



Norseman News

Leif Ericson Viking Ship *Norseman*

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www.vikingship.org

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LEVS

Mission Statement

1. To educate Americans about Leif Ericson as the first European to discover and settle on the North American continent.
2. To promote knowledge and a realistic historic image of Viking people as merchants, navigators, shipbuilders, artists, explorers and warriors.
3. To provide sail training and practice in recreating the experience of traveling on water as Vikings did a thousand years ago.

Distributed 3 times a year

Viking Textiles: Practical Artwork

by Maia Holt

There are many people out in the great wide world that carry the belief that the peoples living in Viking Age Scandinavia were mindless barbarians whose only interests were raping, raiding and pillaging. Although this may sound exciting and adventurous, it's only a scrap of the truth; these people were far more sophisticated and intelligent than we give them credit for.

One of the ways this has been determined is through the many artifacts found which display a great amount of skill and thoughtfulness. And although there are countless examples, I am going to concentrate on just three which are: tablet weaving (also known as card weaving), naalbinding, and sprang. These are a sampling of techniques for fibers such as linen and wool.

Tablet Weaving

Generally, tablet weaving is a technique used to produce strong narrow bands of textile in use for belts, straps and trim. These bands can be either simple or complex depending on the skill of the weaver and can be made of linen, wool and even silk. They were also used to help set the warp spacing in the weaving of fabrics, making for more even and sturdy selvages.

The basic technique is as follows: normally each card has four holes in each corner through which a thread is strung. The far end of the threads is attached to a stationary object and the nearer end to you, possibly your belt. Turning the cards, or deck, towards or away from you changes the positions of the threads and therefore the pattern. Simply turning the deck as a whole can make basic patterns, and more complex patterns involve the turning of individual cards.



A closeup of tablet weaving

Naalbinding

Yet another fiber art is naalbinding, also known as single needle knitting. This technique produces a thick textile, not unlike very flexible modern knitting, hence its alternate name. Naalbinding is usually made from wool due to its thermal properties. Items that can be made from this include mittens, hats, and socks, thus providing soft and warm coverings.

The basic technique involves the course of the needle and yarn though already made loops. Normally a finger was used to gauge their size, to keep the loops the same size and create a more even product. As with most textiles, there are simple and complex forms of the art, and there are several, even thousands of variations.

Continued on next page

LEVS Norseman News

The *Norseman News* is distributed 3 times a year through mailings, our web site, and handouts at events. Our readers consist of mainly Scandinavian-Americans including members, friends and others who have shown interest in our mission, Vikings and Leif Ericson.

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Newsletter Editor

Karen Johnson
neditor@vikingship.org
If you would be interested in downloading current issues of the *Norseman News* from the website after an email notification, please email the editor.

The *Norseman News* is now accepting ads!

Advertising rates are:
Insert, supplied by advertiser . . . \$300/issue (8.5X11" 1 or 2 sides)
Full page ad \$200 (7.5"x10")
Half page \$125 (7.5"x5")
Quarter page \$75 (3.65"x5")
Business card ad \$25 (3.5"x2.5" or 2.5x3.5")

Paper submissions of artwork will not be accepted. All artwork must be grayscale or black and white. Please submit electronically as a BMP, TIF, EPS, or JPG to the newsletter editor. For layout services, add 50 percent.

We reserve the right to reject any advertising at our sole discretion. Deadlines for submission are Jan. 15 (Spring Issue out in Feb.), Apr. 15 (Summer Issue out in May), Jul. 15 (Fall issue out in late Aug.).

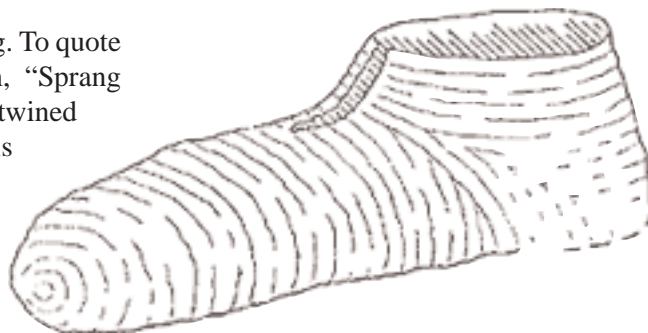
Please make checks payable to LEVS, Inc. and mail to the address listed on the cover.

Viking Textiles Continued...

