

Lena Wennström Kannesten – My First Contact with the Wennström Family in Sweden

By Burks Oakley II
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Introduction

My mother was Grace Florence Brorström (1916-2000). All four of her grandparents were Swedish immigrants, meaning that her ethnicity was 100% Swedish. In turn, that makes me 50% Swedish. In the past few years, I have become very interested in learning more about my Swedish heritage. I have worked to expand my knowledge of my Swedish family tree, and through this work, I have been fortunate to connect with a number of my distant Swedish relatives.

My mother's paternal grandmother (*farmor* in Swedish) was Bernhardine Wennström (1855-1932). She married **Paulus** Bernhard Jacob Brorström (1859-1932) in 1882, and they immigrated to America right after they were married. Their second child was my maternal grandfather (*morfar* in Swedish), Paul Thure Brorström Sr. (1884-1932).

Lena Kannesten – A Wennström Cousin

In April 2017, I was searching online for information about my Wennström ancestors, and I found a page on the Geni.com website that was about my third-great grandfather, Jan Peter Wennström (1778-1862).¹ One of the individuals who manages this page on the Geni website was Lena Kannesten:²

¹ <https://www.geni.com/people/Peter-Wennstr%C3%B6m/6000000030616011251>

² <https://www.geni.com/people/Lena-Kannesten/6000000007191883646>

Lena Kannesten

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Lena Ruth Christina Wennström Kannesten

Immediate Family: Daughter of Daniel Karl Fredrik Wennström and Dagny Ruth Wennström
 Wife of Lars Gustav Kannesten
 Mother of <private> Kannesten; <private> Kannesten and Andreas Kannesten
 Sister of <private> Wennström

