

# SWEDISH-AMERICAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*Established to Record and Interpret the Swedish Presence in America*

Newsletter / March 2013

April 20 at the Swedish Museum

## Join us as we celebrate 375 years of Swedes in America

In December 1637, a Swedish South Sea Company ship, *Kalmar Nyckel*, left Gothenburg for America with a group of adventurers and soldiers. They landed four months later, in March 1638, at what is now Wilmington, Delaware, and established New Sweden, the first permanent Swedish settlement in the New World.



Kalmar Nyckel replica

The 375th anniversary is being observed this year and the Swedish-American Historical Society will join in the celebration with an April 20 dinner and program at the Swedish American Museum, 5211 N. Clark Street, in Andersonville.

Dinner, catered by Tre Kronor, will follow a 6 p.m. wine and cheese reception. (Reservation form on page 3).

The dinner speaker will be Kim-Eric Williams, director of the Swedish language program at the University of Pennsylvania and leading American expert at deciphering and translating 17th and 18th Century Swedish script into modern English. As an historian of early America, he has published four books and numerous articles. He is a former governor of the Swedish Colonial Society and in 2007 received the Royal Order of the Polar Star, First Class, awarded by King Carl XVI Gustaf.

The New Sweden colony lasted only 17 years, but left traces at 24 sites in the Delaware Valley, described in *Swedes of the Delaware Valley*, by Margaret Murray Thorell (Arcadia Publishing, Charleston, SC, 2011)

The 300th anniversary of the colony was marked June 3, 1938, when a Carl Milles sculpture, "The Landing of the Swedes," was dedicated at Fort Christina Park in Wilmington. The sculpture, a gift of the Swedish people paid for by contributions from 225,000 Swedes throughout

the kingdom, was accepted by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who spoke of his pride in his Swedish heritage. Fort Christina was captured by the Dutch in 1655 and New Sweden (*Nya Sverige*) was absorbed into New Netherland.

One legacy of the New Sweden colonists was the log cabin, which spread from the Delaware Valley across the American frontier. Over the years, sustaining members of the Society have received three dividend books relating to the colony: *Swedish Landmarks in the Delaware Valley*, by Esther Chisholm-Meixner, 1960; *The Rise and Fall of New Sweden: Governor Johan Risingh's Journal, 1654-55*, 1988, and *The 1693 Census of the Swedes on the Delaware: Family Histories of the Swedish Lutheran Church Members Residing in Pennsylvania, Delaware, West New Jersey & Cecil County, Maryland 1638-1693*, by Peter S. Craig, 1993.

### Gettysburg weekend ahead Sept. 20-22



Library of Congress

The repulse of Pickett's charge, July 3, 1863, a crucial victory in the battle of Gettysburg as depicted by Swedish-born American artist Thure Thulstrup. Society members will visit the scene as part of a Gettysburg weekend Sept. 20-22. See page 2 for details of the Friday and Saturday program and for hotel reservation information.

## Gettysburg weekend set for Sept. 20-22

Society members are invited to attend a Gettysburg weekend Sept. 20-22 commemorating the 150th anniversary of the pivotal battle that resulted in the highest number of dead, wounded and missing of the Civil War, more than 50,000. The Union victory changed the course of the war and led to the historic speech there by President Lincoln a year later.

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Quality Inn at General Lee's Headquarters. The program:

### Friday, Sept. 20

Afternoon check-in at the hotel with a welcome social and tour of Lee's headquarters courtesy of the inn. Dinner at the Gettysburg Lutheran Seminary, where there is a newly opened museum of previously unexhibited Civil War artifacts. Maria Erling, seminary faculty member and Society director, will speak and introduce the museum.

### Saturday, Sept. 21

Carpool to the Gettysburg Battlefield Visitors' Center for a film and viewing exhibits, including an extraordinary cyclorama of the battlefield. The center has a gift shop and place for lunch. At 1 p.m., participants will board a bus for a guided tour of the battlefield. Dinner at the nearby Appalachian Brewing Company, with a program on Swedish-American contributions to the Civil War.

### Sunday, Sept. 22

Morning check-out from hotel or stay on to explore more of the area on our own.

Reservations at the hotel may be made by calling (717) 334-9515. Double rooms are \$120 a night plus tax; singles are \$110 plus tax.