Sprang

Lastly, we'll learn about sprang. To quote Sarah from www.stringpage.com, "Sprang is a type of interlinked or intertwined fabric. To get an idea of how it is made, think of braiding three strands of yarn, which are fixed at both ends. The yarn at both ends is braided with an open area in the middle, and the two ends are mirror images. That braid is a small piece of sprang. If more strands are used, the fabric can have a complex pattern of large and small holes, or any number of other variations." Got that? Typically a free piece of yarn or a stick is used to keep the braided yarn from unraveling.

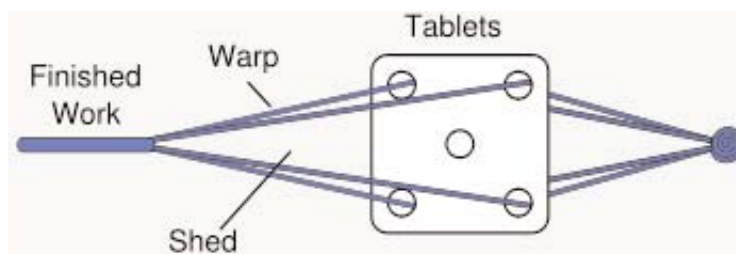
The items made usually have a need for stretching, and include stocking, hairnets, belts and bags. Once again, the complexity depends on the skill of the weaver and the type of object needed, and are made from



A sock made in the *naalbinding* technique

whatever fiber is deemed necessary. The oldest example of Sprang dates from 1400 BC, and was most likely applied in Scandinavia through the 18th century.

If you are interested in learning any of these arts, there are many websites devoted to the techniques, and I highly recommend visiting www.stringpage.com. The site offers instructions and histories of the various techniques and accompanies them with helpful photos.



A graphic showing the basic setup for tablet weaving.

A Friend Returns to Vahalla

Greetings friends,

I have been asked to pass on the sad news that a good Viking friend, Carl Norborg of the Swedish Viking Ship *Viking Plym*, passed away on Friday, September 7th, 2007 after a long battle against cancer. The word comes through Mary Jean Clark from Thomas Popoff and Britt Marie. We will try to obtain additional information for those who contact us.

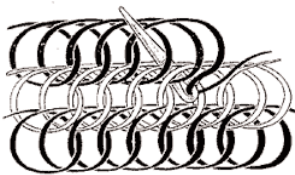
You may remember that we first met the *Viking Plym* in Stockholm when we sailed. The *Norseman* there for the "Viking Invasion of Stockholm". Carl Norborg was instrumental in making that gathering of Viking Ships a success and the trip quite memorable for a lot of us. We sailed with the *Plym* and Carl two additional times, in New York Harbor in 2001 and again in St. Petersburg, Russia in 2003. Carl was a real gentleman and loved the times he spent on the *Viking Plym*. He will be missed.

Dave Segermark

Norseman Captain & 2008 LEVS President

Viking Textiles - Word Search

Find the words in the grid. When you are done, the unused letters in the grid will spell out a hidden message. Pick them out from left to right, top line to bottom line. Words can go horizontally, vertically and diagonally in all eight directions. **HINT: Both the words and the message come from Maia's article (and the message is rather long)...**



N A A L B I N D I N G T H E S H
 S P O O L E T E X T I L E P E A
 S S O P L E W H S D I A R B S I
 T E H E R E F I A B A G S P S R
 R D G E A R L S L T M O R N R N
 I R E A D K T S O I S A R P H E
 N A M I V L S S T I N E C A U T
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www.WordSearchMaker.com

- | | | | |
|----------|-------------|---------|------------|
| bags | knitting | shed | thermal |
| belts | linen | silk | thread |
| braid | loops | socks | unraveling |
| card | mittens | sprang | warp |
| fibers | naalbinding | string | weaving |
| hairnets | needle | strung | wool |
| hats | patterns | tablet | yarn |
| holes | selvages | textile | |

Message:

A Note from our 2008 LEVS President

Hello everyone!

My introduction to “The Viking Life” began when I saw a photograph of Ivar Christensen putting a bumper sticker on a car which read, “Celebrate America’s Discovery, Take a Viking To Lunch.” That was in 1974 and that October 9th, I attended my first “Leif Ericson Day” Dinner and Leif Ericson Society International (LESI) meeting and laughed myself silly listening to Ivar talk. I became active with LESI, helping build our first Vikingship, the *Ravnen*, later becoming its Captain. Our costumes were patterned after “Hagar the Horrible”... fake furs and horns on the helmets.



soon be initiating “Membership Meetings” at libraries, town halls and other meeting spaces near you! As a meeting is set, we will post the announcement on our website at www.vikingship.org, advertise in local papers and by word of mouth, using the many contacts that we have developed over the years. We have developed a PowerPoint presentation to bring folks a show about Viking life and culture and also tell them about what we do at LEVS. If a meeting is set up in your area please come to meet us, bring a friend and learn something about Vikings you may not have known and to learn a bit more about us and what we do.

