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THE **Lundby** LETTER

OF SWEDEN

A Quarterly Newsletter Published for Members of the We Love Lundby Club

Welcome to We Love Lundby

Lundby Featured in 2004-2005 London Exhibit

By Sue Morse

**Home Swede Home
Scandinavian Dollhouses 1950 – 2000
October 2, 2004 to February 6, 2005**

AN EXHIBITION supported by the Swedish Institute and entitled Home Swede Home has opened at the Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood in London. You can see all of the home and furniture styles and colors of the 1950s through the 1970s in miniature at the display of Scandinavian dollhouses. The makers include Lundby, Micki Gemla, and Brio.

During the 1960s these three dollhouse manufacturers were engaged in fierce competition with each other. Because of Lundby's strong sales, Micki and Brio soon abandoned dollhouses in favor of their other wooden toys.

Lundby went on to become one of the most influential dollhouse manufacturers in the world, only to fall into bankruptcy in the 1990s. One of the original competitors, the Micki Company, bought the rights to the Lundby name in 1997 and is currently producing Lundby dollhouses and furniture.

Lundby researcher Yvette Wadsted, who resides in Stockholm, is writing a book that covers the different trends in Scandinavian design from 1950 to 2000. "The Home Swede Home exhibition in London is a resumé of what the book, as yet untitled, will cover," Yvette emailed us recently. The winter issue of *The Lundby Letter* will further highlight the exhibit and her book, which will be released in early 2005.

The dollhouses and furniture on display at the museum exhibit take us through the changing trends in post-war Scandinavian interior design, reflecting the Nordic way of life that has influenced interior design throughout the world. However, details like Lundby's sauna give us insight into Scandinavian trends and traditions that are quite different from those we know in the United States or the United Kingdom.

The electric-powered two-story houses, constructed from hardwood and plastic, were designed from familiar shapes and colors in the Swedish landscape. They are shown completely furnished in the "state-of-the-art" Swedish style. A wide range of matching furniture, lamps, and numerous accessories manufactured

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Greetings Lundby Lovers:

We welcome you to the first issue of *The Lundby Letter*, our Lundby Museum on paper. This issue is complimentary. We hope that you will want to join the We Love Lundby Club so you can continue to receive future issues. Simply complete and return the inserted Membership Application with your payment.

Our mission is to promote Lundby to both young and older collectors, to chronicle the remarkable Lundby history, to encourage enthusiasts to share information, and to provide our members with assistance and opportunities in acquiring vintage and current Lundby items. Our quarterly newsletter will be printed in black and white for the beginning, but we have hopes to post it on our projected 2005 website in color. More about our plans in our next issue.

The involvement of all our members is the key to success! We need you to help us spread the wonderful news about Lundby. Please send us your ideas and contributions via email to welovelundby@aol.com. ♥

The design of this Lundby Gothenburg dollhouse has basically remained unchanged over the 50 years covered by the exhibit. The furniture and accessories, as well as the recognizable treatment of the stairwell, feature 1960s Swedish interior design.



Photo from the Morse collection.

Home Swede Home—continued

Photo from the Morse collection.



Note the geometrically patterned wallpaper and circular staircase in the Micki Gemla dollhouse, which reflect the styles of the 1960s. Today the Micki Company specializes in making wooden toys, as well as Lundby dollhouses and furniture.

to furnish the dollhouses in the last 50 years is also displayed alongside miniature versions of the people who lived in them.

If a trip to London is in your future, you can reach the Museum of Childhood via the Bethnal Green underground station. The museum is open from 10:00 a.m. – 5:50 p.m. and is closed on Fridays. The admission is free. For further details, visit the website, www.museumofchildhood.org.uk. ♥

Photo courtesy of Patricia Harrington.



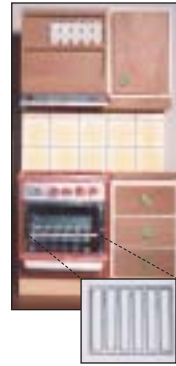
Brio's 1960s dollhouse is very similar to Lundby's and Micki's five-room houses. The company, founded in 1884 by Ivar Bengtsson, no longer makes dollhouses today, but remains one of the biggest makers of educational toys in the world. Patricia Harrington owns this beautiful Brio house. The simulated stonewall effect in the upper room is unique to the Brio house.

Lundby Lore

By Carolyn Frank

Did Lundby provide a rack for the oven of the Continental Kitchen?

Many collectors of vintage Lundby have pondered this question. The supports for a rack are present in the #2531 Cooker Unit of the early 1970s. In fact, two sets of supports have been molded into the interior of the oven. Recently a Mint in Box Continental Kitchen II surfaced on eBay, and an inquiry made to the high bidder of the auction affirmed that the stove was produced *without* an oven rack. However, two other sightings at eBay have shown photographs of stoves with their oven doors open and racks present (one enterprising Seller had a mini-roasting pan complete with turkey on the rack).



