

Ostrobothnian wedding traditions: paper flowers

About: this file illustrates how archive material can be used as a means to safeguard intangible cultural heritage and living traditions. Here, a collection of photos licensed CC BY 4.0 have been assembled to illustrate the role of traditional paper flowers in the bigger wedding traditions. The archive in question asks for attribution when their archivalia is used, and it is important to respect the rules of the archive. However, licence CC BY 4.0 lets us use the photos quite freely, so we have created this series of A4 with photos and descriptions.

Material: the version we use at our pop up workshops is laminated with double sided prints. This makes it easy to handle and pass around. The photos are good ice breakers, older people tell us about their memories or about stories they have heard. Younger people marvel at the fantastic wedding gear.



The Ehrström wedding in Vörå, 1925. The couple to the left of the bridal couple are Brita-Maria and Simon Erik Hannus.

Photo: Erik Hägglund

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Wedding party on their way to church, 1913. Probably southern Ostrobothnia.

Photo: Gösta Carlsson

The photo is part of the collections of the Society of Swedish Literature in Finland, sls.finna.fi. SLS 258, 4. CC BY 4.0



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Pop up workshops: this file is used during short workshops where different kinds of traditional paper flowers are crafted. Please see our [manual for arranging pop up workshops and crafting flowers!](#)

The workshops are often parts of the program in existing events, and the photos illustrate what we are doing. At the same time they offer something to do for non-crafting companions of the participants.



Wedding of Gunnar Thors in Oravais, 1932.

Photo: Erik Hägglund

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Wedding of Johannes Jåfs in Rejpelt, Vörå in 1925

Photo: Erik Hägglund

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Adjustments: this material has also been used for crafting sessions at nursing homes. The assistants helped out more than during pop up workshops, but the discussions around the photos were very engaging - and everyone wearing a flower at the end creates a festive mood.

We have also done integration workshop using this material. All can share something about the wedding traditions of their culture while watching the photos. Crafting at the same time takes away much pressure concerning common languages.



A bride from Korsnäs in 1914. Here, a pupil of folk high school Breidablick was arranging a “peasant wedding”. The costume belonged to the bride dresser, “sätan”, in Korsnäs. Photo: Gösta Carlsson

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Wedding party on the move to the venue of Signe and Oskar Achrén’s three day long wedding in Tuckor, Vörå in 1934.

Photo: Erik Hägglund

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Variation: we feel it is very important that the photos showcase the fact that there is not one correct way to practice this cultural element. Instead, there are many variations over time and space. This is something that the photos need to highlight.

Living tradition: we make sure to pinpoint that this is not a dead tradition - as long as people know how to make these flowers and occasionally choose to do so, the tradition is alive. Still, there is not high demand for these skills currently. But our workshops have had several knowledgeable individuals craft versions of the paper flowers they remember from their youth in their own villages. Also, people are inspired by the tradition and express the interest in using it for their own celebrations.



Wedding photo, Anders Karlson (1910-1920)

Photo: Erik Hägglund

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Bridal party of Viktor and Amanda Storhannus in Lappfjärd, 1909

Photo: Ina Roos

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