

# SWEDISH-AMERICAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

Newsletter / March 2024

## 2024 SPRING PROGRAM

Thursday, May 9, 2024, 11:00 am - 2:00 pm

## Lunch & Lecture at Seattle's Swedish Club NW

**“Stories of the Past: How Swedish Americans Shape Their Heritage”**  
by Jennifer Eastman Attebery, Professor Emerita at Idaho State University

The SAHS is excited to partner with Seattle's Swedish Club Northwest and the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Studies (SASS) for a lunch and lecture on the opening day of the SASS conference in Seattle. The SASS conference, held annually in cities across the country, welcomes hundreds of scholars and students of Nordic and Scandinavian studies from all corners of the world to convene and exchange ideas related to their scholarship.

The Thursday lunch will feature guest speaker and Society member **Jennifer Eastman Attebery** who will share examples from her new book *As Legend Has It: History, Heritage, and the Construction of Swedish American Identity* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2023). In writing histories of their own communities, Swedish Americans draw on historical legends that distill a sense of ethnic identity and heritage. The book and talk examine how immigrants and their descendants used legendary materials to claim a place in American history.

Jennifer Eastman Attebery is professor emerita of English at Idaho State University, where she taught folklore and American Studies. In addition to her new book, she is the author of academic books concerning letter-writing by

Swedish immigrants and the Swedish Americans' summer holidays, and articles in *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly* and *Scandinavian Studies*. And many know Jennifer from her many years of service on the Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center advisory committee.



Jennifer Attebery

The lunch program will be held at Seattle's Swedish Club Northwest, a dynamic center of Swedish cultural events and Swedish classes with a restaurant and bar, weekly dinners and fikas, and a popular monthly pancake breakfast that draws hundreds. The Club located on Dexter Avenue North is perched above Lake Union overlooking the lake and downtown Seattle. The spectacular mid-century building was designed by architects Einar V. Anderson, Arden Croco Steinhart, and Robert Dennis Theriault Sr., and completed in 1961. The event will include a short tour of the space led by Club staff members.



Purchase tickets to the May 9, 2024 Spring Program Lunch & Lecture in Seattle on the Society website [www.swedishamericanhist.org](http://www.swedishamericanhist.org).

## Continuing our celebration! 75 and onward!

In this newsletter, we reflect on the Society's 75th anniversary celebration held in Chicago last October. It was a time to recognize our past successes and honor those who have dedicated their time and expertise to our mission, but also an occasion to look to our future.

The Swedish-American Historical Society has maintained and sustained a distinguished publications program for 75 years. At this significant milestone in its history, it is advantageous and wise now to secure this rich tradition for present and future generations by establishing an adequate, healthy endowment fund, independent of annual operating revenues and expenses, whereby the Society will continue to honor its past and sustain its future.

### THE PHILIP J. ANDERSON PUBLICATIONS ENDOWMENT FUND

While we shift our publishing model from a quarterly to annual, we are ever dedicated to securing the legacy and expanding the audience who reads our essays and scholarship that explore Swedish-American history. Over the next three years, the Society seeks to raise at least \$250,000 to create the **Philip J. Anderson Publications Endowment**, named after Philip J. Anderson, who served as the Society's president for thirty-five years, retiring in fall 2023. Income from the endowment will be used for supporting publication. This will allow the journal to remain affordable for the Society's members and make the journal accessible to scholars and lay readers alike.

One of the most recognized voices in scholarship on Swedish America, Philip J. Anderson has focused much of his professional career on the study of Swedish immigration, especially its religious influence on the United States and the Evangelical Covenant Church. Over many years of dedicated and skilled leadership, Phil has promoted scholarly excellence, community engagement, and a healthy balance sheet for the Society. We all owe him a great debt of gratitude, and by naming the publications endowment after him, we will cement his legacy by making scholarship on Swedish America accessible for generations to come.

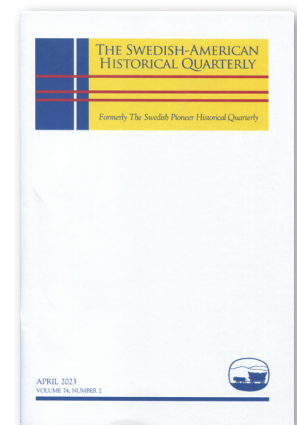


As members and supporters of the Swedish-American Historical Society, you will receive more information about our campaign and an invitation to contribute in a meaningful way. We thank you all for your membership and support, your contributions to our publications, events, and preservation program. Here's to the Society's next 75 years!