I have been a Viking for about 33 years now, finally working my way into the President’s seat of the Leif Ericson Viking Ship, Inc. (LEVS) which at one time was a scion of LESI. When Ivar decided to deactivate LESI, LEVS, which had always had similar goals and ambitions, was there to continue on.

Ivar’s bumper sticker in the '70s should remind us that while we can keep something going, we really need to bring in “new blood” for an organization to thrive. I would like to announce that our focus will be to increase our membership this year and for years to come in the hope that our mission, to “Educate those we meet to the FACT that Leif Ericson WAS the first European to set foot on North American soil”, will be passed on into the future. This is the message that we carry to events and schools where we display and educate. Our costumes have evolved to be much more historically accurate, and each crew member has added their knowledge, skills and enthusiasm to the message.

To that effect, I am pleased to announce that LEVS will

New Merchandise!

We are always on the lookout for new items that help us both entertain and educate the visitors at our events and our members. With that goal in mind, we have found some new book titles, puzzles, games, and accessories to offer this year! Please check out our 2008 Catalog (included with this newsletter or online at www.vikingship.org/LEVSfiles), or find us at our many events! And, if YOU come across an interesting item, please let us know about it!

“What we do” is starting to ramp up for 2008. We have what seems to be an interesting year starting to shape up with inquiries from events that we call “old friends” as we have been going there so long, to some new locations and events. The tentative events are listed on our website calendar. As they are firmed up, the “tentative” label is removed and a “confirmed” label is attached so you will know where we definitely will be. Please stop over to say hello should you be at an event where we are on display. Better yet, join the crew and really have some fun!

Let’s work together on this journey of survival! See you at a local meeting!

Dave Segermark, President

Leif Ericson Viking Ship, Inc.

Message from Membership

I will make every effort to send a reminder that your membership is about to expire during the month preceding the expiration. Look for a postcard with the Viking ship on it and a list of the various levels of membership. If your membership should lapse by several months after the postcard has been delivered, a letter with a self addressed stamped envelope will be sent to you. Either use the envelope to return your check for membership or be kind enough to put a note in the envelope telling us that you would like your name removed from the membership list.

Thank you,
Hilde Lindstrom, Membership Chair

Rune Scratchings from The Old Swedish Viking Dennis L. Johnson

Brooklyn, New York has a Day School named after Leif Ericson. It has some 174 students in grades K through 8, and is a private, co-ed, Lutheran school that is highly rated by the parents of the students who attend.



A possible Viking Ship has been discovered in the River Boyne, in Ireland last year. The remains appear to be of a ship about 9 to 16 meters in length (*Norseman* is about twelve meters) and of clinker-built construction. Plans are being made for recovery and carbon dating of the remains to establish whether this is truly a Viking ship.



Viking enthusiasts in Ireland were rewarded last summer with the visit of the Norwegian ship *Gaia* to Dublin and Wexford. The *Gaia* is a 24 meter replica of the *Gokstad* ship, discovered in the 1880's in Norway. The ship was on a voyage to retrace the routes taken by Viking sailors in the ninth and tenth centuries, and attended a Viking Festival in Wexford in July.



In the course of work by archeologists in the conservation of the ruins of the old St. Nicolas church at Borgarsyssel in Norway last summer, the researchers discovered accidentally some ancient skeletal remains while removing some rose bushes. Two men and an infant were found. One of the men's skulls was found to have an unusual bone condition normally found only among Peruvian Incas. The question of how this old South American Indian skull came to be found in Norway is the subject of much speculation and has prompted further research.