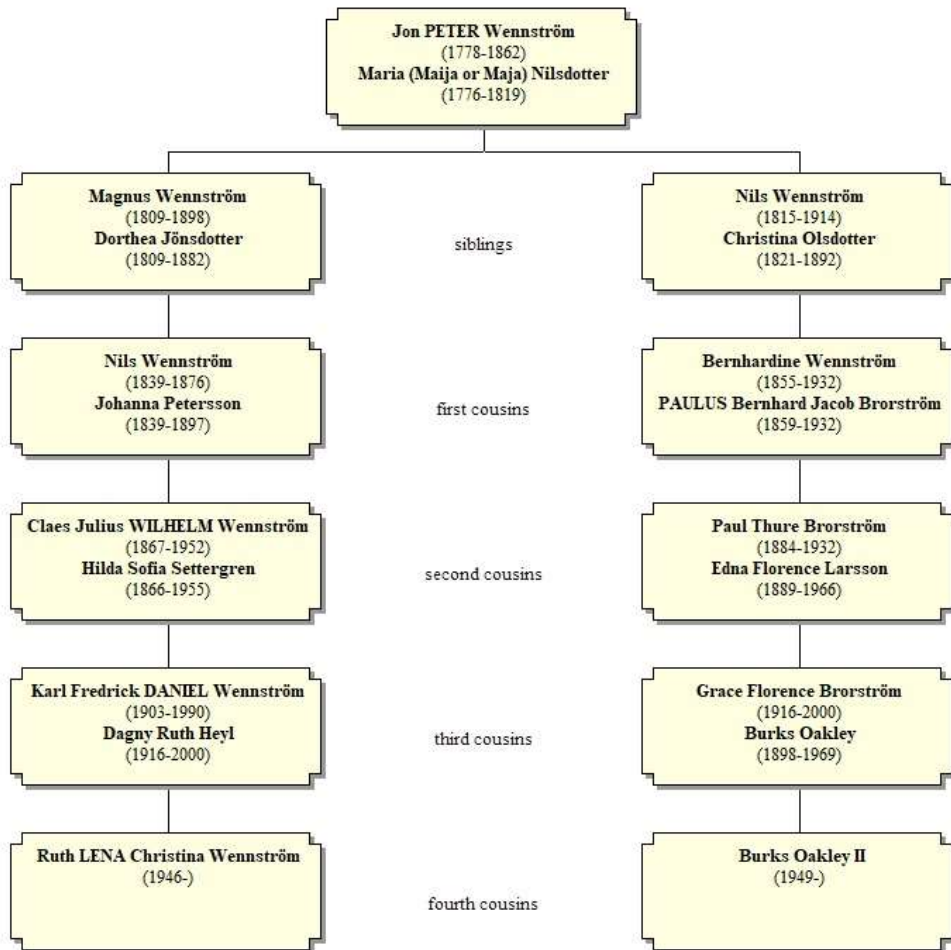
Send Message

Added by: Andreas Kannesten on August 9, 2009

View Tree

In looking at Lena's family tree on the Geni.com website, I learned that she was born a Wennström. Like me, she is descended from Jan Peter Wennström and his wife Maria (or Maija or Maja) Nilsdotter (1776-1819). At last, I found a living Wennström cousin!

The following chart shows how we are related as fourth-cousins:



Contacting Lena Wennström Kannesten

I started searching for Lena Kannesten online, and I found two people with this name on Facebook, and they both live in Sweden:



It turned out that the first one shown above was my cousin.³ We became Facebook friends, and on 13 April 2017, we exchanged the following messages:

