

# Swedish American Historical Society of Wisconsin



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# Swedish American Historical Society of Wisconsin, Inc.



## Founded in 1975

Initiative by Anders Segerdahl Honorary Consul of the Royal Consulate of Sweden **to promote the observance of the Bicentennial of the American Revolution and the role of Swedish-Americans in the American history.**

## Officers

- **Harry H. Anderson**, Milwaukee County Historical Society, Director
- **Bertil Winstrom**, Vasa Order of America, former Grand Master
- **Richard Horngren**, Vasa Order of America, Linde Lodge, Officer
- **Anders Segerdahl**, Royal Swedish Consulate in Milwaukee, Honorary Consul

## Objective

“Promoting a greater knowledge and appreciation of the role played by people of Swedish descent to the State of Wisconsin through the story of immigration and settlement as well as recognizing the contributions Swedish-Americans have made to American society”



# SAHSWI today



- Non-profit volunteer organization
- 115 members
- 8 Board members + committees
- 6 Social meetings each year
- 3 Historical Projects
- Genealogy Group
- Historical records
- Newsletter
- Website and Facebook
- \$10 annual membership fee
- Donations, cash and Swedish articles

## ❑ 6 Social meetings each year

- 4 Fika meetings
- Midsommar
- St. Lucia Day
- All meetings are open to the public at no cost

## ❑ Nordic Council Scandinavian Fest

- Danish Sisterhood of Milwaukee.
- Finnish American Society
- Linde Lodge 492 , Vasa order of America
- Lykkeringen Dancers
- Sons of Norway
- Swedish American Historical Society of Wisconsin



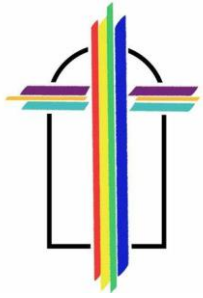


# Board members & Committee Chairs



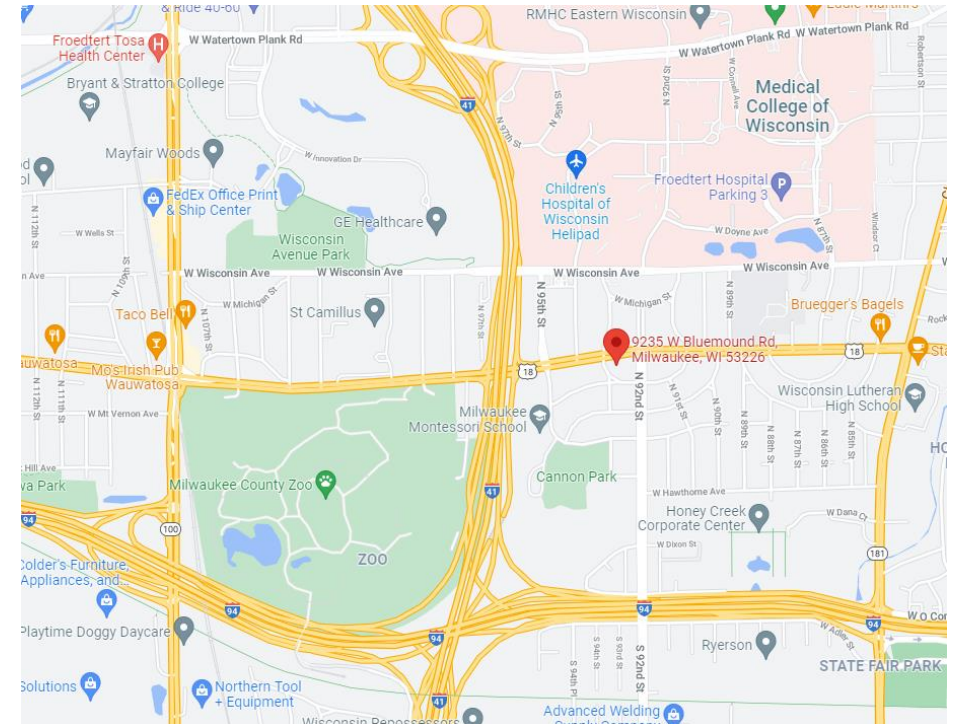
- Martha Bergland      Historical Projects, Speaker (Presenter)
- John Elliott          Fika Programs and frequent Speaker (Presenter)
- Barbara Froemming    Treasurer, Tax filings, Financial transactions and reports, Insurance, Lucia, (Past President)
- Marge Jothen          Swedish Genealogy (Past President)
- Karin Konrad          Midsommar and Lucia celebrations
- Joann Kreimendahl    Secretary, Newsletter editor, Nordic Council, Sale items
- George Lofgren        Vice president, Finance, Midsommar Pole
- Janet Taylor          Fika meetings, Church contact, Midsommar and Lucia
- Bev Wenzel            Membership, Publicity, Historical files, Swedish Genealogy
- Jan Ehrengren        President, Blog and Website, Nordic Council, Historical Projects





