

When The Swedes Saved The Sesqui (Sort of)

By Thomas H. Keels



It was June 2, 1926. The Sesqui-Centennial International Exposition was only two days old, and already in trouble. Philadelphia's second world's fair had opened on May 31 in the reclaimed marshlands of League Island Park, at the southern tip of the city. Poor planning, political corruption, inadequate funding, and pandemic graft had collided to create a half-baked affair totally unprepared to receive visitors. The massive stanchions of the gigantic Liberty Bell that straddled South Broad Street at Oregon Avenue were still shrouded in scaffolding. The two main exhibition halls were crowded with workmen unpacking crates and assembling displays. Nearly every other fair building was still under construction. Many guests – including 250,000 Shriners whose annual convention had been scheduled to coincide with the Sesqui opening – were muttering that the fair was already a first-rate flop.

Hope for the Sesqui appeared in the form of its first royal guests: Crown Prince Gustaf Adolf of Sweden (a.k.a. Gustavus Adolphus, later King Gustaf VI Adolf), and his consort, Princess Louise Alexandra. Philadelphia was their third American stop, after New York and Washington, on a world tour to promote Swedish business interests. When the royal couple had landed in New York on May 27, reporters had been won over by their willingness to pose for pictures and answer questions. Americans were especially impressed by Gustaf Adolf, who at 44 retained a youthful athleticism and exuberance. While Princess Louise was somewhat high-strung, retiring frequently to nurse nervous headaches, the press officially pronounced her charming.

The Swedes arrived in Philadelphia on the afternoon on June 1. Their destination was Whitmarsh Hall, the magnificent 300-acre

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Note from the Director

I suppose that as the Director of a Swedish Museum, I should not admit that I have never particularly cared for aquavit. But then I met Christer Olsen of Arcus (maker of Aalborg and Linie aquavits) at the museum's February Skål event. After learning about aquavit's long tradition in Sweden, Norway and Denmark, hearing him describe how aquavit is made, and discovering how to taste the various notes of the different brands, I was converted! What before had struck me as too strong, I now understand and appreciate in a new way.

Looking back on all that I have learned and come to appreciate about Swedish culture over the last 11 years, it is hard to imagine that almost all of the traditions, foods, artists and history that now hold a place in my heart and mind were new to me when I started here. What an incredible journey of discovery! All of us at ASHM are looking forward to sharing Swedish and Scandinavian culture with our new curator Trevor Brandt who will begin working with us in June.

While we normally think of summer as a time to take physical journeys, why not also embark on a learning journey as you visit new places or perhaps catch up on reading this summer? Share it with us on Instagram or Facebook. We'd love to hear from you!


Tracey Beck

When The Swedes Saved The Sesqui (Sort of) continued from front cover

suburban estate of banker Edward T. Stotesbury. Stotesbury, senior partner of Drexel & Company, was reputed to be Philadelphia's wealthiest man. He and his wife Lucretia (known as "Eva") were in charge of hospitality for the Sesqui's most distinguished guests. Whitmarsh Hall was a 147-room, six-floor mansion designed by Horace Trumbauer in the Georgian style, surrounded by formal gardens and fountains. An aerial photograph of Whitmarsh Hall taken on June 1 shows a red carpet rolled down the front steps of the mansion to welcome the royal party.



The prince and princess were installed in the Portico Suite, the largest and most elegant guest suite at Whitmarsh Hall. That evening, the Stotesburys hosted a formal dinner for them. The guest list included Mayor and Mrs. W. Freeland Kendrick, Senator and Mrs. George Wharton Pepper, and forty others drawn from the city's loftiest social circles. After dinner, two hundred guests joined the party in the Ballroom for a musical evening featuring tenor Giovanni Martinelli of the Metropolitan Opera.

The next morning, June 2, the Stotesburys and the royal couple motored from Whitmarsh Hall through Fairmount Park to Logan Circle. They were met by an honor guard of the First City Troop on horseback, who escorted them to Independence Hall. There, Mayor and Mrs. Kendrick greeted the royal couple, and gave them a tour of the building and the Liberty Bell. The prince and princess then visited Old Swedes' (Gloria Dei) in Queen Village, the historic church founded by Swedish settlers in the 17th century.