Burks wrote: Lena - I am descended from Nils Wennström (1815-1914) - and I believe that we are 4th cousins. My great-grandmother was Bernhardine Wennström (1855-1932). I will be in Sweden next month and I would like to meet you. My e-mail is: burkso2@gmail.com I hope to hear back from you sometime soon. Lena - jag härstammar från Nils Wennström (1815-1914) - och jag tror att vi är 4: e kusiner. Min farmor var Bernhardine Wennström (1855-1932). Jag kommer att vara i Sverige nästa månad och jag vill träffa dig. Min e-post är: burkso2@gmail.com jag hoppas att höra från dig någon gång snart.

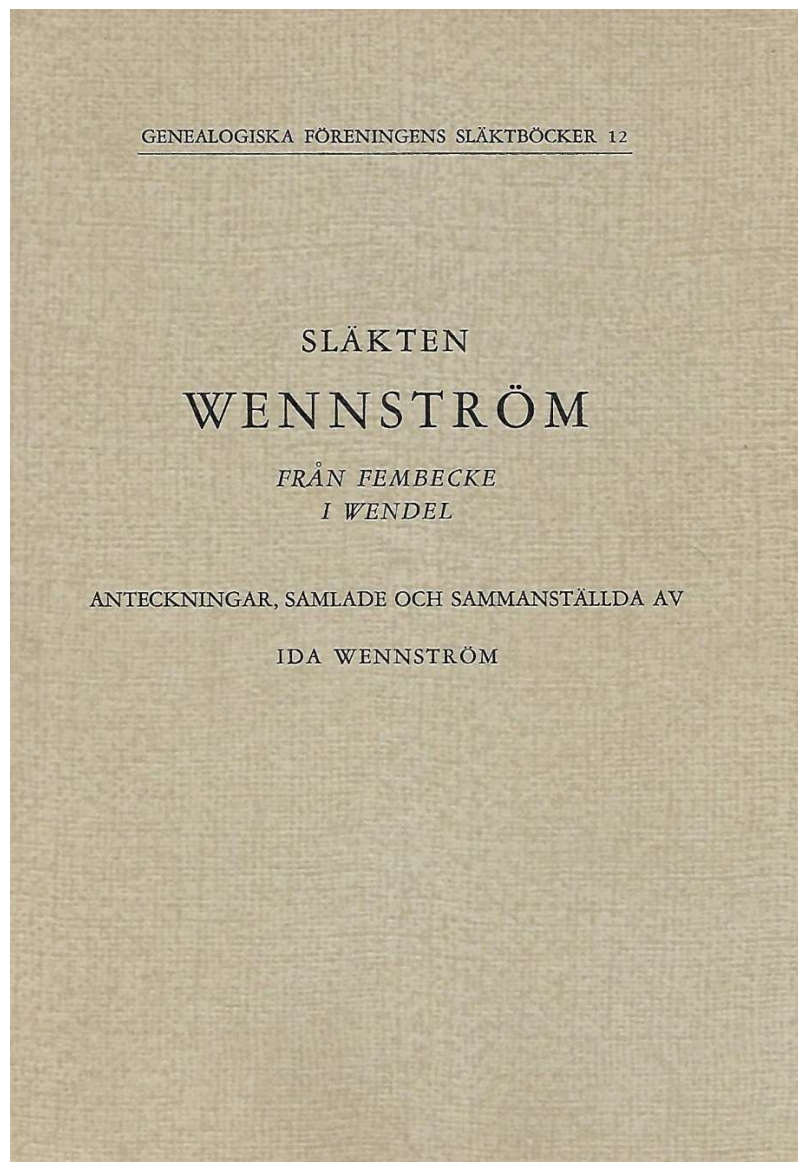
Lena wrote: Hi! Yes, we are 4th cousins. Nils was a younger brother of my great-great-grandfather, Magnus 1809-1898. Next week I will send you more information (from a book of the Wennström family). We live in Helsingborg and have two children with families (four grandchildren) here. We have two children in Stockholm.

