

DUMELA



Newsletter from Botswana Sweden Friendship Association No 2/2015



PHOTO livly.se

In the Footsteps of Early Swedes to Botswana

TEXT Julia Majaha-Järtby and Ulla Odqvist
PHOTO BOTSFA galleries

Founded in 1984, the Botswana-Sweden Friendship Association, commonly known as BOTSFA, continues to provide opportunities for its members and friends of Botswana to meet and enjoy each other's company. The Association organises at least 3–4 informal get-togethers a year. This has provided an avenue for information sharing on Botswana through presentations by experts and other people with interest in the country.

There are also times when friends gather simply to share an evening meal and a drink in a relaxed atmosphere.



At times the Association goes beyond evening meetings to organising overnight events. In October 2011, the association organised a day boat trip to the island of Åland, east of Sweden. This

Welcome to BOTSFA!

MEMBERSHIP FEES

- Individual: SEK 175
- Family: SEK 300 (incl. children up to 15)
- Student: SEK 100
- Institution: SEK 500

Plusgiro 85 10 39-8, or Bankgiro 428-6472

For an update of records, please send an e-mail to AndersHj@botsfa.nu with the name(s) and contact details of the renewal or payment for new membership.

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Lyrestad 2013



attracted 35 members and friends of Botswana, including the former Ambassador of Botswana to Sweden, H.E. Bernadette

Rathedi, and her colleagues. Again, in September 2013, 110 members and friends of Botswana (some from Norway) gathered in Lyrestad, along the Göta Kanal. Ambassador Lameck Nthekela, accompanied by his family and some of his colleagues, not only joined the entertainment-filled weekend, he made a much appreciated presentation on developments in Botswana.

Is it a coincidence that these get-togethers have been planned around Botswana's Anniversary of Independence? No! Most of BOTSFA's members live in Sweden but cherish the links they have had or are having with Botswana. There is a blend of nostalgic attraction to the country, from work that some of the members performed to simple enjoyment of continued links with Botswana and its people.

BOTSFA prides itself with having 200 or so members and, on occasions such as Botswana's independence, takes the opportunity to toast to the



health of Botswana and its people – and to the long-standing friendship.

During the weekend of September 5–6, BOTSFA will be in Vänersborg, in pursuit of the knowledge gathered by early Swedes to Botswana. Some early Swedish explorers, who reached Botswana in the 19th century, have their roots in Vänersborg. In 1885, Vänersborg established a museum which carries interesting collections of specimens from the explorers' visits to southern Africa, including from Botswana. Coincidentally, this was also the year today's Botswana came under the British rule as

the Bechuanaland Protectorate – till independence on September 30, 1966.



In addition to getting together BOTSFA members, the weekend is planned for interactions with neighbouring communities which have project links to Botswana. There are links related to art exhibitions, waste management and others. Some 40 members have registered to be part of the friendship weekend and, once again, the Embassy of Botswana in Sweden will be flying Botswana's flag high. Most of the meetings of the



AGM 2014



Åland 2011



get-togethers of the association are held in Stockholm, even though some of its members come from across the long country (over 1 500 km). The Vänersborg meeting will, once again, take the association to the south. There are active plans for going north ...

Come September 2016, a number of enthusiasts will be heading to Botswana to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Independence. As part of the celebrations, some members of the association are

preparing a commemorative book, Botswana–Sweden 50 years of partnership, 1966–2016. The book will take the reader through some of the work performed by Swedish experts in contributing to Botswana's development, today's business partnerships and cultural exchanges ... down to simple personal experiences.

If you are reading this and would wish to join BOTSFA, please send a line to info@botsfa.nu

WELCOME TO BOTSFA WHERE FRIENDS MEET ...

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