## Historic Transition for SAHS Journal

Big changes are in store for our journal this year. In 2024, the *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly* is becoming *Swedish-American Studies*, and will be published on an annual basis through the University of Minnesota Press, while continuing to serve as the journal of the Swedish-American Historical Society. This has been a dream that the Society's publications committee, board members, and editors have been working toward for many years, and builds upon the recent improvements that have been made to the journal, such as introducing options for formal peer review and expanding our network of academic contributors in Sweden and across North America.

We are committed to maintaining the same level of content per year, yet in a higher quality academic annual format, as well as an expanded digital presence that will reach more scholars around the globe. We are proud of the fact that our journal has been in continuous publication since 1950 and this transition aims to expand rather than diminish that storied legacy. We hope our readers will share our excitement as we anticipate volume 75 of *Swedish-American Studies* in autumn of 2024!







SWEDISH-AMERICAN  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*Honoring Our Past • Sustaining Our Future*

## Swedish-American Historical Society — 75th Anniversary Celebration

The Swedish-American Historical Society (SAHS) celebrated its 75th Anniversary on October 20 and 21, 2023 in Chicago, first with a reception and festive dinner at the Old Orchard Country Club in Mt. Prospect just northwest of Chicago, and then by an exhibition at North Park University’s Brandel Library.



The festive two-day event with music by **lynx lynx**, a Norwegian-Swedish folk duo, included a keynote address by **Adam Hjorthén**, Society board member from Uppsala University in Sweden, and awards were handed out, to **Philip J. Anderson**, after 39 years of service in many capacities, among them as president of the Society, and to **Joy K. Lintelman**, recipient of the Carl Sandburg Medal, exemplifying her long service as a board member in SAHS.

The Society also launched a fundraising drive in Philip Anderson’s name to create a publications endowment. Income from the endowment will be used to support *Swedish-American Studies*.

The events of the second day highlighted the Society’s Swedish-American Archives of Greater Chicago at North Park University, while also recognizing the Society’s close relationship with the University, its physical home since the mid-1950s.



### BACKGROUND

#### Swedish-American Historical Society

The Swedish-American Historical Society grew out of the 1948 Swedish Pioneer Centennial celebration, which marked the 100th anniversary of the arrival of the first Swedish immigrants in the Midwest. In Chicago, 18,000 people filled the stadium on June 4 to hear speeches from President Truman, Prince Bertil of Sweden, Carl Sandburg, and representatives from many Swedish-American organizations. Four months later, on October 15, 1948, the leaders of the centennial celebration met in Chicago and formed the Swedish-American Historical Society, or, as it was originally named, the Swedish Pioneer Historical Society.

In 1983, the Society’s Board of Directors approved a name change, as, by then, the Society had moved well beyond a focus on just the “pioneer” period. Then, and today, the Society serves to promote interest in the entire Swedish presence in America, from the first settlers on the Delaware in 1638 through the present day.

## The Carl Sandburg Medal Presented to Joy K. Lintelman

“Tonight’s recipient exemplifies this service to the Society, the Swedish community, as well as the community-at-large,” said board member Anna-Kajsa Echague when presenting the Carl Sandburg Medal to Joy K. Lintelman, professor of history and long-time board member.

“Her dissertation at the University of Minnesota, ‘More Freedom, Better Pay: Single Swedish Immigrant Women in the United States, 1880-1920’ marked the beginning of a rich career researching the experience of Swedish American women, leading to her book, *I Go To America: Swedish Immigrant Women and the Life of Mina Anderson* that won the Minnesota Book Award for General Non-fiction in 2010.”

Lintelman’s work covered local Minnesota history, the history of indigenous peoples, and food history, Echague continued, and her 2013 article “A Hot Heritage: Swedish Americans and Coffee” won the Solon J. Buck award for best article of the year in Minnesota History. Currently, she is researching the historic East Side Flats neighborhood in Minneapolis.



