

-- June 6th, 2011 -- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE --

HRH Princess Madeleine visits ASHM



John McCann Jr., Chairman of the ASHM Board of Governors and Tracey Beck, Museum Director, welcome HRH Princess Madeleine to the museum.

HRH Princess Madeleine was the beautiful highlight of the wonderful New Sweden Gallery Opening at the American Swedish Historical Museum Sunday, June 5th. The princess was given a private tour of the museum and the new gallery by Museum Director Tracey Beck and Curator Carrie Hogan. The princess attended the reception, gave brief remarks to the invited museum members and guests, cut the ribbon, and was whisked away to catch a late flight to Sweden to attend the June 6th National Day celebrations at Skansen in Stockholm.

The opening ceremony also included remarks by Tracey Beck, Gary Steuer, Chief Cultural Officer of the City of Philadelphia, John McCann Jr., Chairman of the ASHM Board of Governors, and Mrs. Esther Ann McFarland, who through her generous donation to the museum made the dream of redesigning the museum's New Sweden exhibit possible. Mrs. McFarland is descended from 17th century colonists Sven Gunnarsson and Jonas Nilsson.

The *Sven Gunnarsson and Jonas Nilsson New Sweden Gallery* is dedicated to the New Sweden Colony and the earliest European settlements in the Delaware Valley. Central themes are Sweden's

colonial vision, contact and trade with Lenape and Susquehannock Indians, leadership and expansion in the colony and the personal stories of Swedes and Finns who came to New Sweden between 1638-1700. The exhibition also explores the question of why the colony ultimately fell to the Dutch in 1655; the impact of William Penn and the influx of English Quakers on Swedish and Native American land; and the important role of former New Sweden colonists in laying out the city of Philadelphia. The exhibition features rare and original artifacts from the museum's collections.

The new exhibit includes several interactive components, including an animated, computer-based map detailing the location of New Sweden that visitors can use in the gallery and "New Sweden in Profile", a hands-on activity offering a look into the lives of individual settlers.

From collections and education to programming and PR, this single gallery project benefits all aspects of the museum and is an important step in renewing the core theme of the American Swedish Historical Museum: the presentation of New Sweden colony. "It has been a central goal to create a space where visitors and school groups can explore New Sweden in a single gallery," says Curator Carrie Hogan. "We envisioned art and artifacts, models, hands-on and interactive opportunities that will bring New Sweden to life." The gallery opens to the public June 7th, 2011.

ASHM is also launching a Google Map of New Sweden Landmarks, which will expand the New Sweden Colony experience beyond the walls of the museum. The map includes museums, churches, and historical sites which still survive today, telling the story of the Swedes and Finns who settled along the Delaware River in the 17th century. A link on ASHM's website will guide virtual visitors on their journey back in time to New Sweden!



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