also for the development of the whole society in which we live. This is the reason why this organization makes a difference and it is the reason for Ulla's membership in DKG international.

# Selma Lagerlöf

chosen by Lambda Chapter, Karlstad



On the one hand Selma Lagerlöf is seen as the kind old spinster with a limp who wrote so many stories set in her native province of Värmland, but on the other hand she was a woman of strong will, a

powerful voice in the suffrage movement in Sweden, as well as the pacifist movement during World War I. She donated money to support Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany and helped get a visa for the German poet Nelly Sachs enabling her to escape the concentration camps. After re-purchasing her home, Mårbacka manor, which had been sold a few years later due to her father's financial problems, she developed it into a farm with livestock, poultry, a kitchen garden and an orchard thus employing 30 people making her one of the major employers locally. They even exported oat flour to the United States during a few years.

Selma Lagerlöf's contact with people of all walks of life during her childhood on the estate Mårbacka is of great relevance to her literary production. She often describes the life of peasants and the Nordic nature inspired by the myths, history and folklore she got familiar with during her early years. Already as a young girl she set her mind to become a writer but in order to be able to support herself entered a Teachers' Training College in Stockholm. She graduated in 1885, then moved to the little town of Landskrona to teach and in her spare time started to write. Encouraged by a female friend she entered a literary competition with the first chapters of *Gösta Berlings saga*, won the competition and in 1891 was able to publish the the whole novel about a rowdy group of young men with Gösta Berling, a dismissed clergyman, as their leader. The

novel deals with beauty versus duty and joy versus good.

The two part novel *Jerusalem* (1901-1902) based on the true story of a group of Swedish peasants who, seized by religious fervor, sold their farms and went to the Holy Land to devote their lives to good works is considered one of Selma Lagerlöf's masterpieces. Another one is *The Wonderful Adventures of Nils* (1906-1907), written as a geography book for children. It is one of the world's most popular children's books, which has been translated into a great number of languages. Teaching at a summer camp in southern China I learned to my amazement that young Chinese school-children know of the young boy Nils who rides on the back of a wild goose across the whole of Sweden.

Selma Lagerlöf's third novel worth mentioning is *The Emperor of Portugallia* (1914), a story of a father's unconditional love for his daughter and the dream world he sinks into where he imagines her as the noble empress of Portugallia, whereas in the real world rumours say that she is a prostitute in the capital city. It is a heartbreaking story!

In 1909 Selma Lagerlöf became the first woman to be awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. In 1914 she was the first woman to be elected to the Swedish Academy. Her writings might have been placed in local settings but she used them to deal with much larger issues and therefore gained both national and international prominence. Therefore I consider her a worthy representative of our province of Värmland.

Gull Boman & Lambda Chapter

# Ellen Key

## chosen by My Chapter, Linköping



In My chapter we are very proud of Ellen Key, an extraordinary woman, who lived a long period of her life in Östergötland. She was born in Småland, but spent

many years at Strand, her villa by the great lake Vättern. Her whole life she was interested in the society and she loved to debate different issues.

Ellen Key had many titles she could put on her visiting card: author, pacifist, feminist, pedagogue; just to mention some of them. She was born in 1849 – the same year as August Strindberg – and when Ellen grew up she got the same education as her brothers did, which was very rare at this time.

When Ellen was in her twenties she followed her father to Stockholm to help him with secretary job when he sat in the parliament. This is when her own writing begins. Some years later she has to work as a teacher. The mansion where she had been brought up, got economic problems and she was forced to provide her own living.

Once settled in Stockholm her life became very active. Ellen worked, wrote articles, demonstrated and held speeches. She made friends with many artists and authors among them Rickard Bergh and Hanna Pauli. As the first woman ever she held a speech on the first of May, at the International Workers Day in Stockholm in 1893. That shows she was a brave and strong woman. Ellen Key fought for females right to vote. At last her struggle with this problem succeeded: when she was 72

years old, in 1921, she was allowed to vote for the first time in her life.