Until her recent retirement, Dr. Lintelman taught women’s history, digital history, food history, Midwest history and the history of indigenous people for 34 years at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota. During her career, she was also a key player in the development of Concordia’s Heritage and Museum Studies program. In recognition of her exemplary teaching, Concordia awarded her the Ole and Lucy Flaot Distinguished Teaching award in 2017, said Echague, who also praised Dr. Lintelman’s long and active role as an SAHS board member.

“It is,” concluded Anna-Kajsa Echague, “my very great honor to present the Carl Sandburg Medal to Dr. Joy Lintelman.”

## Honoring Philip J. Anderson, Outgoing President of the Society, Launching a New Campaign

With a gift, many warm words from colleagues and friends, a certificate of recognition and appreciation, and with a fundraising drive in his honor, Philip J. Anderson’s 39 years with the Society were celebrated at the 75th Anniversary.

The fundraising drive in his honor has the goal of raising \$500,000 by the end of 2025 for a Philip J. Anderson Publications Endowment, of which \$240,000 have already been raised. The goal of the endowment, board member Kurt W. Peterson explained, is to supplement the publication costs of the Society’s new annual journal, *Swedish-American Studies*, as he presented Anderson with a certificate of appreciation and recognition of “exemplary service and leadership” during his many years of service to the Swedish-American Historical Society.

“It gives me great personal and professional pride and joy to be the one to honor Phil,” Peterson said. “As a graduate student and assistant professor at North Park, Phil patiently introduced me to the contours of Swedish America, and there could be no better tutor and friend. Phil is a good friend, a patient teacher, a generous colleague, and a notable person. Beyond all of that, Phil is one of the most important voices in the world among scholars of Swedish immigration and Swedish America.”

Board member, B. Marcus Cederström, presented Phil Anderson with a small gift, created by the artist Tara Austin of Duluth, Minnesota.



“Tara,” Cederström said, “does incredible work that is inspired by the plants and animals of northern Minnesota as well as the Nordic and Nordic American heritage of the region. This is one of her Dala Horses, not quite the traditional one we may expect, but a beautiful display of a tradition changing, evolving, while still honoring the past. We hope you find a place for this in your home as a reminder of your work for the Society in honoring the past while always looking to a sustainable future for not just the Society but the field as a whole. Thank you for everything these past few years, Phil. It’s been an honor to work with you and to learn from you.”



# “Dining with Friends: A History of Swedish-American Commemorations”

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY ADAM HJORTHÉN, UPPSALA UNIVERSITY

*This is an excerpt from the keynote address delivered at the Society’s 75th Anniversary Celebration, which, in turn, is based on Adam Hjorthén’s book, Cross Border-Commemorations: Celebrating Swedish Settlement in America (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2018).*

Commemorations are always about remembering the past, for present purposes, with visions of the future. They are celebrations of a selected past. But they are also vehicles through which organizers and participants are able to manifest their own interpretation of that past, with an eye to its significance today, and tomorrow. What history do we celebrate? How do we celebrate that history? And why do we do so?

The Swedish Pioneer Centennial on June 5, 1948 in the Grand Ballroom of the Palmer House in Chicago was important for the ways in which it celebrated Swedish pioneer and immigration history. It did not do so by building massive monuments, but by writing history, staging public festivities, organizing a visit of high-profile representatives from Sweden, and, not least, through an intense program of luncheons and banquets.

Led by Prince Bertil, the official Swedish delegation traveled around the Midwest to attend public festivals, parades, dinners, and luncheons. Through their travels, the delegation was thought about as embodying the movement and experiences of the pioneers, but in a modern way. In a speech upon arrival in New York, Prince Bertil said:

I cannot help thinking of how different their crossing was from ours. We have traveled speedily and safely in great comfort, even luxury. . . . Those others, who came here before us in the search for a new life in a strange country, traveled quite differently: on small and unsafe vessels, jammed together in narrow quarters, with little or nothing that they could call their own—and in their hearts a great feeling of uncertainty of what [the] future might have in store for them.

Many of the meals consumed during the month-long celebrations in the summer of 1948 were big, festive gatherings, commemorative events in their own right. They were opportunities to meet in formal and informal settings, both during and outside the dinner programs. Unlike the public festivals, dinners were invitation-only events intended for a select social elite. They also featured speeches from prominent Swedes and Americans, centered on one common theme: the notion of friendship—past, present, and future—in the realms of politics, business, and ancestry.