The royal party continued south to the Sesqui-Centennial, where the prince dedicated a replica of the Wicaco Block House, a log fort built around 1666 on the site of Old Swedes' Church. He also laid the cornerstone for the John Morton Memorial Building (now the ASHM). After a second dinner at Whitmarsh Hall that evening, the royal party was entertained at Joseph E. Widener's Lynewood Hall in nearby Elkins Park, where they were given a tour of the magnificent Widener art collection. On June 3, Gustaf Adolf and Louise left Philadelphia for a two-month tour of America. When they departed, they took along the aristocratic yet democratic air of grace that ennobled the Sesqui-Centennial during their brief visit. The Sesqui would limp along until it closed on December 31, attracting fewer than five million paying visitors and costing the city millions of dollars. Today, the American Swedish Historical Museum remains as one of the few surviving links to this forgotten world's fair.

THOMAS H. KEELS (www.thomaskeels.com) is the author of the recently published Sesqui! Greed, Graft, and the Forgotten World's Fair of 1926. He wishes to thank Whitmarsh Hall historians Richard Billig and Edward Zwicker IV for sharing their research on the royal visit, and the Springfield Township Historical Society for use of the photographs of Whitmarsh Hall.

THOMAS H. KEELS will be speaking about his book at the ASHM on June 14.

Meet ASHM's New Curator, Trevor Brandt

Trevor Brandt is honored to join the staff of the American Swedish Historical Museum as the Curator. Trevor earned his B.A. degrees in history and political science with minors in German and the Classics from the Pennsylvania State University. After graduating from Penn State, Trevor pursued graduate studies with the Winterthur Program in American Material Culture and the University of Delaware. At Winterthur, Trevor studied eighteenth and nineteenth century immigrants and their material expressions of identity.

Trevor's focus on objects and identities culminated in his M.A. thesis, which explores the creation and usage of primarily German-language religious prints. Preparation for this research led to Trevor's enrollment in classes at the Moravian Archives in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Here, he honed his foreign-language research abilities by learning to read historic German scripts.



Trevor has given talks on his work at a symposium in Philadelphia and a board of trustees meeting at Winterthur, and he looks forward to upcoming conference participation in Atlanta, Georgia. While Trevor's research has concentrated on these religious objects, he has also undertaken professional development through several internships.

These experiences included co-curating a permanent exhibit within the Winterthur Museum's Textile Galleries.

This exhibit explores the long life of a Pennsylvania loom and the survival of handweaving techniques into the twenty-first century.

Trevor also worked as a curatorial intern at the Speaker's House in Trappe, Pennsylvania, before accepting an invitation to join the museum's board. Trevor now serves as chair of the collections committee and oversees the museum's archaeological, decorative arts, architectural, and archival materials.

These experiences have prepared Trevor to preserve and exhibit the array of objects housed at the American Swedish Historical Museum. With this background and his specialty in American immigration history, Trevor is eager to steward the museum's collection while promoting deeper appreciation for the contributions of Swedes and those of Swedish descent to American history.

SmörgåsBeer on the Terrace

Mark your calendars now for the American Swedish Historical Museum's annual SmörgåsBeer event on July 29! Spend a gorgeous summer evening at the Museum in FDR Park enjoying local and international beer while sampling traditional Swedish food with a modern twist. This year's breweries include Agrilla Brewing Company, Boxcar Brewing Co., Carlsberg, Naked Brewing Company, St. Benjamin Brewing Company, Rekorderlig Cider, and new this year, Liquid Alchemy mead and cider. Be sure to check back on the Museum's event page as we continue to add more breweries.

SmörgåsBeer party goers will have the chance to play trivia and lawn games as well as a traditional Swedish *Tipsrunda* or quiz walk through the museum. What better way to pass a summer evening than tasting new beers, challenging friends to unique games, and dancing the night away to the retro mix of DJ JCLEF. Amazing prizes for fun experiences will also be raffled off throughout the evening.

SmörgåsBeer will be held Saturday, July 29th from 5-9pm. General tickets are \$30 in advance, and \$35 at the door. Special designated driver price of \$10 is also available. General admission includes a commemorative event sampling glass. Pre-register by phone or online.



