

Gogebic Range Genealogical Society
Newsletter
December 15, 2014

The Gogebic Range will be a busy place this next summer, with the Smithsonian Exhibit being in place April and May at the Downtown Ironwood Place and the State U.P. History Conference running from June 26-28 at various venues.

The Gogebic Range Genealogical Society will participate as one of the partners with the Smithsonian committee by holding two half day genealogy sessions in the afternoon, May 12 and 19, at the Gogebic Community College computer lab. More information will follow, but the plan is to construct a program that will interest beginners in genealogy to those who have been at it a number of years, but are trying to dig deeper into their family history, and are looking for ways to do that. *Specifics to follow.*

The U.P. History Conference will feature several breakout sessions of speakers on programs that should be of interest to everyone. The Historical Society of Michigan and the Ironwood Area Historical Society will be co-hosts for the conference. The Saturday sessions will take place at the Luther L. Wright High School in Ironwood. The Saturday evening banquet will be held at the Gogebic Community College Lindquist Center. Tours will be available on Friday and Sunday, with an informal BBQ supper being held at the Old Depot Park Pavilion Friday evening. *Details will be provided as the event draws closer.*

**Christmas in Ironwood as described by Skulda V. Baner in
“Latchstring Out”
Published in 1944**

The setting—Early 1900s Swedish community near Vaughn and Suffolk Streets in Ironwood (Iron Valley in the book).

The narrator—Eight or nine year old Stumpastina

“I began to think about Christmas again, sitting there against my father’s arm. And somehow, now, the thought wasn’t a sharp point to wince away from. I thought of the tree with the brown-wrapped bundles we would open tomorrow, that was nearly today. I thought of Christmas dinner, that Magnus and the new hired girl Emma would share with us—Swedish as the blue and yellow flag itself—*lutfisk*, rice in creamy milk with cinnamon and sugar crusting it, the jellied veal *sylta*, the red glow of the lingonberries festive as the red satin on a holly wreath, and the sausage and meats simmered in the big iron kettle we would *doppa* our bread into because that was the way you did at Christmas. I thought of the *Julgubbe*, who would really be my father in false face with whiskers. I didn’t know whether to giggle or weep, that I should know. I thought of the long dance we would make in and out and back and forth among the showcases and tables and chairs, through the store, after Christmas presents tomorrow, my father and my mother, Magnus and Emma, with me at the head and as many behind that might come in to visit and say *Go’Jul!* I let my thinking slip guard. I thought of the small red house beside the tall red house, on the *tomt* far across the ocean, where my other grandmother, who was Anna von Braun, would be sitting thinking her silent *Go’ Jul* to Gustaf, would never hear it except silently in her mind.”

“Suddenly sitting there, I knew about Christmas. I knew why you stayed empty no matter how much *lutfisk* with cream sauce and hard cooked eggs chopped into it you put inside you. I knew why your ears kept listening and your mind kept waiting. Christmas was a giggle that crowded the lump in your throat. Christmas was your Grandmother Anna over in Sweden, waiting for nothing, and your Grandmother Katrina here in Iron Valley, sewing buttons on pants for a doll. Christmas was Lyda’s organ

music and the choir's singing that never quite met, and it was the silent darkness outside that the hot little tongues of the candles could reach for but never reach. Christmas was an ancient *Lo, where a rose e'er blooming* caroled down centuries of streets, and it was a gay, saucy *Now it is Christmas again, now it is Christmas again, let it be Christmas again till it be Easter!* Long-danced around a Christmas tree. Christmas was everything you could hold in your two hands. And Christmas was nothing you could hold in your two hands."

Note—Skulda Baner was the daughter of JGR Baner (widower of Tilda), who in 1938 lived at 218 E. Vaughn, and was a Swedish poet and writer of Indian legends. He was Gustav in the book, the father of Stumpastina. In 1938 Skulda and her sister, Nanna, were employed in office work in Milwaukee.

Great read to discover early Ironwood's Swedish culture.

Snippets from the 12/12/1914 Ironwood News Record

- Daughter born to Mr. and Mrs. O. E. Olson, N. Lawrence St, on Dec. 9.
 - For rent, furnished rooms for light housekeeping. Avon Hotel, Mrs. H. A. Haack, phone 362.
 - One thousand resident and 55 non-resident deer-hunting licenses were issued in Dickinson County during the season that closed last week.
 - Supt. Robert King of the Ashland Mine, went to Chicago Saturday night to confer with Mr. E. A. Hayes, who was on his way from California to Washington regarding matters relating to the operation of the mine.
 - Two store buildings next to Curry Hotel for rent. Con Geary, real estate and insurance.
 - Fifty-nine aliens were admitted to full citizenship at the recent term of the circuit court of Gogebic County. Not one of the applicants was rejected.
 - "A Gentleman from Mississippi" will be shown at the Temple Friday, Dec. 18.
 - Automobile licenses issued in Michigan for the present year numbered 76,322 on Dec. 5. The figures for 1909 were 11,718. Up to Dec. 2 motorcycle licenses issued in 1914 numbered 6,975. These machines were not licensed until 1910, when the licenses issued numbered 1,041.
 - Christmas victrolas, \$15 to \$200, full line new records in all languages, at Hydar's.
 - The new highway between Wakefield Village and Tula is now in good condition. It is the intention of the township officials to make many improvements on this highway between Tula and the Ontonagon County line. A new steel bridge has been delivered to span the river east of Camp Francis, also steel approaches for the big bridge across the Presque Isle River west of Camp Francis. It is expected that this new trunk road to the north end of Lake Gogebic and the Ewen District in Ontonagon County will be in condition to be used by the public in 1915.
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This will be an abbreviated newsletter, but we wanted to send you vital information about upcoming events and wish you a healthy and blessed 2015.

Gary Harrington