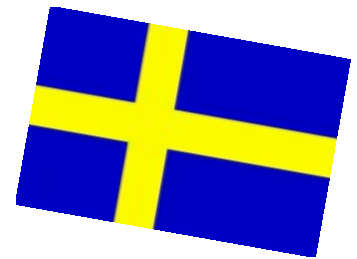
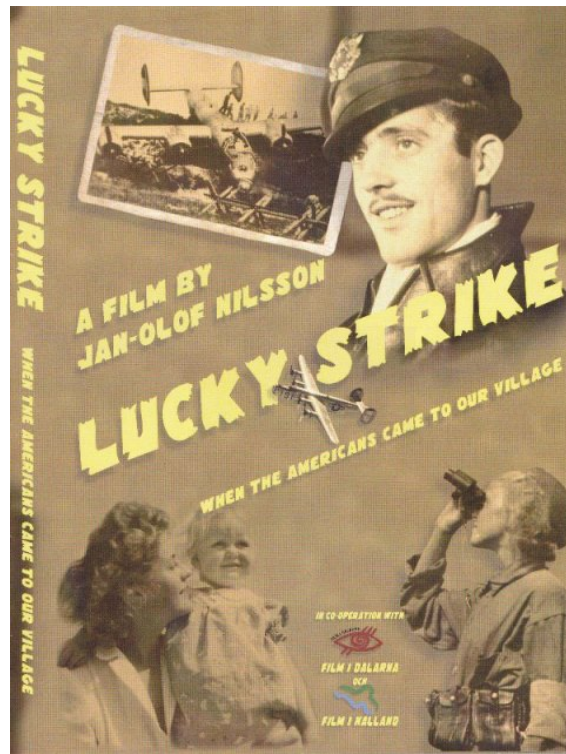


VASA PA DISTRICT #9 PRESENTS A SPECIAL ZOOM PROGRAM – “LUCKY STRIKE”



Dear Members and Friends of PA District #9 - Drott Lodge #130, Nobel-Monitor Lodge #168, and Svea Lodge #296,

You are cordially invited to attend a special Zoom presentation on

February 17, 2024 at

3:00 – 4:00 pm EST

*“Lucky Strike” - the story of Young American Airmen and Soldiers
who spent time interned in Sweden during World War II*

Presentation by Robert Dyer and Arne Dunhem

Private Viewing of “Lucky Strike,” courtesy of Jan-Olof Nilsson



Image: B 17 (Liberator) World War II bomber in Flight (Public Domain, U.S. Air Force)

This special program features commentary by **Bob Dyer** describing the history of events on a little-known historical occurrence in the annals of Swedish and American history: Sweden's role in hosting thousands of U.S. airmen during World War II. When the aviators had to make forced landings of their "flying fortress" aircraft after bombing runs in Germany, many American airmen ended up interned in Sweden, where they recuperated from injuries; some spent many months in Sweden.

Bob will also interview **Arne Dunhem** whose father was one of the young Swedes who during the war were mechanics at one of the airfields where U.S. airmen landed or even crash-landed during WWII. Arne will present photos and information from his father's airfield museum called Ljungbyhed in Southern Sweden. He will also show official records about an airman and his crash-landing and internment at the Ljungbyhed airfield.

The program features a private showing of "Lucky Strike" (Video Viewing Courtesy of its creator, **Jan-Olof Nilsson**, Swedish author, copywrite 2017).

During World War II tens of thousands of young American airmen were sent to Great Britain to participate in bombing runs over Germany to aid in the liberation

of Nazi occupied Europe. After being hit by German anti-aircraft guns or fighter planes, and without any possibility of returning to their home base, many of the crews tried to save themselves by flying to a country in the North that was out of the war's way. That country was Sweden. Many of the airmen died on this journey when their aircrafts crashed into the cold waters of the Baltic Sea, but more than 1,200 Americans succeeded in reaching the security of Swedish shores.

Their arrival in Sweden caused sensation. To some Swedes, these young Americans seemed to speak like movie stars from American films. The aviators gave Swedish children chewing gum and taught the Swedish girls to dance the jitterbug. After they recovered from injuries, they played their own distinctively American sports, such as baseball and American football. They also had chances to canoe on lakes and do cross-country skiing. Friendships were formed between the American airmen and Swedes. In some cases, romance and bonds of love were fashioned that led to marriage and children. Some Swedish brides accompanied their aviators to America.

Other young airmen died of their injuries in Sweden, and, of these, many were buried in Sweden.

Robert Dyer is a Professor Emeritus from The George Washington University. He is a board member of the Swedish American Cultural Union in Washington, D.C. Arne Dunhem is the current Chairman of Drott Lodge #168, the VASA chapter in Washington, D. C. He worked, before retirement, over many years as a senior executive of several high-tech companies in the U.S. and Europe to include companies for satellite communications, telephone services and semiconductor development.

Pre-register for the Zoom presentation on the Drott Lodge events page:

<https://www.drott-lodge.org/events>