The most famous of her books was released in 1900, and it is called “ Barnets århundrade” (The century of the child). Ellen became known over the world as it was translated into 13 languages. She had a very modern opinion of school, children and their education. The child should be in the centre and the education must proceed from the needs of the individual. Thematic studies were important and one ought to work with only one subject for some weeks. The pupils should learn and explore on their own; that was her idea. The first education was to take place in the home of the child and then, when the child was mature enough it was time for the school. The classes at the school must be small and maximum twelve pupils in each class were accepted.

Ellen Key has influenced the pedagogic ideas in many countries and it is fascinating to see how she tried to follow her ideas in the school where she taught for more than twenty years. There are schools in Europe, which still carry her name.

She had become an excellent member of My chapter.

# Birgit Nilsson

chosen by Omicron Chapter, Kristianstad



*The Swedish opera singer (dramatic soprano) Birgit Nilsson was born on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May 1918 in Västra Karup and died on the 25<sup>th</sup> of December 2005 in Kristianstad. In 1954 she became a Royal Court singer at the Swedish Royal Court. In 1968 she was awarded the corresponding title "Kammersängerin" in Austria and in 1970 the same title in Bavaria. She became a member of The Royal Swedish Academy of Music in 1960 and became a Honorary Professor in 1998.*

Birgit Nilsson grew up on a farm in Västra Karup, a rural life far from

the one she would later have as one of the most famous opera singers in the world. At the age of fourteen she began piano lessons and started singing in the church-choir. Ragnar Blennow, choir leader and singing master, was the first one to realize Birgit Nilsson's great talent. After having listened to her singing, he polished his misty glasses and said: "This was splendid. You are going to be a great singer young lady." He also encouraged her to apply for admission to The Royal College of Music and the University College of Opera in Stockholm where she was accepted as a solo song student at the age of twenty-three.

In 1946 Birgit Nilsson made her debut at the Royal Opera in Stockholm and in 1947 she had her first great success as Lady Macbeth in Verdi's opera Macbeth. A series of performances followed from Mozart, Strauss and Verdi to Wagner, Puccini and Tchaikovsky; she sang Donna Anna, The Dyer's Wife, Aida, Sieglinde, Tosca and Lisa.

Birgit Nilsson's unequalled international career began in 1951 at the Glyndebourne Festival after which she sang at all the famous opera houses of the world such as La Scala, Wiener Staatsoper, Deutsche Oper in Berlin, Covent Garden and The Paris Opera. At the Metropolitan Opera House Birgit Nilsson appeared 223 times in 16 roles. She sang two

complete "Ring" cycles in the 1961-62 season, and another in 1974-75. She was Isolde 33 times, and Turandot 52.

In 1985 Birgit Nilsson made her last performance as Electra in Frankfurt.

Birgit Nilsson also gave master classes at the Manhattan School of Music in New York.

The Birgit Nilsson Stipend:

Birgit Nilsson wanted to encourage young musicians and felt personal responsibility for the future of the Opera Art. In 1969 she established a national scholarship in the Memory of Ragnar Blennow for promising young singers who carry on Birgit Nilsson's tradition.

The Birgit Nilsson Prize is the world's largest prize for classical music:

Birgit Nilsson wished to establish a prize aiming at protecting the legacy of the art of classical opera. The prize is international and shall be awarded to a currently active singer in opera, concerts, oratorio or Lieder. It can also be awarded to a conductor or to an institution such as an opera house or an orchestra. The amount is one million US dollars.

[http://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Birgit\\_Nilsson](http://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Birgit_Nilsson)

<http://www.birgitnilsson.com>

<http://birgitnilssonprize.org/>;

Nilsson Birgit (1995): *La Nilsson*, Stockholm: T. Fischer & Co., ISBN 91-7054-756-4

# Estrid Ericson

## chosen by Sigma Chapter, Skövde



Estrid Ericson founder of "Svenskt tenn" in 1924.

Estrid Ericson was born 1894. In spring 1924 she inherits a small sum of money after her father. This money makes it possible for her to start Svenskt Tenn in Stockholm.