³ And the other Lena Kannesten is her sister-in-law, married to her husband's brother.

Lena and I subsequently exchanged a number of e-mail messages about the Wennström family in Sweden, and I did in fact meet her in Helsingborg in May 2017 (see below).

The Wennström Family Book

In 1965, Lena's aunt Ida Wennström published a book entitled "Släkten Wennström" (The Family Wennström). This book details many generations of the Wennström family, going back to Jan Peter Wennström (1788-1862). In the spring of 2018, Lena sent me a brand-new copy of this book – here is a scan of the book's cover:



Lena appears on page 37, where she is listed with her full name Ruth **Lena** Christina (Wennström):

B a r n:

Hans Fredrik Wilhelm, f. 1943 17/8 i Uppsala (skriven i Västerlövsta). Studentexamen 1963 22/4 vid Hvitfeldtska högre allmänna läroverket i Göteborg, inskriven vid Handelshögskolan i Göteborg fr. ht 1964.

Ruth Lena Christina, f. 1946 13/5 i Uppsala (skriven i Västerlövsta). Avgångsbetyg 1964 från Vasa kommunala flickskola, Göteborg; elev i gymnasiet vid Hvitfeldtska högre allmänna läroverket i Göteborg fr. ht 1964.

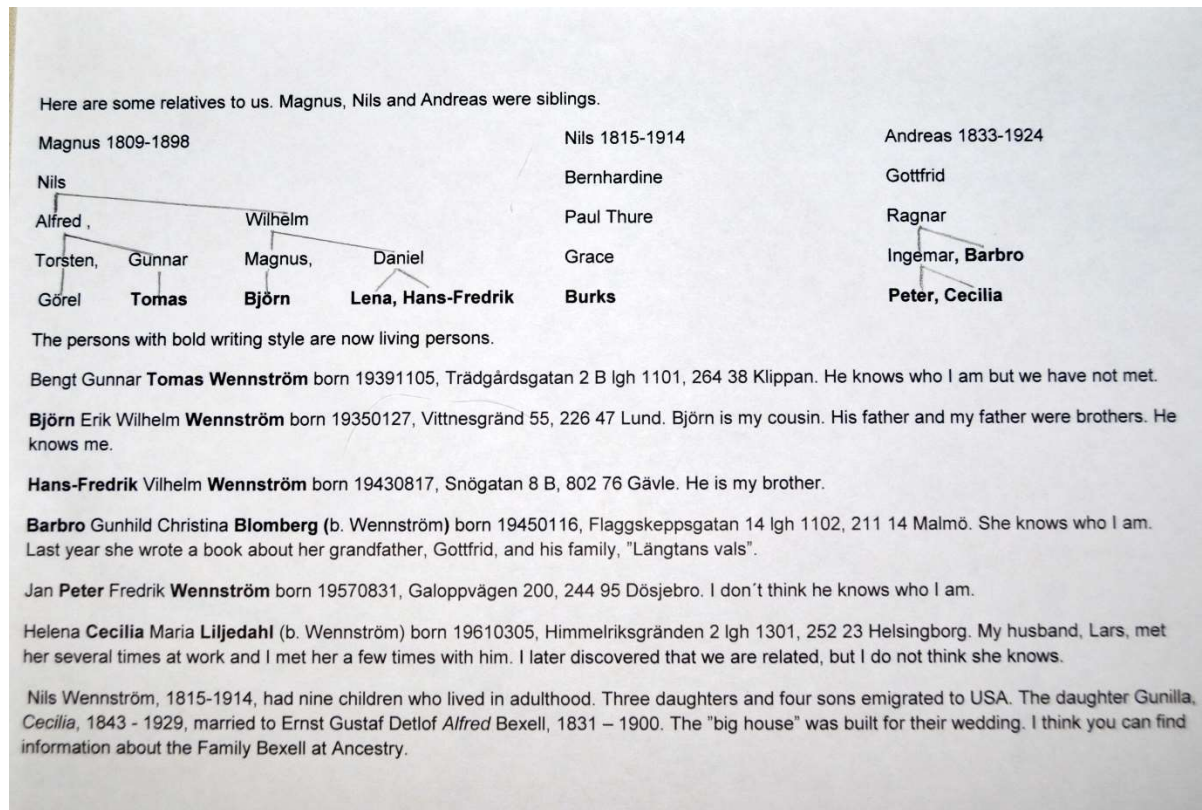
Her entry states that she was born on 13 May 1946 in Uppsala, Sweden. This section also states that she has an older brother, **Hans Fredrik Wilhelm Wennström**, who was born on 17 August 1943.

I have found the Släkten Wennström book to be invaluable in researching the Wennström family, and I am very grateful to Lena for giving it to me. Here is the inscription she wrote:

2018
To my dear cousin, fem-
manning, Burks from Lena

Lena as a Resource for Learning about my Wennström Relatives

Over the past few years, Lena has become a wonderful resource for me in learning about my Wennström relatives living in Sweden. Here is a scan that she sent me, showing some of the living relatives she knows:



So it looks like I'll have plenty of research about the Wennström family to keep me busy for a while!

Lena's Brother, Hans Fredrik Wennström

In one of the scans from the Wennström Family book shown above, I noted that Lena has an older brother named **Hans Fredrik** Wilhelm (Vilhelm) Wennström, who was born on 17 August 1943. In an e-mail exchange, Lena told me that he lives in Gävle, Sweden, on the Baltic Sea, just over 100 miles north of Stockholm. Hans Fredrik has two daughters, Maria Elisabeth Wennström (age 44) and Anna Karin Elisabeth Wennström (age 40), and they also live in Gävle. I hope to meet all of them the next time I travel to Sweden.

My First Visit with Lena in Sweden – May 2017

I first visited Lena and her husband, **Lars** Gustav Kannesten, when I was in Sweden in May 2017. They live in Ramlösa, just south of Helsingborg, on the west coast of Sweden. On that visit, I met their daughter, Christina, and her two young sons. Lena and Lars also drove me to Menlösa, Sweden, to see the house in which Berhardine Wennström's father, Nils Wennström (1815-1914), lived.