The event is still accepting sponsorships from the business community. If you are interested in reaching the Philadelphia and surrounding area please contact Lauren Burnham at 215-389-1776 or lburnham@americanswedish.org

Upcoming Events and Registration Info

To Register For Events

call 215-389-1776, or visit online at
www.americanswedish.org/calendar.htm

There is always something going on at the American Swedish Historical Museum. See below for scheduled events. Please check with the Museum to confirm dates and other details. Refunds will not be granted for cancellations after the registration deadline. To register for events by phone call (215) 389-1776. Online registration is available through links in the Museum's email announcements or on the Events Calendar page of our website, americanswedish.org/calendar.htm.



MONTHLY PROGRAM:

Toddler Time

10:30 am - 11:30 am

The third Tuesday of each month ASHM offers specially designed programs to

introduce Swedish culture through art, science, and literature in fun and creative ways to children ages 18 months to 4 years old. The cost is \$5 per child or free for museum Household Members. There is no charge for accompanying caregivers. Optional pre-registration by phone or online.

Saturday, June 10
The Shapes Around Us

Tuesday, July 18
Row Your Boat

Tuesday, August 15
Swedish Food Traditions



Skål! Scandinavian Spirits Guided Exhibit Tours

1:00 pm - 2:00pm

Sunday, June 18

Sunday, July 9

Saturday, August 12

Saturday, September 9

Whether you are new to Scandinavian spirits or an aficionado, join us for an exclusive guided tour of the *Skål! Scandinavian Spirits* exhibition. Each tour will explore the history of Scandinavian spirits and the role those beverages play in the heritage of Scandinavian America. Learn how to properly Skål, or cheers, at the end of the tour with an Aquavit tasting and food pairing. Pre-registration required and tour spots are limited. \$8 members and \$18 non-members (must be 21 or over to attend tasting).



National Day

Tuesday, June 6

12:00 pm - 4:00 pm

What better place to celebrate Swedish National Day than the American

Swedish Historical Museum! Enjoy free admission including guided tours at 12pm and 2pm highlighting the history of the museum, and a special Swedish summer dessert treat.

Lecture, *Sesqui! Greed, Graft, and the Forgotten World's Fair of 1926*

Wednesday, June 14,

6:00 pm

The Sesqui-Centennial International Exposition of 1926, held in South Philadelphia, was meant to be the greatest world's fair since the 1876 Centennial. Thanks to political corruption, greed, egotism, and the wettest summer on record, it became a crumbling, sodden, bankrupt mess, Philadelphia's "forgotten fair." Join the Friends of FDR Park for this engaging talk by author Thomas Keels.



Midsommarfest

Saturday, June 24

4:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Celebrate summer at our annual *Midsommarfest*, complete with food, drinks,

home-made Swedish pastries, maypole dancing, as well as games for the kids. Don't miss this year's musical performance by the Swedish Meatballs! Non-members \$12, Members \$8, Children 4-12 \$6. Pay at the door.



SmörgåsBeer

Saturday, July 29

5:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Spend a summer evening sampling local Philly and International lagers, ales, stouts,

and more paired alongside a spread of savorys like Swedish meatballs, cheeses, and sausages. SmörgåsBeer'd will be held Saturday July 29 from 5-9pm. Tickets are \$30 in advance, \$35 at the door, with a special designated driver price of \$10. Register online or by phone.



Crayfish Party

Friday, August 18

6:30pm

Get a taste of Swedish summer at our annual Crayfish Party! Enjoy a buffet of crayfish or

Swedish meatballs, along with crisp bread, cheese, potatoes, cheese pie, and glass of *akvavit* all outside under our beautiful lighted and decorated tent. \$50 for ASHM and SACC Philadelphia members, \$60 for non-members. Register by phone or online by August 14th.

Antique Appraisal Day

Sunday, August 6

1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

If you have ever wondered about the history or value of a family antique bring it to ASHM on August 6th for our fundraising Antique Appraisal Day with expert general appraiser and broker Robert Borgstrom. Appraisals will be given on a first come first serve basis and includes up to three items for \$20. Each person with items will be given a number upon arrival. Guests may sit in the audience while each number is called and appraisals given live on stage. Doors open at 12pm and appraisals start at 1pm. For more information call 215-389-1776 or email lburnham@americanswedish.org.

Annual Meeting

Sunday, September 10

3:00 pm

ASHM members are welcome to join us for our annual meeting, where we the Amandus Johnson Volunteer Service Award will also be presented. This is also a great chance to see the *Skål Scandinavian Spirits* exhibition before it closes on the 17th.