### *Four members' ancestors fought for the Union in the Civil War*

In the last newsletter, in connection with the forthcoming trip to Gettysburg, we invited readers to let us know about ancestors who served in the Civil War.

First to reply was **John Norton** of Moline, IL, whose great grandfather Lars Nordin (Lewis Norton) was a member of H Company, Illinois 112th Volunteer Infantry Regiment, while his brother, John's great uncle Karl Nordin (Charles Norton), served in the almost all Swedish A Company, Illinois 43rd Volunteer Infantry Regiment from Galesburg. Another fully-Swedish unit from the area was D Company, Illinois 57th Volunteer Infantry Regiment, known as the Bishop Hill "Swedish Union Guard."

John adds that "the 43rd and 57th have been the subject of several Swedish works on the Civil War, including Alf Åberg's *Svenskar under stjärnbaneret* and Thomas Risbecker's *Tack, General*, a rather unique biography/

genealogy of Illinois Civil War Brig. Gen. Carlos Stålbrand. Augustana College personalities who served were treated in the April 2012 Augustana Historical Society Quarterly in connection with the sesquicentennial of the battle of Shiloh. Roger Kvist has also written on Illinois Swedes who served."\*

**Randy Hopper** of Fairborn, OH, wrote that his great-grandfather Andrew Edinger served in G Company, 155th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry as a private from September 1862 to June 1865. He was wounded twice, in the battle of the Wilderness in May 1864 and at Ft. Steadman, VA, in March 1865.

John A. Brown, great grandfather of **Ted Roberg** of Chicago and **Merilee Roberg** of Wilmette, IL, served in Battery B, 1st Illinois Light Artillery. Born Johan August Brunberg in Södra vi, Småland, he came to the U.S. with his parents in 1850.

\* Kvist's article, "Social History of the Swedish Ethnic Units from Illinois in the Civil War," in the *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 50, No. 1 (January 1999), is accessible through the Society website. Other *Quarterly* articles of interest include "A Swedish Ballad of the American Civil War," by Robert L. Wright, Vol. 11, No. 4 (October 1960), and "Thure Thulstrup: Painter of American Historical Scenes," by Åke Thulstrup, Vol. 13, No. 1 (January 1962).

### Bruce Karstadt named 19th Sandburg Medal recipient

Bruce Karstadt, president of the American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis, became the 19th recipient of the Society's Carl Sandburg Medal Nov. 10 at the 2012 annual dinner at North Park University. A fifth-generation graduate of Bethany College in Lindsborg, Kansas, he later served for ten years, 1979-89, as executive assistant to the president, legal counsel and adjunct professor of business law at Bethany.

"Bruce's contributions to preserving the history and nurturing the future of Swedish America are many," said William Beyer in presenting the medal. "Since 1990, as head of ASI, he has indefatigably raised funds to preserve the historic Turnblad mansion and complete by June 2012 a 34,000-square-foot addition on a campus enlarged in 2005 to comprise a full city block."

Beyer also cited Karstadt's role as honorary Swedish consul and then consul general for Minnesota since 1995 and his service as a board member of the Society, the Swedish Council of America and the Swedish-American Chamber of Commerce of Minneapolis.

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Newsletter editor: Eric Lund

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## SPRING DINNER MEETING RESERVATION

Swedish-American Historical Society  
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Chicago, IL 60625-4816

Phone: (773) 244-5295  
E-mail: kmandersson@northpark.edu

Please reserve \_\_\_ places at \$40.00 per person for the dinner and program April 20.

Enclosed is my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Or charge my credit card:  Visa  Master Card \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Please respond by April 13**

### Obituary

#### *Friend of the Society*

#### *Henry Hanson dies*

Henry Hanson, retired U.S. foreign service officer and history professor, died Dec. 30. Hanson, of Springfield, VA, was 94.

A former director of the Society (1988-94), he was one of its best salesmen. "Thanks to Henry, more people in the Washington area became SAHS members than any other area outside the Midwest. That's how he snagged me," said Ellen Rye, a current director.

"For many years, at every meeting of any Swedish- or Scandinavian-American organization, he saw to it that copies of the Society brochure and usually a couple of copies of the *Quarterly* were on an information table. As head of VASA Drott Lodge's gifting committee, he would make sure the Society was on the contribution list."