She started her career as an art teacher and tinartist. She was managing director of Svenskt Tenn for 56 years and her greatest talent was as producer and designer. She trusted the good taste and the time to come. Although she did not have an explicit aesthetic programme, she did have a creative persons sensitivity to the many faces of beauty. For Estrid the good life was not just about luxury and exclusivity but it was also about thoughtfulness and delicacy. Fearlessly, she mixed high and low with old and new. It must have required tremendous courage for a 30 year old woman to start a company in Sweden in the 1920's. She started her company with passion and stuck to her ideals even in time of aversion.

She worked together with Josef Frank who was an architect from Austria. They mixed patterns, colours and things with softness and simplicity. Estrid managed the company daily until she was 81 years of age and then she sold the company to Kjell and Märta Beijers foundation. But she continued to be the artistic leader until her death 1981. She created some

of the finest tin pieces in her last years. The foundations single goal is that the company will live forever. It gives the opportunity to work with quality and a long term perspective.

Josef Frank did not know how right he would get when he once said: Furniture survive machines, people, clothing and housing.

Marianne Olsson & Sigma Chapter



# Nanna Schwartz 1890- 1986

chosen by Pi Chapter, Västerås



Nanna Svartz grew up in Västerås in a family where religion and humanities played an important role. She was the youngest of five siblings and the only one to survive to adulthood. She started her medical studies at the Karolinska University Hospital in 1911, partly inspired by her future husband, Nils Malmberg, who was a medical student at the time.

She possessed an incredible energy, purposefulness and will-power and has described herself as a "workaholic". She was in charge of various services, which entailed duties to be carried out at all hours. She was deeply involved in equal opportunities and women's emancipation and had many ideas about the improvement of women's rights. Already at an early age she was described as creative and innovative. This served her well in her research and it was in her academic career that she inspired other women and not in demonstrations.

She was appointed Professor of Internal Medicine at the University of Stockholm in December 1937, the first woman Professor in Sweden. Svartz's appointment was important not only for herself but also for her friends in the women's rights movement. Her appointment was controversial and she was the target of many pejorative comments like "a woman in her menopause cannot possibly manage such an important position." Others supported her vividly and respected her

capacity and capability. "She is the only man among all the silly old ladies", was the comment by a well-known professor, who admired her work. Nanna Svartz's thesis was based on gastrointestinal disorders, with the purpose of clarifying whether the iodophilic microbes in the colon were bacteria or yeast cells. Throughout her life she maintained her interest in gastrointestinal disorders, but after her dissertation she started research into chronic joint disorders, especially rheumatoid arthritis (RA).

Like many other scientists at that time, Svartz was convinced that a microbe, not yet isolated, was the cause of RA. She decided to make this her research area. After the Nobel Laureate Gerhard Domagk's publication in 1935 on Prontosils bacteriostatic effects, Svartz had the idea that a remedy combining salicylic acid (a substance with well known effects on joint pains) and a sulfonamide (sulfapyridine) might well be effective in the treatment of RA. Together with chemists at Pharmacia in Uppsala, she developed an azo compound between sulfapyridine and salicylic acid known as Salazopyrin. In 1941 Salazopyrin was registered as a trademark and during the following years its efficacy in ulcerative colitis was confirmed and it is still used today in treatment of inflammatory gastrointestinal and rheumatic disorders.

Nanna Svartz was a honorary member of 35 different scientific organisations and one of the restaurants at The Karolinska University Hospital is named after her, as well as a street in the city where she was born, Västerås.

Nanna Svartz was a pioneer and visionary in many fields – a remarkable woman for her time.

# Ottilia Adelborg

## chosen by Phi Chapter Falun



Ottilia Adelborg was born in 1855, one of five daughters to a naval officer and his wife in the town of Karlskrona. Her father served in both the Swedish and British navy. The father died

when Ottilia was ten years old and left the widow destitute. She moved with the three surviving daughters to Uppsala where relatives took care of the family.