Images from Recent Events

Photographs by ASHM Staff



► Waffle day on March 25th called for delicious Swedish waffles, with lots of strawberry jam and whipped cream! Yum!

► In the beginning of April we celebrated Easter a little early with our Swedish themed Easter Family Fun Day & Egg Hunt.



► In early February we spent a Saturday morning eating delicious semlor followed by a film.



◀ During April's Toddler Time themed "Wool Gathering – From Sheep to Sweater", we welcomed our human and wooly friends from What-Knott Farm to the Museum.



▼ Our volunteer Skål Aquavit Ambassadors, who lead tours of the exhibit, received a special training and tasting with Christer Olsen from Arcus at our February exhibit opening, and are pictured here with Rasmus Thogersen, Executive Director of the Museum of Danish America.



◀ During Toddler Time in February, children got to walk in the tracks of moose around the Museum galleries, and then create their own animal tracks and moose puppets!



▲ Children got to reinforce their knowledge of the five senses through interactive stories and music movement during our 'Five Senses' themed Toddler Time in March.



▲ We had a fantastic time at our annual fundraiser Spring Ting in early May!



◀ At this year's Viking Day, we got to learn all about Viking fighting techniques during East Coast Combative Arts' historic weapons demonstration.

Contributions to the Collection

As a nonprofit organization, the American Swedish Historical Museum relies on the generosity of its friends and supporters to meet the costs providing programs and services, year-round, to thousands of local, national, and international visitors. Thank you for your contributions!

Contribution to the Collection

Margaretha Talerman donated her Swedish provincial costume to the museum, made by her aunt as a school project in Stockholm in 1936 or 1937. This beautifully-sewn costume is now on display in the Common Thread gallery.

New Members

February 1 through April 30, 2017

Life Members

Jan & Lillemore Essunger
Earl & Sylvia Seppala

Household

Burt & Donna Duren
Anne Flink
Angie & Pasquale Gallelli
Geoff & Yegi Hillman
Greta & William Hodgson
Kirsten M. Jensen
Carolyn LeComte & Jon Hopely
Anthony LoCicero
Mary Ann Lykens-Janke & Ronald Janke
Helena Mansson & Mikael Nyberg
Hillary & Jamie McAndrews
Aibing Ouyang & Happy Liu
Ritosalmi-Kisner Family
Sion Shou
Karen Stensgaard
Andrea & Dan Stone
Linnea Tideman & Family
Bertil Wagner
Raymond Williams

Individual

Alicia McDonald
Pamela Rasmussen
Ellen Spampinato
Carl Fredrik Stensson

Seniors/Students

Karen Hoepfinger
Joseph Jeantet

In Memoriam

The ASHM lost a very special member recently. We send our deepest condolences to his friends and family.

Fred Pfaff

Annual Giving and Contributions

February 1 through April 30, 2017

Serafimer

Margaretha Talerman

Vasa

Kristina and John Antoniadis
Kristina and John O'Doherty
Swedish Colonial Society

Gold

William & Tracey Beck
Ragnhild & Bo Bergqvist
Roy & Donna Johnson
Britta A. Mattson
Sandra & Fred Pfaff
Fanny Warren

Silver

Roberta Petusky
Abby Shaw
Alice Wood

Bronze

Jens & Allison Clausen
Ken & Kerstin Cook
Mary Corrigan
Rik Edstrom and Lea Knapik-Edstrom
ExxonMobil Foundation
Joseph M. O'Donnell
Earl & Sylvia Seppala

Friend

Alice Christensen
Community Explorers Day Services, Inc.
Mr. & Mrs. Evald R. Eskilson
Barbara E. Good
Marlin R. Mattson, M.D.
Ellen T. Rye
Birgitta Wilson



Thanks for your support!

What a wonderful evening it was! Spring Ting was an extra special event this year thanks to our honoree Robert Engman and guests who joined us from the Swedish Council of America. We would especially like to thank our event sponsors:

Sponsors

Alfa Laval, Inc.
Kreischer Miller
Philadelphia Energy Solutions
Biddle & Company
Margaret Copeland
Sylvia Davenport
John & Carin Foster
Roy & Donna Johnson
Kristina & John O'Doherty
Margaretha Talerman

Patrons

Bo & Ragnhild Bergqvist
Leonard Busby & Ruth Lindeborg
Michael and Jill D'Andrea
Richard & Laura Denes
Sam Heed
Gene & Mary McCoy
Mr. & Mrs. Alfred Pfaff
Popp's Water Ice
Virginia Swedberg
Kim Eric Williams & Ruth Marie Nelson Rizzi
Birgitta Wilson
Rich & Andrea Zak

Friends

Jacqueline Axilbund
Lila McCleary
Mary Anne Powell
Hope Rosenlund
Shirley Stengel
Elaine Tannenbaum
Fanny Warren

Do you want to make a contribution?