Part of his sales pitch was touting the *Quarterly*, in which he published three articles and 14 book reviews between 1985 and 1996.

His first foreign service posting was as third secretary and vice consul at the American legation in Stockholm, 1942-44, during World War II. After two years in the Navy, he served as vice consul in Accra, Gold Coast; Nordic specialist in Washington; press officer in Helsinki, and with the U.S. Information Agency, retiring in 1968. This was followed by professorships at three community colleges until 1987.

A memorial service was held Jan. 27. He is survived by a daughter, Ingrid; son, Rolf, and four grandchildren. His wife for 72 years, Mildred, preceded him in death by two months.

### Society 2012 year-end appeal nets \$3,815

The Society's 2012 year-end appeal resulted in contributions from 47 members totaling \$3,815. The contributors included:

Karin Abercrombie, Evelyn and Henry Anderson, Philip and Karna Anderson, Robert and Marjorie Anderson, Rolf D. Anderson, Karin Andersson, William Andersson, H. Arnold Barton. Margaret Brandel, Glen and Elaine Brolander, Jon Brorson, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Campbell, John Enander, Robert Englund, Mr. and Mrs. John Fridlund, Barbara S. Graves, Doris Haas.

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LeRoy and Eloise Nelson, Paula M. Nelson, Wayne W. Nestander, Erik Nilsson, Darlene Norman, John and Janet Norton, Walter E. Olson, Lynn and Peter Pearson, Kevin Proescholdt, Eva and Anders Rydåker, George R. Tesch, Mariann Tiblin and Glen Wiberg.

### Coming in the Quarterly

#### John Ericsson's triumphal return

The designer of the Civil War iron-clad battleship *USS Monitor* is the subject of the lead article by David Mel Paul in the forthcoming January issue of the *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly*, "A Prodigal Return: John Ericsson's Swedish Triumph," the story of his elaborate state funeral in Sweden following his death in America.

## News of the archives

### *Verdandi Lodge donates \$2,000 to help enhance its collection*

Verdandi Lodge of the Independent Order of Svithiod has made a \$2000 gift to the F.M. Johnson Archives and Special Collections at North Park University, where its records are housed as part of the Society's Swedish-American Archives of Greater Chicago. The gift will be used to further arrange, describe and provide access to the records. Verdandi dates from 1890, when it was founded as Svithiod's third lodge.

Joanna (Annie) Wilkinson, previously part-time manager of the Johnson Archives' digital collections, in January became full-time technical services and digitization coordinator of North Park's Brandel Library. In her new role, she will continue to spend half time in the Johnson Archives coordinating digitization activities and developing the growing on-line collections, while also assisting with cataloging and managing exhibits in the library.

The Johnson Archives' new Frisk Collection of Covenant Literature was described by Interim Archivist Anna-Kajsa Anderson in an article in the September 2012 Covenant Companion. The digital collection, a family memorial honoring the late Donald C. Frisk, North Park Theological Seminary professor, has been growing since January 2012 and is accessible on-line at [northpark.edu/archives](http://northpark.edu/archives).

The Archives in February published another new digital collection, the *North Park Press*. Partially funded by a bequest to the North Park library from alumnus Harry R. Cullins (C'85), this collection once completed will make available the school's student newspaper, originally titled the *North Park College News*. Published continuously since January 1922, it is a rich resource for campus news, student perspectives, alumni news, and local business advertisements. The collection is accessible on-line.

A notable recent acquisition is a register kept by Carl August Björk (1837-1916), first president of the Evangelical Covenant Church. In this register, Björk recorded baptisms and weddings he performed between 1871 and 1914 at the churches he served in Swede Bend, Iowa (1869-1878), and Chicago (1878-1895), as well as nationally in his travels up to 1914. An important source for genealogists and scholars of early Covenant history, this gift was made by Catherine Bjork Marquis, great-granddaughter of Björk, on Feb. 1.

### Olsson Grant aids art project

In 2011, Alan Petersen received a Nils William and Dagmar Olsson Research Grant from the Society for his continuing work on the Swedish-American artist Gunnar Widforss. Petersen, himself an artist, is curator of fine arts at the Museum of Northern Arizona in Flagstaff. For more on his research project and on Gunnar Widforss, see [www.gunnarwidforss.org](http://www.gunnarwidforss.org).

## **Society Officers**

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