*From Left: Vilas Johnson, Harry S. Truman, Prince Bertil of Sweden, Conrad Bergendoff. (Courtesy of Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center, Augustana College.)*

Commemorations of the past are also always about a longing for the future. What future are we as a Society longing for today? Swedish America has never been static, and nor has the study of Swedish America. When the Society was formed, it was created in a specific context of ethnic generations that identified a need of ethnic preservation, and the necessity of taking charge of writing its own social history. They did so because of a perceived lack of historical knowledge and narratives about the immigrant experience.

Today, we are faced with other challenges—we no longer have a scarcity of narratives, but rather an abundance of information in a digital era, shaped by easy communication and inexpensive travel across the Atlantic. We are no longer pushed by an urgency to preserve a past that is soon to be lost, but rather to brace for a future that appears all the more uncertain. What does preserving Swedish American history mean today?

The Society has throughout these years been a pillar in the field of Swedish-American history. But the Society was not formed for the sake of its own existence. It was formed to make a change in the landscape of Swedish America. And so, thinking about the significance of the history of commemorations, I would encourage you to also think about the significance of our celebration. We are after all “Honoring Our Past, and Sustaining Our Future.” What history are we really celebrating? And what do we want the future to look like?

## FROM THE ARCHIVES

*This article marks the outset of what will be a regular newsletter feature from archivist **Andrew J. Meyer**, Director of the F.M. Johnson Archives and Special Collections at North Park University.*

Last fall, as the Society celebrated its 75th Anniversary, the archives turned inward and studied the history and evolution of the Swedish-American Archives of Greater Chicago. I deeply enjoyed learning about the early collecting efforts of the Society led by people like Selma Jacobson. I also really enjoyed seeing the evolution of archival descriptions – from notes written on boxes to detailed container lists to now digital descriptions. Understanding how the Swedish-American Archives of Greater Chicago (SAAGC) fits within the Swedish-American Historical Society was fascinating.

Here in this short article, I want to explore how the SAAGC fits within the broader tapestry of cultural institutions here in Chicago. Concretely, I'll do this exploration by way of archival affiliations with the Chicago Collections Consortium and the Black Metropolis Research Consortium. I hope this exploration will both highlight the importance of these collections as well as their potential use for Society members interested in research.

The Chicago Collections Consortium “envisions a world where the history of Chicago is made accessible to diverse communities to foster understanding, inspiration, and knowledge creation through engagement with primary sources.” (<https://chicagocollections.org/about/consortium-mission-vision/>). One of the Chicago Collections Consortium’s main projects is the Explore Chicago Collections portal; this portal provides a centralized access point to the archival holdings of many Chicago area cultural organizations including the Swedish-American Archives of Greater Chicago. By our participation in this portal, we are able to research a large community of researchers interested in the history of Chicago and the Chicago region general that otherwise might never know what treasures could be found within them.

The F.M. Johnson Archives and Special Collections has three major archival repositories. The first two, the Covenant Archives and Historical Library and the North Park University Archives, have clear connections to North Park. However, SAAGC’s presence on campus invites further inquiry: How did North Park become home to such a collection, and how does it fit with North Park’s distinctive mission?

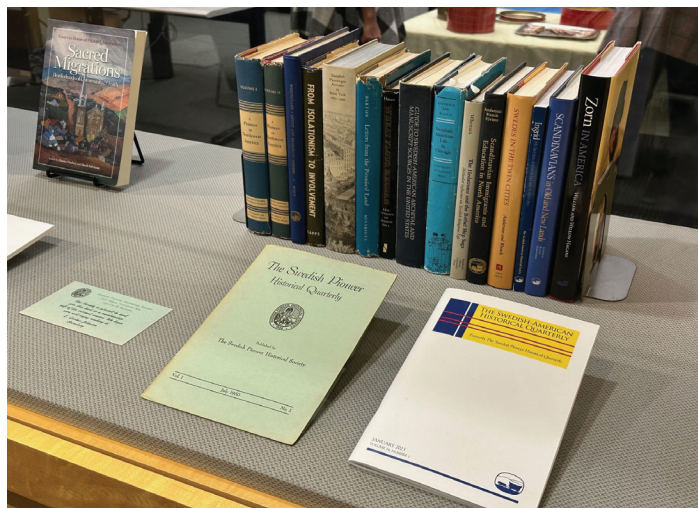


*Archivist Andrew Meyer.*

As the name implies, SAAGC documents the experiences of Swedish immigrants in Chicago and is an international research destination. For example, academic researchers interested in Swedish food traditions and how women maintained social ties to Sweden—as well as high school students and reporters—have found rich resources in this collection.