There are several easy ways to support us. Visit our web page americanswedish.org/support or call 215-389-1776 for more information.

Membership

Please print all information as you wish it to appear on the membership roster.

Return this form to:

American Swedish Historical Museum
 Attn: Membership
 1900 Pattison Avenue
 Philadelphia, PA 19145-5901

Among the benefits of membership are:

- free admission to the Museum and library
- use of the ASHM Swedish Film Library borrowing system
- guest passes
- subscription to the newsletter
- 10% discount in the Museum Store
- discounts on admission to most events, workshops and Swedish language classes

For more information, please call 215-389-1776.

Application & Renewal Form

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

- \$35:** Senior/Student
 \$75: Organizational (Non-profit only)
 \$500: Patron
 \$50: Individual
 \$125: Friend
 \$1,000: Key Contributor
 \$65: Household
 \$250: Sustaining
 \$2,500: Life

Make check payable to ASHM or Charge my: VISA | MasterCard | Discover

Account # _____

Exp Date _____

The official registration and financial information of ASHM may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Your membership contribution to the American Swedish Historical Museum is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

 Please detach here and return.

Won't You Join Us? Volunteer with ASHM's Auxiliary and Midsommarklubben

The Museum is lucky to have dedicated groups of volunteers, the Auxiliary and *Midsommarklubben*. Both groups have been around for decades and are at the heart of planning some of our major, annual events. It is easy to join and be a part of either or both if you are interested in volunteering!

The Auxiliary is the Museum's longest standing volunteer group, open to everyone and has annual dues of \$10. They primarily raise funds for the Museum through the Lucia event each December, as well as Semlor and a Movie, along with other events throughout the year. They meet once a month on Thursdays at the Museum.

Midsommarklubben is a group for Swedish speakers and has annual dues of \$20. If you want to practice your Swedish or meet some new Swedes, they are eager to have you join them! Originally founded in the late 1970s to plan Midsommarfest, the group is primarily responsible for the Museum's Midsommar celebration, as well as our Julbord dinner. They meet once a month on Mondays at the Museum, September through June.

If you are interested in either group, call us for more info or email lburnham@americanswedish.org to get connected.



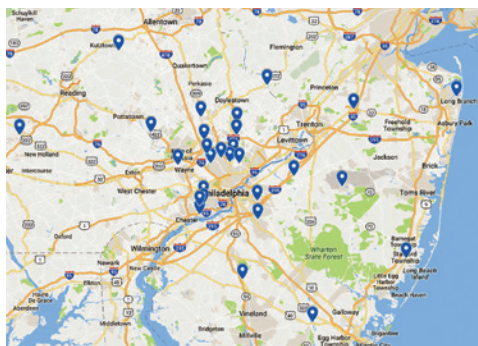
Connecting
Cultures and
Community

Kids Can Make a Difference!

Build a Better Tomorrow: Kids Can Make a Difference



In order to reach a wider family audience the American Swedish Historical Museum creates a new summer library outreach program each year, which fits the national Collaborative Summer Reading theme. The 2017 reading theme chosen by the libraries is Build a Better World and ASHM is ready to teach kids how Sweden is leading the way! Did you know that more than 99% of Sweden's waste is recycled or reused as a source of power? In the summer outreach program, children will learn about sustainable energy and environmentally conscious architecture.



The program includes an interactive introduction to the topic, hands-on activities such as building model-sized energy efficient homes, making pinwheels to demonstrate renewable energy, and creative opportunities to brainstorm how kids can build a better world!

As always, we hope to bring the program to as many libraries and community centers as possible. The program can travel throughout Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, and Maryland so if you are interested in having *Kids Can Make a Difference: Building a Better Tomorrow* at your library this summer, be sure to pass on the museum's information to your local librarian!

◀ *Oh the places we go! Our summer library program will be traveling throughout the tri-state region. Check it out if we will be at your local library!*