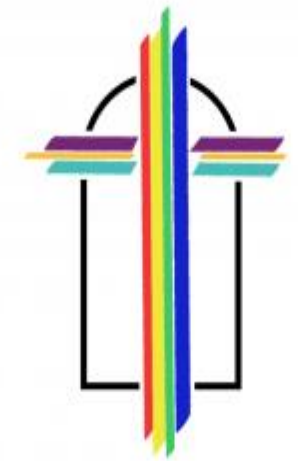
# New fika meeting place

- **Meeting place:** Martin Luther Lutheran Church
- **Location:** Just east of the Milwaukee Zoo
- **Contacts:** Pastor **Ari Mattson**  
Administrative assistant **Ronna Paradowski**
- **Address:** **9235 West Bluemound Road**  
**Milwaukee, WI 53226**
- **Meeting hall:** **Fellowship Hall seats up 75 people + Kitchen**  
Sanctuary can also be used for presentations
- **Upgrade:** Upgrading of facilities is in progress  
Mainly kitchen and AV equipment  
Completion target “by Easter”



# Martin Luther Lutheran Church,

Member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America ([ELCA](#))



## History

- May 1949 missionary
- April 1950 Congregation was formed (110 members)
- September 1950 Church site was purchased
- December 1952 the first service was held in the new chapel.
- 2011 Ari Mattson became Pastor

## Worship

Sundays at 8 AM  
&/or 10:30 AM

## Education

- Sunday School
- Bible Studies
- Pastors Blog
- Sermon Archives
- Online Devotions

## Website

[Martin Luther Church – Martin Luther Lutheran Church, ELCA](#)

## Outreach world through ELCA

- Food Pack for Haiti's Hungry
- Mt. Meru Coffee Project (supporting fair trading of Tanzanian coffee)

## Outreach local community

- **Serenity Inns, Inc.**, (Serving the homeless)
- **Luther Burbank School** (Beyond the classroom academic support, mentoring, community leadership etc)
- **Tosa Cares** (Food Pantry, food and personal items)
- **Christian Care Ministry** (Serving homebound and elderly members)



# Fika meetings



- ☐ Normally in January, March, May and October
- ☐ Program presentation of **Swedish - American historical topics**, heritage, customs and celebrations, show & tell, food, etc.
- ☐ **Fika (a Swedish coffee break)** including typical Swedish pastry and treats with coffee
- ☐ Meet and socialize with people interested in the Swedish American heritage
- ☐ During Pandemic the Fika meetings have been replaced by ZOOM meetings

## Recent Programs



Show and tell, History of Dala Horses plus exhibit of personal collection by Board member **John Elliott**



Christina Nilsson  
Rags to Riches story by member relative **Carol Gustfason**



Recognizing the first Swedish settlement **New Upsala** and its founder **Gustaf Unonius**

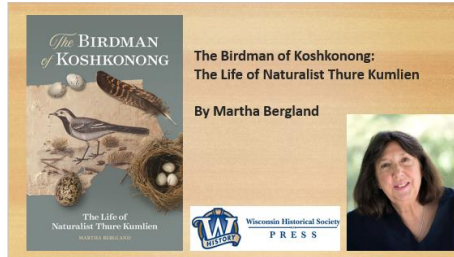
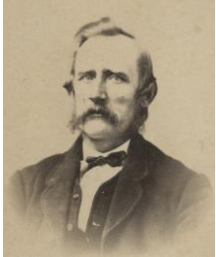




# Fika meetings – Recent programs ZOOM



“Svenska Låtar” **Carol Gustafson** and **Mary Stetson**, artistic name “**Goda Vänner**”, presenting and performing this program about Swedish Folk Music.