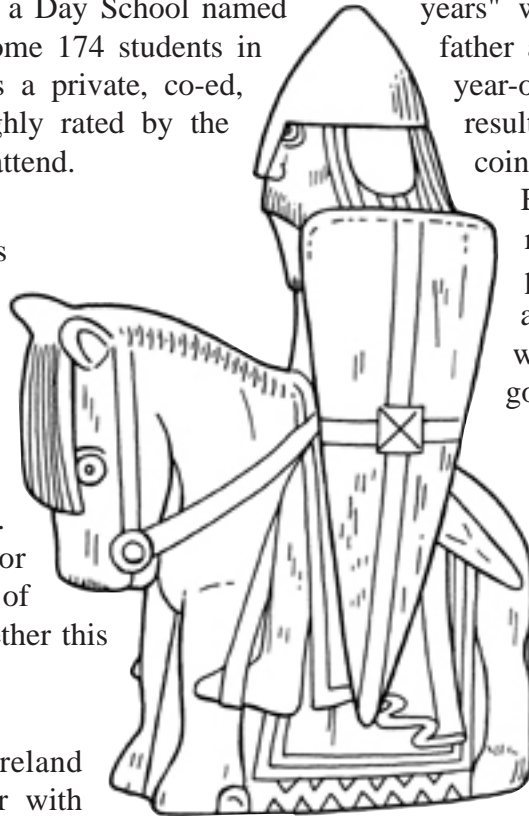


It seems 2007 was a year of astonishing discoveries for Viking researchers. What has been described as "the most important Viking treasure find in England in 150

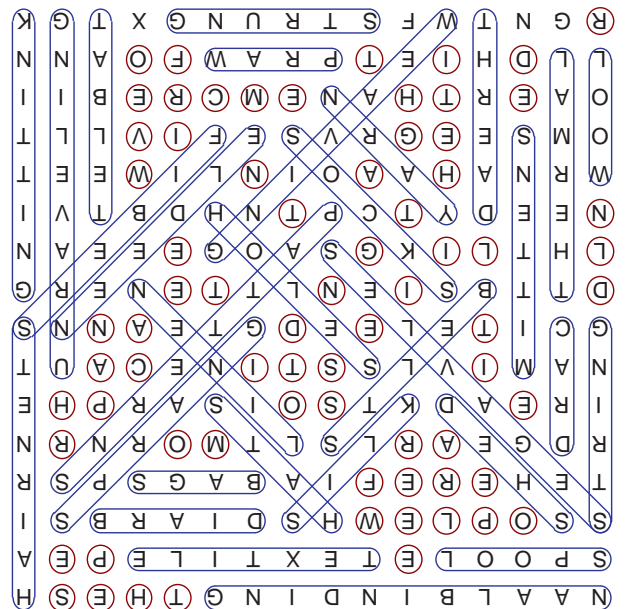
years" was found in Yorkshire, England, by a father and son with metal detectors. This five-year-old hobby of David and Andrew Whelan resulted in the discovery of a Horde of silver coins and other objects valued at over 750,000 British pounds. The British Museum is raising funds to purchase the find, the proceeds to be shared between the finders and the landowners. (Unlike in Sweden, where all finds are the property of the government).



Confirming widely suspected information, recent DNA studies have shown that widespread genetic evidence of Viking settlement exists among people now living in northwest England. This research confirms that Vikings did not just raid this part of England, but many settled in the area.



Message Solution: These people were far more sophisticated and intelligent than we give them credit for.



Word Search Solution

Norseman News

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Winter/Spring 2008 Edition!



Spring/Summer Norseman Events

We've got a great mix of public events, private school presentations, work parties and meetings on our schedule! The events listed below are tentative, so check our site or contact us at info@vikingship.org to verify that we'll be there. We are also working on scheduling General Membership Meetings in a variety of areas, so keep an eye out for more info!

March 19: 12:00p - 4:00p

Work Party at Kalmar Nyckel Shipyard!

March 19: 7:00p - 8:30p

Board Meeting this evening at the Kalmar Nyckel Shipyard

March 27, 2008: 7:00p - 9:00p

General Membership Meeting: Newtown Square, PA

April 11, 2008 - Living History

Presentation - Avon Grove Charter School, Avondale, PA

April 25 - 27: Viking Festival

Asheville, OH

May 17 & 18: Viking Festival &

Parade: Brooklyn, NY

May 31: Viking Day at the American

Swedish Historical Museum: Philadelphia, PA

June 21: Scandinavian American

Historical Society Festival: Vasa Park, Bud Lake, NJ

July 5th, 2008: Cradle of Liberty

Scouts' - Fun Day for Scouts and their Families: Greenlane, PA

July 18 - 20: Scandinavian Folk

Festival: Jamestown, NY

August 1 - 4: Icelandic Festival:

Gimli, Manitoba, Canada

August 17, 2008: Cradle of Liberty

Scouts' - Fun Day for Scouts and their Families: Greenlane, PA

October 12, 2008: LEVS' Celebration

of Leif Ericson Day: Marcus Hook, PA

Fall, 2008: Delaware County

Community College - Living History Presentation: Media, PA

Always check our calendar on www.vikingship.org for up-to-date information.