The Swedish-American Historical Society owns the archival collections that comprise the SAAGC. It grew from the 1948 Swedish Pioneer Centennial celebration and continues its historical mission of recording and interpreting the Swedish presence in America today.

North Park has supported SAAGC since its inception. In collaboration with the Brandel Library and the Center for Scandinavian Studies, the university’s support has provided SAAGC with the archival infrastructure that has ensured long-term access to these collections.



This collaboration has allowed North Park to contribute to Chicago’s rich tapestry of cultural institutions. We are proud members of the Chicago Collections Consortium and the Black Metropolis Research Consortium, groups seeking to empower and connect researchers with relevant archival resources focused on understanding Chicago. This history, these records, and these relationships are ways North Park lives its intercultural and city-centered missions.



# March 2024 News and Notes

## EASTERN REGION

**New York City:** Scandinavian House is showing a New Nordic Cinema series, including “Tove’s Room” on April 3, 2024. More information: <https://www.scandinaviahouse.org/upcoming/films/>

**New York City:** Faroe Islands Culture Days will be held April 13 - 21, 2024, at Scandinavian House. More information: <https://www.scandinaviahouse.org/event/faroe-islands-culture-days/>

**Philadelphia:** Upcoming exhibits at the American Swedish Historical Museum include Swedish Folk Weavings for Marriage, Carriage, and Home 1750-1840, opening on March 14, 2024. Information: <https://www.americanswedish.org/exhibitions/swedish-folk-weavings-marriage-carriage-and-home-1750-1840>

**Philadelphia:** Celebrations at the American Swedish Historical Museum include Spring Ting on May 4; Midsommarfest on June 22; and Smörgåsbeer on July 27, 2024. Information: <https://www.americanswedish.org/events>

## MIDWESTERN REGION

**Chicago:** Exhibits at the Swedish American Museum include “Lay Of(f) the Land”: Nordic Narratives by the Art Alliance of the Arctic South,” with works in varied media by eight Scandinavian artists inspired by Nordic nature; showing April 5 - June 16, 2024. Information: <https://swedishamericanmuseum.org/special-exhibits>

**Minneapolis:** Congratulations to Dr. Molly Steenson on her appointment as the new Executive Director and CEO of the American Swedish Institute. Dr. Steenson also serves as Honorary Consul General.

**Minneapolis:** Congratulations and gratitude are due Bruce Karstadt on his retirement in 2023 from the American Swedish Institute, where he served as Executive Director/CEO for over three decades, overseeing the institute’s shift to national prominence and development of ties to Sweden. Under Karstadt’s leadership the institute undertook major renovations and addition of a cultural center and cafe. With a 21st century audience in mind, the institute expanded to include innovative contemporary exhibits while continuing its historical focus.

**Minneapolis:** Special exhibits at the American Swedish Institute through May 26, 2024, are Arctic Highways: Unbounded Indigenous People, including works by artists from Sápmi and North America and Mygration, drawings and prints by Sámi artist Tomas Colbengtson and Swedish artist Stina Folkebrant. Information: <https://asimn.org/exhibitions/>

**Rock Island, IL:** Applications for the Dagmar & Nils William Olsson Visiting Scholar Award are due on May 15. The \$2,500 award supports travel to the Swenson Center at Augustana College for academic research concerning Swedish American history or relations. It is not intended for genealogy research. Apply by May 15. Details: <https://www.swensoncenter.org/visitingscholaraward>

**Wisconsin:** Events sponsored by the Sustaining Scandinavian Folk Arts in the Upper Midwest project, University of Wisconsin, include a Swedish Alspell Session at the 2024 String Gathering, April 6, 2024, in Baraboo; Celebrating Young People in Scandinavian American Folk Music and Dance, May 4, 2024, in Dodgeville; and a lecture by Marcus Cederström, “The Viking Sword