**Martha Bergland** discussed her newly released book “The Birdman of Koshkonong”, “The life of Naturalist **Thure Kumlien**”.



**John Elliott** presented “Facts about Swedish traits”



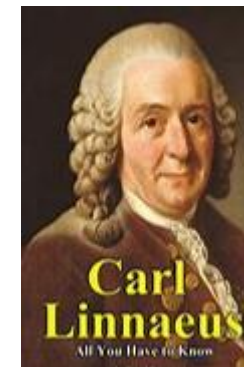


# Fika History



❑ The word fika is an inverted form of “**kaffi**,” the 19th-century Swedish word for “**coffee**.”

❑ This shuffling of the syllables (and the removal of the other “f”) was to disguise the practice, since the very importation and consumption of coffee was banned in Sweden five times between 1756 and 1817





# Midsommar celebration



- ❑ Traditional Swedish Midsommar celebration in late June (around **Summer Solstice**)
- ❑ Location **Heidelberg Park** by Bavarian Bierhaus in **Glendale**
- ❑ **Decoration** of the Majstång, (**Midsommar pole**) with greens and flowers
- ❑ **Flower wreaths** for the girls and women
- ❑ **Procession** with traditional violin music to **raise the Majstång**
- ❑ **Dancing** around the Majstång and singing the special Swedish songs like "små grodorna" (the little frogs) or "vi äro musikanter" (we are all musicians).
- ❑ **Games** including the Swedish Kubb game, face painting, tug-a-war, and more.
- ❑ **Folk Dance** performance
- ❑ Free, open to the public
- ❑ Swedish food platter available for purchase



## Midsommar at Heidelberg Park







# St. Lucia Day celebration



- ❑ Lucia is celebrated in Mid December at the **Whitnall Park Lutheran Church in Hales Corners.**
- ❑ **Lucia and attendants** procession singing typical Lucia songs Swedish Christmas carols and reading of poems. Director: SAHSWI member **Sonia Hummel.**
- ❑ A Swedish **"Julbord"** smorgasbord with Swedish Christmas food and pastry is served
- ❑ **Dance** around the Christmas tree
- ❑ Arrival of **"Jultomten"** Santa Claus



## St. Lucia a special Swedish tradition

Early on the morning of **December 13**, a young woman appears, dressed in white and wearing a crown of blazing candles. She is attended by a group of young boys and girls, and brings light into the dark winter at homes, hospitals, schools, and offices, serving steaming coffee with ginger biscuits and saffron bread. The young woman is portraying St. Lucia and this is Luciadagen, Santa Lucia Day, a particularly Swedish festival that has spread throughout Scandinavia.



# Historical Project The Friman Family



- ❑ 56 year-old **Carl Friman** ( 1781-1862) and **five of his six sons** arrived in New York 9 July **1838** aboard the vessel Rosen from Goteborg: Johan, 17; Wilhelm, 14; Adolf, 11; Herman, 9; and Otto, 6.
- ❑ **Purchased 80 acres** near Genoa City.
- ❑ The Friman family recognized as **the first Swedes to settle permanently in Wisconsin.**
- ❑ Returning to his homeland, Friman corresponded regularly with his sons who remained here.
- ❑ Their **letters** from Wisconsin appeared in **Swedish newspapers**, stimulating interest in opportunities and conditions in America.
- ❑ Carl Friman's **son, Adolph** (1826-1871), became a **successful businessman**. Freeman Street in Genoa City is named in his honor.
- ❑ Carl's son, Wilhelm (1823-1911), also owned land that was incorporated into this community.
- ❑ The **other sons** lived for a time in this area before **moving west**.
- ❑ **State Historical marker erected in 1988** sponsored by **SAHSWI and Genoa City Lions Club**