Emails were sent to the Sellers of the ovens with the racks, and it was learned that the little stove units in their burnt orange hue and dark stained cabinets were childhood toys. Margaret Peters Holley, one of the Sellers, remembers buying her cooker rack at Harrods in London with her allowance money. Alas, the other Seller had only bought the Lundby kitchen pieces at a boot sale (yard/garage sale) in the UK. Other than

What's New at Lundby

By Carolyn Frank

LUNDBY has always been an innovator of interesting and unique items for the dolls house. While the 1/12th miniature world has mostly been grounded in the Victorian and Edwardian periods, Lundby has kept abreast of the modern era with dishwashers, microwave ovens, computers, and stereo equipment. Contemporary trends in home décor, furniture, and fashion are frequently integrated into the line.

New Lundby accessory items include a realistic pushchair/stroller, a detailed rabbit hutch complete with two rabbits, an Advent

calendar, and additional electrical fittings and lamps. New family members have “smiley” mouths and current clothing styles. Of special interest in the Lundby Family are the Popstars and their four-piece instruments, a horse and little girl in riding gear, and the Grandparents (the Grandfather has a beard!)

Check out Lundby's website at www.lundby.com for photographs of the latest products in the line. Some of the material is in Swedish, so you will need to scroll down for the English copy. ♥

being told that the items had been a child's Christmas present, she had no knowledge of their history.

I purchased two of the oven racks at a toy store in Zurich, Switzerland, in the mid-1970s. I recall that they came in small packets with Lundby headers. Constructed of rigid plastic in simulated stainless steel, the racks are a perfect fit in the oven. Although there are two sets of rack supports, only one rack is viable for placing a cooking container due to the height limitation of the oven's interior.

Until I encountered the oven racks on eBay, I thought they were probably an “exclusive” for the toy emporium in Switzerland. I am not aware of their listing in any Lundby catalog of the period.

If any Member of the We Love Lundby Club has further information on the Lundby oven racks, please contact me by either email or mail. ♥



The Children's Corner

By Camryn Long

Hi, my name is Camryn and I'm 9 1/2 years old. One day I was visiting my grandmother, Sue Morse, and she told me about her plans to start a Lundby club. She asked me if I had any ideas about a name for the club and I said, “How about We Love Lundby?” Both she and Mrs. Frank said it was a perfect name for their club.

I have my own beautiful Gothenburg dollhouse and my mom has a Stockholm house. Every year I get new furniture for my birthday and Christmas. The next pieces I'd like to get are the boxer dogs and the horse and rider. My other hobbies are dog obedience in 4-H (my dog is an Australian shepherd) and horseback riding.

I'd love to write to other children from around the world who play with Lundby dollhouses. I would ask them what their favorite Lundby houses and furniture are. Please send an email to me at welovelundby@aol.com. ♥

Editor's note: Did you know that Lundby created a Pen-Pal-Club in the 1980s? We would like to hear if any of our readers corresponded with Lundby playmates from around the world during that period. Please send us a description of your experiences.

HOW I FIRST FELL IN LOVE WITH LUNDBY

By Sue Morse

IT HAS BEEN ONLY EIGHT YEARS since I acquired my first Lundby house from my good collecting friend, **Linda Hanlon**. I'm living proof that it's never too late to launch into a new hobby. My passion—or more appropriately obsession—has yielded a current collection of ten fully furnished Lundby houses, one of which has eight levels!

In October of 2000 I was extremely fortunate to attend a Lundby exhibition in Vänersborg, Sweden. The photo shows me happily standing amid many objects of my affection! I'll tell you more about the houses I photographed at this unprecedented exhibit in future issues of *The Lundby Letter*. ♥



Remember the word, *Dockskåp*, the Swedish term for dollhouses. A one-time exhibit of Swedish dollhouses from the 19th and 20th centuries, the *Dockskåp* exhibit ingeniously presented 13 Lundby houses from 1963 to 1990 in a framework structure that resembled a Lundby house.

We Love Lundby Members!

We are very pleased to announce that the very first member of We Love Lundby is **George Mundorf**, a wonderful supporter of Lundby. Thanks so much, George, for your confidence in us to be the guardians of Lundby history.

At the time of printing, five more members had joined—**Maria Cannizzaro**, **Carola Eriksson**, **Elisabeth Lantz**, **Geraldine Scott** and **Annette Wood**. Welcome, Lundby Lovers! ♥

Lundby Connections

Many Lundby friends have emailed us that they are so excited about the We Love Lundby Club.

Elisabeth Garner from the UK writes, "I'm so pleased that you are spreading a bit of happiness somewhere in the world. My Lundby house is nine floors high! Any more and it'll be unstable. I'll email you a photo if you'd like!" Please send it, Lis.

Lisa Boutry of Canada wants to sign up to be a charter member and she would like to contribute articles and/or photos for the newsletter. We'd love to hear from others too.