That Wasn’t,” April 24 and July 10 in Stoughton, and May 3 in Monona. Information about SSFAUM events: <https://folklife.wisc.edu/events/>

## WESTERN REGION

**San Francisco:** On January 1, 2024, a new Consulate General opened in San Francisco to serve a district including California and Hawaii. Information about the consulate’s services are on their homepage: <https://www.swedenabroad.se/en/embassies/usa-san-francisco/>

**Seattle:** Special exhibits at the National Nordic Museum include Project Aurora, by Ballard artist Ginny Ruffner, running through June 2, 2024; and Nordic Utopia? African Americans in the 20th Century, a display of art in a variety of media by African Americans who visited and were inspired by the Nordic countries. Running March 23 - July 21, 2024. More information: <https://nordicmuseum.org/exhibitions/nordic-utopia>

**Seattle:** Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study meets May 9-11, 2024, including a paper stream “Nordic Settler Experiences.” More information: <https://scandinavianstudy.org/annual-meeting/sass-2024-seattle/>

## ONLINE EVENTS

*Monthly book clubs are held online by these Swedish and Scandinavian institutions:*

**Nordic Book Club** (Online), Swenson Center, Augustana College: <https://www.swensoncenter.org/bookclub>

**Book Club Online**, Swedish American Museum, Chicago: <https://swedishamericanmuseum.org/product/33388>

**Nordic Book Club** (Online), Scandinavian House: <https://www.scandinaviahouse.org/series/literary-series/>

**Genealogy Club** (Online) is held monthly January through October, from the Swenson Center, Augustana College: <https://www.swensoncenter.org/genealogyclub>

**Scandinavian Jam Online** is held monthly from the Swedish American Museum, Chicago: <https://swedishamericanmuseum.org/product/33443>

April 16 and 17, 2024: **Faroe Islands Culture Days** at Scandinavian House will include lectures by Bergur Djurhuus Hansen and various authors and translators. To register: <https://www.scandinaviahouse.org/upcoming/lectures-literary/>

May 1, 2024: **“Early Swedish Folk Weavings,”** a lecture by Wendel Swan for the American Swedish Historical Museum. Information and registration: <https://www.americanswedish.org/events/free-virtual-lecture-wendel-swan-early-swedish-folk-weavings>

May 13-14, 2024: **Nordic Innovation Summit 2024**, presented by the Washington State Department of Commerce. Information and registration: <https://nordicmuseum.org/events/innovation>

*NOTE: If you are aware of upcoming events or recent happenings of potential interest to members and friends of the Swedish-American Historical Society for inclusion in the next (fall) newsletter, please let us know. Suggestions for topics of future newsletter articles are welcome, as well. Contact us at [lintelma@cord.edu](mailto:lintelma@cord.edu).*

# Name the Newsletter Contest!

Along with the upcoming change of the *Quarterly* to an annual publication *Swedish-American Studies*, the Society will produce an expanded twice-yearly newsletter. We'd like your help with finding a name for it! The newsletter will include such features as News and Notes, recognition of donors, a message from the Board Chair, an archival column, as well as special features. The Society Board will make a final title decision, and if your entry is chosen, you will receive a free year's membership in the Society.

## Guidelines for submissions:

- Submit only original work.
- The name should be brief, 1 to 3 words so it fits easily on a masthead.

Things to think about that might help you develop your ideas:

- The Society's values and mission (The Society is a nonprofit organization with the mission of recording and interpreting the Swedish presence in North America, and relations between Sweden and Swedish America, with a focus on the interaction of people and ideas between the two regions. The Society is devoted to this mission through research, publications, programs, and archives.)
- The new Society logo (depicted below, left)
- What creatively communicates who we are, or what we do?
- Offer a name for the newsletter along with a brief statement explaining your choice.

> Deadline for entries is **July 1, 2024**.

> Please email suggestions to **Joy Lintelman**, chair of the Communications Committee, at [lintelma@cord.edu](mailto:lintelma@cord.edu)



## SWEDISH~ AMERICAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

### NEWSLETTER EDITORS

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