## The Friman Historical Marker







# Historical project Gustaf Unonius



- ❑ Gustaf Unonius arrived to Wisconsin and settled at **Pine Lake, Chenequa** in **1841** and named the settlement **New Upsala**
- ❑ **10 families** or individuals **joined the New Upsala** settlement in 1842-43
- ❑ In 1842 he met Episcopal Missionary James Lloyd Brecht who established a seminary, the **Nashotah House**
- ❑ Unonius studied there and in 1845 was the **first graduate**. This was **recognized by SAHSWI with a historical plaque**
- ❑ Founder and first Pastor of the **Pine Lake Scandinavian Parish 1844**
- ❑ **Holy Innocents Cemetery** was consecrated for the Scandinavian parish
- ❑ Moved to **Manitowoc** and took over a congregation then to **Chicago**, founded Episcopal church. **Returned to Sweden in 1858**.
- ❑ New project to recognize Unonius and the First Swedish settlement in Wisconsin with an **official State Historical Marker**





# Historical Project Rambo Apple Trees

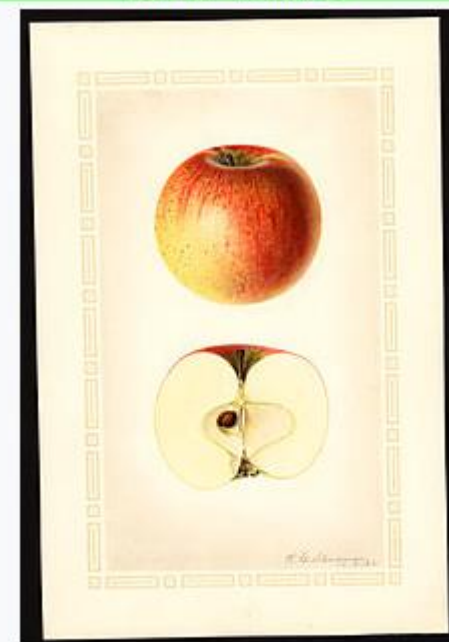


- ❑ Swedish immigrant **Peter Gunnarsson** arrived to New Sweden on the ship Kalmar Nyckel in 1640
- ❑ He brought the seeds from his favorite apple tree.
- ❑ Changed his name to **Peter Rambo**, based on his birthplace near Ramberget (Raven's Mountain), Sweden (Rambo = Raven's home)
- ❑ The apples were named Rambo and the Rambo Apple Tree became popular
- ❑ John, "**Johnny Appleseed**" Chapman claimed Rambo as being his favorite
- ❑ After harsh winter in Sweden 1709-10 the original apple trees became extinct.
- ❑ In 2008 project the Rambo apple trees were re-introduced to Sweden
- ❑ To honor **Swedish immigrants who have settled in Wisconsin**, SAHSWI has sponsored the planting of two Rambo apple trees on the Finnish\* farm grounds at Old World Wisconsin (OWW)
- ❑ \* Peter Rambo's wife Brita was Finnish.
- ❑ **Bev Wenzel** Project leader, **Marcia Carmichael** Gardener at OWW

Rambo tree planted at Old World Wisconsin



Apple 'Rambo'



Genus *Malus*  
Species *Malus pumila*  
Cultivar 'Rambo'  
Origin Known in North America before 1817<sup>[1]</sup>



