

## Albin Hagstrom



**Albin Hagstrom, 1905-1952**

Albin Hagstrom grew up on a farm on which a farmhand was working. The farmhand knew an accordion player who was considered to be a great musician.

Albin Hagstrom was very happy when he could visit this man and hear him play. Later on Albin Hagstrom borrowed a two-row accordion on which he learned to play.

At the age of 12, after having saved money for a very long time, Albin Hagstrom bought himself a three-row accordion.

In order to earn money Albin Hagstrom played at dances.

In the beginning of the twenties Albin Hagstrom read an advertisement about a German company which sold accordions. The price was 2.500 devalued marks a piece.

The company asked for an advance payment. Albin Hagstrom took the chance, ordered two accordions and sent the money. After a lot of shilly-shallying Albin Hagstrom received the accordions - two five-row with eighty basses. He sold one of the accordions to a buyer in Älvdalen and the other he kept for himself to earn more money.

When Albin Hagstrom was 18 years old the German company again advertised to sell a lot of accordions. Albin Hagstrom did not hesitate and ordered the lot. Seven accordions were sold in Älvdalen. By this the home market was saturated. The rest of the accordions, by the name of GERA, were sold through an ad in the magazine "Triumph" at the price of 140:- each. By instalment payment the price was 165:-.

Albin Hagstrom started to manufacture accordions himself. The first year he produced one accordion, the second year three and so on.

## Production of accordions

On January 19, 1925 the Albin Hagstrom company was established, but the business didn't really start until 1930. In 1945 the company opened music stores in Stockholm, Göteborg, Malmö, Växjö, Karlstad and Örebro. When the company was at its peak it employed 400 people in Scandinavia.

In 1952, 17.000 accordions were produced. The years before the main line production ceased the average production was 200 accordions per year. In January 1970 the last accordion was assembled. The machines were sold to Italy and Yugoslavia. The production of accordions has ever since been located in the Italian city Castelfidardo.

During its forty years of existence the Hagstrom company was a great influence to the music in Sweden. In all, the company produced no less than 700 000 accordions and contributed to the education of 70 000 accordion players. Accordions were made for famous players like Carl Jularbo, Toralf Tollefssen, Gelin, Arnstein Johanssen, Mogens Ellegaard and Ernst Borgström.



**Accordion course on a gramophone record.**

## Production of guitars

In 1959 the Hagstrom company was so to speak "electrified". The production of electric guitars began. The models "Standard" and "De Luxe" became the most important models in the world for amateurs and pros. In 1964, 7 000 guitars were produced by the Hagstrom company.

Before his big "68-special comeback" Elvis Presley complained about that his own guitar was too heavy. The Hagstrom agent in America then saw his chance and introduced a modified Viking de Luxe to Elvis. Elvis was satisfied with the guitar and for instance he played on it at his appearance on TV. The Elvis Hagstrom guitar is now for sale at the price of **50 000 dollars** (SEK ~420 000:-).

In 1970 a change in production took place, from accordions to guitars, amplifiers, electric basses and P-A equipment. Between 1977-1978 the production reached its peak. A total amount of 115 000 guitars were produced during the years 1959-1977.



**Indoor picture from a Hagstrom music store in Sweden**

**More than a million accordions, guitars and PA-equipment** left the Hagstrom factory during its years of productivity.

Every year in June the Hagstrom Festival takes place in Älvdalen. Accordion players from near and far meet and play together. Every year at this festival one accordion player is awarded the Albin statuette. A scholarship is also given to a young accordion player.

## World famous

Beyond Elvis Presley, many world stars played Hagstrom guitars: Frank Zappa, Larry Coryell, Björn Ulvius-ABBA, Bryan Ferry-Roxy Music and even The Beatles bought themselves a Hagstrom guitar during a visit to Sweden in the early Sixties.

Over the years more than 800 000 more or less well known musicians all over the world have played Hagstrom instruments.

The reason for the great success of Hagstrom and today's interest in the instruments among musicians is a result of the quality and the design which is still in use.

Today, more than twenty years ago since production ceased more and more people discover the quality and magic about the Hagstrom brand.



Two world stars with their Hagstrom instruments - Elvis Presley and Larry Coryell

## The Porhyry- and Hagstrom Museum

In the center of Älvdalen you will find the Porphyry- and Hagstrom Museum. It holds a large exhibition of Hagstrom instruments, a collection of porphyry stones and objects, a geological department and an exhibition about bog-ore and production of iron.

Telephone to the museum: 0251-41035, fax 0251-12151, e-mail: [porfyr-hagstrom.museum@alvdalen.se](mailto:porfyr-hagstrom.museum@alvdalen.se)  
<http://www.alvdalen.se/porfyrmus.htm>



A press cutting from a Japanese music magazine. Many other models of guitars and accordions are on display at the museum in Älvdalen. Books with lists of employees and lists of manufactured guitars are sold at the museum at the price of 150:-. You can also order the book by writing to the following address: Bälgraget, Fack 39, 796 31 Älvdalen., e-post: [info@balgraget.com](mailto:info@balgraget.com), <http://www.balgraget.com>

# Hagstrom



Some Hagstrom classics.



Hagstrom instrument - now also available on internet: [www.albinhagstrom.se](http://www.albinhagstrom.se)