To see a beautiful Stockholm house, visit www.CarolineMockett.com/cameron/guestbook.html. You'll enjoy reading responses from Lundby lovers in her guestbook. ♥

A Swedish Christmas in the 1960s



Photo courtesy of Sue Morse.

The pictured Christmas tree was the first one produced by Lundby in the 1960s. The branches and glittery star are soft plastic while the trunk, stand, and candles with holders are made from hard plastic. A garland of wire further decorates the tree.

We wish you merriment in 2004 as you decorate your houses, both big and little. Have a very Happy Holiday Season,

Carolyn and Sue



Sign at the Lundby Exhibit Älvsborgs Länsmuseum Vänersborg, Sweden September-November 2000

Lundby has manufactured toys in Lerum since 1947 when the business was established by the Thomson family.

In the 1970s, the company expanded, and by 1986 controlled 97% of the world production of dollhouses. The catalogs were translated into six languages. In order to hold costs down, large parts of the production were moved to China, the Philippines, Macao, and even Mexico during the 1980s. By the middle of the 1980s, there were 100 employees in Lerum and 200 working in their homes.

During the 1960s and 1970s, Scandinavian furniture design was highly fashionable in Europe and the U.S., and Lundby quickly adopted the new modern style in their dollhouse furniture.

Lundby stayed true to Scandinavian interior design and it became popular the world over. By studying Lundby's different dollhouse furnishings, one can learn a great deal about post-WWII furniture styles.

In 1993, the company went bankrupt for several reasons. Luckily, Älvsborgs County Museum was able to acquire this valuable dollhouse collection for a mere symbolic sum of money, through the former branch manager in Lerum, Bo Johansson.

The Micki Company, located in Gemla, and which has its own past in the dollhouse market, took over Lundby in 1997.

Editor's note: Pictured above is the exhibit sign in Swedish. We asked Patricia Harrington to do the translation into English, and we think she did a terrific job. If you would like something translated from Swedish to English, please contact her at newswedepat@yahoo.com.

Crafting with Lundby

By Carolyn Frank

A Mini Timer

Many of the early Lundby catalogs gave directions for constructing various accessory items for their dolls houses. Continuing this tradition, we will make a mini Timer. The Timer can be attached to the range hood/extractor of the Lundby stove/cooker.

The Timer is an 1/16th scale replica of an actual kitchen timer with a magnetic back. Permission is given to photocopy the pattern.



Materials:

- Index Card
- Double-faced Tape
- Scissors
- Mini-Hold (available in most miniature shops)

Instructions:

1. Cut out the Black Rectangle—NOT the timer itself.
2. Position a strip of the Double-faced Tape on the Index Card.
3. Position the Black Rectangle over the Double-faced Tape with the Timer securely on the Tape and press firmly.
4. Cut out the Timer.
5. Attach the Timer to the range hood/extractor with the Mini-Hold or a dab of Tacky glue.



Can you date this vintage Lundby button? Sue bought it on eBay about two years ago from a Canadian seller.

Where Can We Buy New Lundby?

We buy our new Lundby items from Lynne Stierman at Once Upon a Time in Vienna, VA, 703/255-3285. Maria Cannizzaro recommends a shop in Shrewsbury, NJ called Grandma's Dollhouse. To order, call Howard at 732/576-1500. You can also visit www.nancysdollhouses.com to place an order online.

If you know of any other miniature shops where you can buy new Lundby items, please let us know and we'll publish the phone number and/or web site in the next *Lundby Letter*. ♥

Looking for Vintage Lundby?

The editors have prepared lists of their vintage Lundby dollhouses and furniture for sale. Send your want list, along with your name and address, and \$2.00 (fully refundable with your first order) to receive our lists, to P.O. Box 7429, Alexandria, VA 22307.

If we do not have the items you want on our lists, we'll publish your wish lists in the next issue of *The Lundby Letter*. Any WLL member can also email us if you have Lundby items for sale. We'll distribute your "Looking for Lundby" information to all members. ♥

YOUR PREFERENCES COUNT

Our readers may have noticed that we have opted to use the American version of the word *dollhouse(s)*, rather than the international spelling, *dolls house(s)* or *dolls' house(s)*. Surely the thinking behind these latter spellings is that there would be more than one doll in a house. What is your preference? Your votes will be counted and we'll reveal the outcome in the winter issue!



The Lundby Letter is published quarterly for members of the We Love Lundby Club. If you have any inquiries about an article, or if you are interested in submitting a story or project of your own, please do not hesitate to write or email us.

THE LUNDBY LETTER
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Coming Up in the Winter 2005 Issue

- ♥ An article that further distinguishes the 1960s Lundby, Brio, and Micki Gemla dollhouses from each other. We're finding that many Swedish dollhouse devotees have trouble identifying them.
- ♥ More on the Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood exhibit and the book by Yvette Wadsted.
- ♥ Interviews with Members.
- ♥ More rare Lundby pieces.
- ♥ Plans for website.
- ♥ Wish lists.
- ♥ A Membership Directory.
- ♥ And much more.