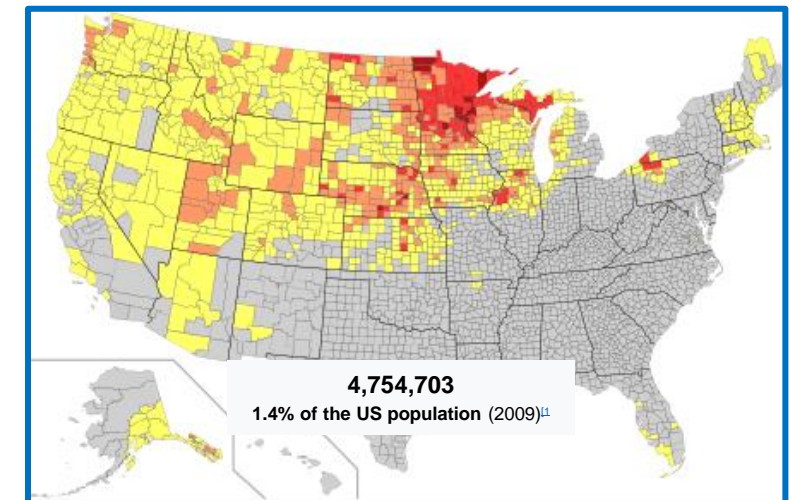
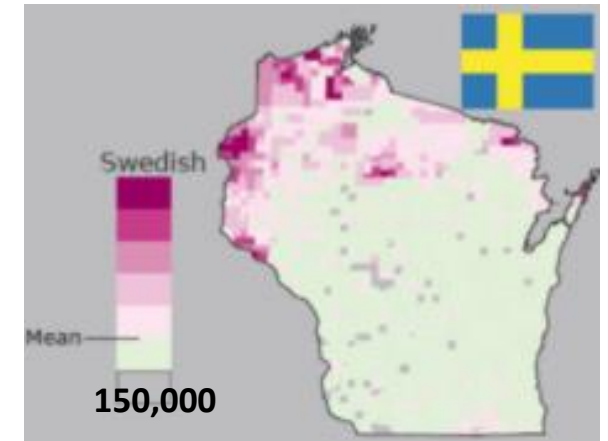


# Swedish Immigration History



- ❑ Wisconsin's first Swedish settlement was along Pine Lake in Waukesha County in 1841;
- ❑ A second emerged along the banks of Lake Koshkonong in 1843
- ❑ The largest and most significant wave of Swedish immigration to Wisconsin occurred between **1860 and 1890**
- ❑ Immigration from Sweden increased significantly following the passage of the **Homestead Act of 1862** and **crop failures in Sweden in the late 1860s**.
- ❑ The largest **Swedish populations** in Wisconsin were **in the northwest**. Chicago and Minneapolis/St. Paul were the major urban centers of Swedish settlement.
- ❑ There are **150,000** Wisconsin residents of Swedish descent (2012)
- ❑ The first Swedish Americans were the settlers of New Sweden. A colony established by Queen Christina of Sweden in 1638 centered around the Delaware Valley

## Swedish American population

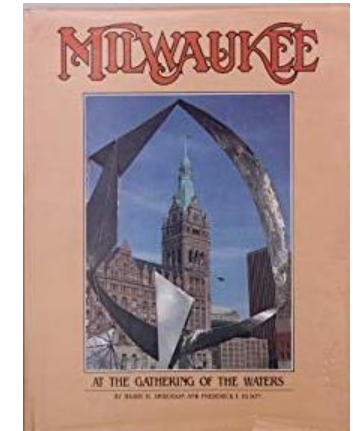




# Bits of Swedish-American History



- ❑ Stories by Milwaukee Historian **Harry H. Anderson**
- ❑ Executive Director at the Milwaukee County Historical Society until 1998
- ❑ Author of ***Milwaukee, at the Gathering of the Waters*** (American Portrait Series), a pictorial and entertaining commentary on the growth and development of Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- ❑ Short stories relating to the **Swedish heritage adopted into the American society.**



## Story links

- [Gustaf Unonius' Homemade "Snoose"](#)
- [Carl Sandburg and Milwaukee Politics](#)
- [Swedish Apple Trees survive tornado](#)
- [Swedish Methodists in Old Milwaukee](#)
- [Another Swede in Hollywood](#)
- [Employment Activities Among the Women of Milwaukee's Swedish-American Community](#)
- [The Tragedy of the Public Museum's Swedish-American Naturalist](#)