Ottilia's artistic talent was discovered and supported by her aunt and although money was scarce she was able to study for six years, four of them at the Royal Academy of Arts in Stockholm. Ottilia and her older sisters Maria and Gertrud were the first generation of women to be able to study in order to attain a profession and thus able to support themselves. The Academies of Music and Arts as well as universities were open to women in the late 1860s and early 1870s and women from the upper classes and gentry/nobility were the first ones to take the opportunity of higher education. Ottilia's family situation made it impossible to find a marriage partner due to lack of means. All marriages within the nobility were arranged according to what the partner could contribute (dowry).

The older sisters Maria and Gertrud were the bread winners in the family when they moved to Stockholm, Maria as a textile designer and Gertrud employed by one of the organizations working for women's rights (to vote, to be employed etc.) Fredrika Bremer Förbundet. All three sisters were involved in the first women's movement in Sweden, taking part in the many organizations started by women for women.

Ottilia is known as the first writer of children's books (as we know them today) in Sweden. Her belief was that children needed beauty in their life and books to identify with. Children's books at that time were mainly imported from Germany and their purpose was to discipline the child and to teach morals. Her books were inspired by the arts and crafts movement in Britain, in the style William Morris and Walter Crane, with a definite air from arts nouveau. Ottilia was given a scholarship to study in London in 1894. Her books *The flower alphabet for the princes and Pelle Snygg och barnen i Snaskeby* have been reprinted several times, the latest edition in 2009. *Pelle Snygg (Clean Peter)* has been translated into five languages. *The flower alphabet* won a medal at the World Exhibition in Chicago 1893.

Ottilia shared an interest in textiles and handicraft with her sister Maria, especially lace after visiting Italy and Belgium in the 1890s. When she came to the small parish Gagnef in the Dalecarlia area to paint in 1902 she was astonished by the laces worn by the women. The traditional costumes worn in Gagnef fascinated her with their colors and handicraft skill. She returned to Gagnef in



1903 and decided that this was the place where she wanted to spend the rest of her life. She started a lace making school for young girls so that they would be able to find a way to support themselves. Inspired by what she saw around her she again began to paint. The 33 years she spent in Gagnef were productive and happy. The Ottilia Adelborgmuseet in Gagnef ([ottiliaadelborgmuseet.se](http://ottiliaadelborgmuseet.se)) is a tribute to a talented woman and her work within a small farming community. The museum shows lace and traditional clothing from Gagnef as well as Ottilia's art works and literature.

Lena Nordesjö & Phi Chapter

# Christina Rinaldo

## chosen by Chi Chapter Borås



Christina Rinaldo, Senior Lecturer at the University of Borås, has dedicated most of her professional career to The Textile School of Hand Weaving in Borås Sweden. For a number of years she worked very hard for the

acknowledgement of the instruction in hand weaving as a university education in Borås, which eventually became reality.

Her most important achievement was the reconstruction of Pharaoh Tutankhamun's wardrobe, which resulted in a famous exhibition opened in Alexandria, Egypt in 2006, and then shown in many countries all over the world. Rinaldo's research made us better understand what Tutankhamun really looked like in his lifetime, is the conclusion.

The work on Tutankhamun's Wardrobe and her comprehensive research on Egyptian hand weaving led to many visits to Egypt and the Oasis of Siwa, where she now lives part time, and where she has a house and a garden of her own.

Another achievement is the reconstruction of Queen Margareta's coronation dress from 1397. She was the Queen of Norway, Denmark, Finland and Sweden in a united Scandinavia.

Christina is a former member of the DKG, Chi chapter, Borås, and an important support for



*The Nordic Union Queen  
Margaretha 1353- 1412*

the Siwa Project, an aid project for the education of girls and young women in Siwa. Moreover, she is a door opener when it comes to the contact with local authorities.

Honorary Professor Christina Rinaldo has been richly rewarded for her research and academic teaching. Thus, in 1997, she was awarded a pedagogic prize from the Univ. of Borås for her creativity and work on the academic education in hand weaving. She has also received a gold medal from the King of Sweden as well as a medal from the Swedish Handicraft Association.

Birgit Wahlgren & Chi Chapter



# The DKG Chapters, Sweden State