Lars & Lena at their home in Ramlösa



Lars & Lena with their daughter Christina and her sons on the Mölle Peninsula



Nils Wennström house in Menlösa, May 2017



The old barn (1863) adjacent to Nils Wennström's house in Menlösa.
Note the large iron letters "N" and "W" on the side of the building.



Nils Wennström's gravestone in the churchyard in Hasslöv.

My Second Visit with Lena – May 2018

I again visited Lena and Lars in the Helsingborg area when I was in Sweden in May 2018. We took the ferry across the Øresund (Öresund) strait from Helsingborg to Helsingør, Denmark, and visited the 15th-century Kronborg Castle, which provided the setting for Shakespeare's "Hamlet." We also went to Ramlösa Park near their home, which is the site of the wells for the natural Ramlösa water. We went to the cemetery in Landskrona where Lena's father Daniel Wennström is buried. And when I was in Stockholm a week later, I by chance met their son Andreas at the Millesgården museum on Lidingö.



Lars and Lena at Kronborg Castle in Helsingør, Denmark.



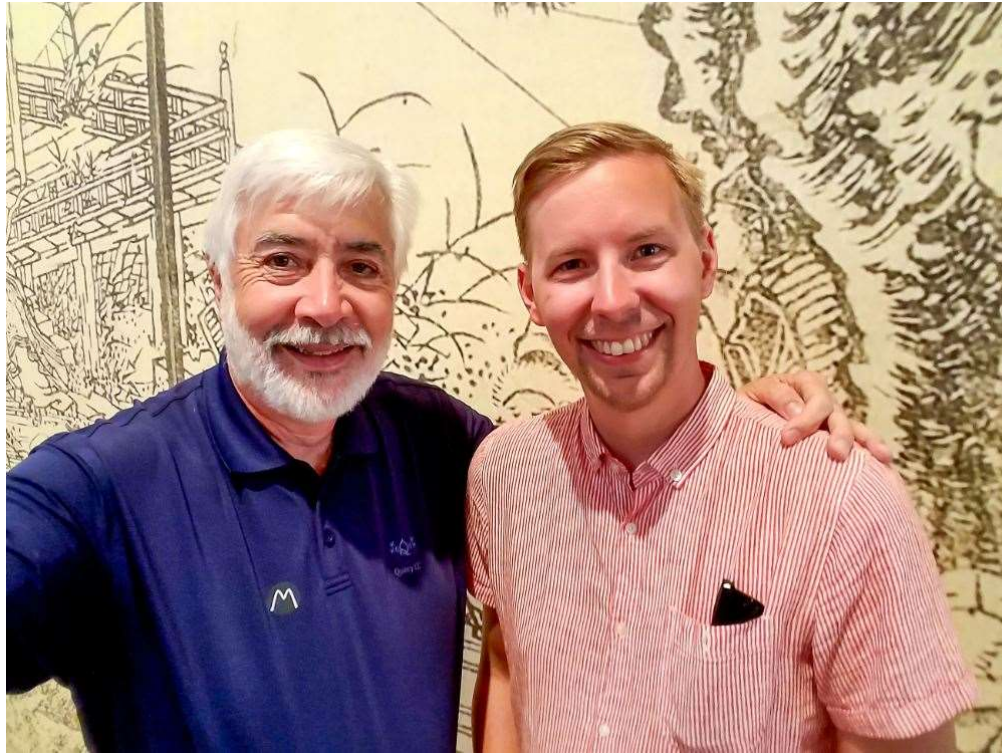
Lena and Burks in Ramlösa Park.



Ramlösa is famous for its natural water.



The gravestone of Lena's parents, Daniel and Dagny Wennström.
Landskrona, Sweden.



Burks and Andreas (Lena's son) at the Millesgården Museum near Stockholm.

Summary

Lena Kannesten was the first Wennström cousin in Sweden that I learned about. I have enjoyed getting to know her and her family, and she is a tremendous resource for information about my Wennström relatives in Sweden. What great memories I have of my two visits with her and her family in Sweden!