- [Lindbergs 1927 visit to Milwaukee](#)
- [Memories of a Swedish-American "CHRISTMAS PAST"](#)
- [An early American account of Swedish Midsummer](#)
- [Wisconsin's Swedish pioneers observe holidays](#)
- [Yon Yonson \(John Johnson\) and old-fashioned Swedish-American public entertainment. Nikolina](#)
- [Milwaukee's JENNY LIND club, A pioneer organization honoring the Swedish Nightingale](#)
- [Birds, Eggs and Witches Swedish folk customs and superstitions regarding Easter](#)





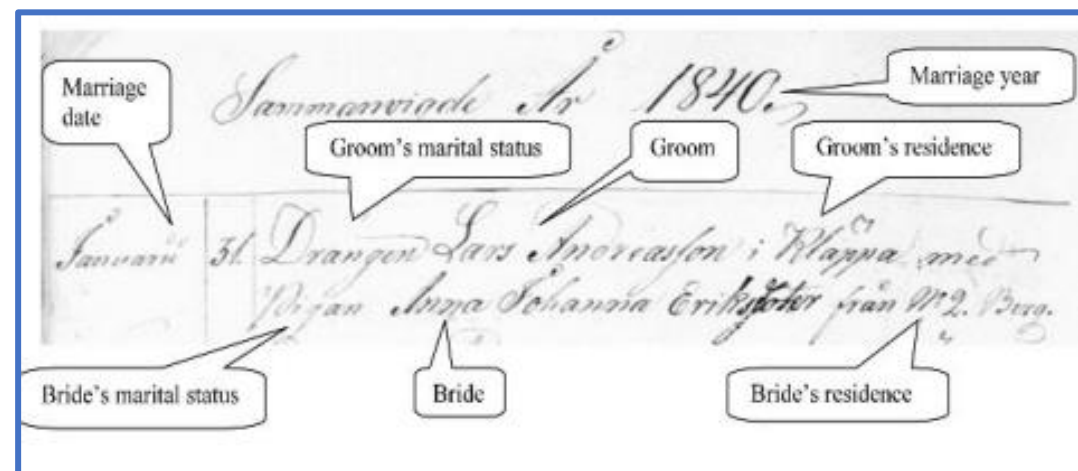
# Swedish Genealogy



- SAHSWI's **Swedish Genealogy Research Group (SGRG)**
- **26 members** collaborating and supporting Swedish Genealogy
- **Marge Jothén and Bev Wenzel** have developed a packet

1. Beginning Basics
2. Swedish Genealogy Research
3. Swedish Language for Genealogy
4. Websites , periodicals and books
5. Swedish Parish Records
6. Glossary, Wordlists, Surnames & Misc
7. SGRG Membership & Search Areas

- **Looking for a committee leader or coordinator**





# Stories of my Swedish Heritage

## The Christina Nilsson story, Carol Gustafson



- ❑ **Christina Nilsson** story told by Christinas great great niece SAHSWI member **Carol Gustafson**
- ❑ Carol talked about her family ties to Christina and her recent trip to Christina's homestead, now a museum in Sweden as well as her visit to the mansion **Villa Vik** and mausoleum in **Växjö**.
- ❑ **Christina Nilsson** was a famous **Opera singer** in late 1800's and early 1900's
  - ❑ Born **Kristina Jonasdatter** on **Sjöabol** farm, **Småland**, 1843.
  - ❑ Self taught, performed at local fairs in Sweden
  - ❑ Her talents discovered, studied under **Franz Berwald**
  - ❑ Member of **Royal Swedish Academy of Music** 1869
  - ❑ Performed at **New York** Metropolitan Opera, **London**, **St. Petersburg**, **Paris**, **Vienna**
  - ❑ Married twice banker Auguste Rauzaud, and with her second husband, Angel Ramon Maria Vallejo y Miranda, Count de Casa Miranda
  - ❑ Known as **Countess de Casa Miranda**
  - ❑ Her signature song "[Fjorton ar tror jag vist att jag var](#)"
  - ❑ Died in Växjö, Sweden in 1921





# Stories of my Swedish Heritage

## The Anders Berglund story, Martha Berglund



- ❑ **Anders Berglund** arrived at **Bishop Hill** in 1847 to join the Swedish colony.
- ❑ Ancestor, Author and SAHSWI Board member **Martha Berglund** presentation
- ❑ Story of a young man in Sweden brought up under difficult circumstances and hardship
- ❑ Leaving his home country to seek a better and more meaningful life in the USA.
- ❑ At age 63 Anders wrote a letter describing his life in Sweden and the reasons for his immigration to the USA
- ❑ Bishop Hill. Erik Jansson, leader of the **Janssonist** religious sect in Sweden left Sweden in 1846 guiding his dedicated followers to America where he established the Swedish Colony of Bishop Hill in Illinois.
- ❑ [The story of Bishop Hill](#)







# Stories of my Swedish Heritage

## The Spanish Flu pandemic, Paul Fanlund & Bev Wenzel



- ❑ 50 million people worldwide died from the Spanish Flu
- ❑ In Sweden 34,500 people died during the first year
- ❑ Paul Fanlund's article: ***"A century ago, a pandemic devastated my ancestors."***
  - ❑ Julius Fanlund emigrated from Sweden 1914
  - ❑ In 1918 one brother and two sisters in Sweden died within 5 days
- ❑ Bev Wenzel's story ***"The presence of pandemics in our family"***
  - ❑ Bev's father Erik Olsson emigrated 1926
  - ❑ Grandparents lost three sons
  - ❑ Then lost one daughter from the Spanish flu
- ❑ Bev's father Erik Olsson and Julius Fanlund came from the same area in Sweden near the town of Kyrkhult, Blekinge.

Spanish Flu patients, Boden, Sweden, 1918







# Stories of my Swedish Heritage

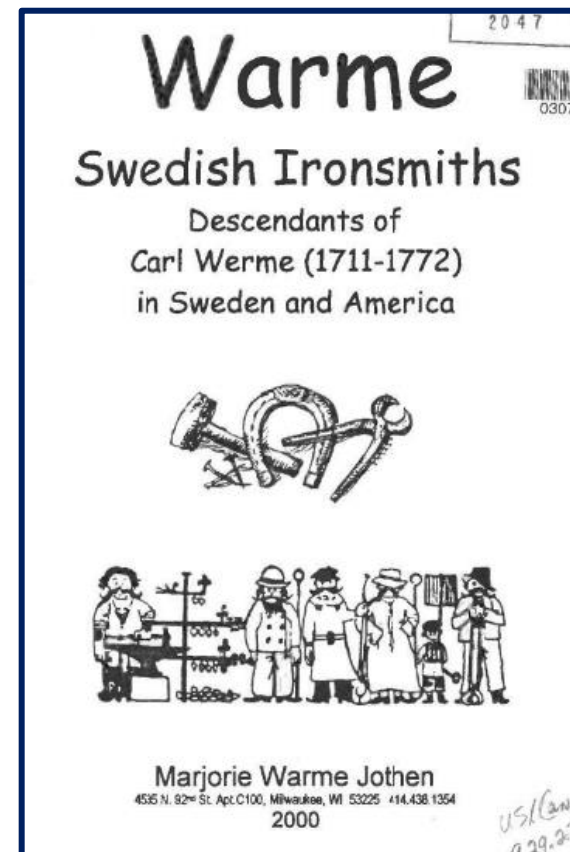
## Marge Jothen author of 2 books about her ancestors



- ❑ **The Carlson Family:** *Sons of Carl Gustaf Petersson: Ancestors, Descendants and Emigration from Gärdserum, Småland, Sweden to Fish Lake, Chisago County, Minnesota, 1991*
- ❑ **Warme Swedish Ironsmiths:** *Descendants of Carl Werme (1711-1772) in Sweden and America, 2000.*



Happy Birthday Marge!  
**103 years !!**





# Wisconsin Swedish-Americans



- ❑ **GUSTAF UNONIUS**; Settlement Founder. Clergyman. Letters to Sweden attracted immigration to Pine Lake Settlement of New Uppsala and Wisconsin.
- ❑ **CARL FRIMAN AND FAMILY**; First Swedish Settlers and landowners near Genoa City in Wisconsin
- ❑ **OSCAR GOTTFRIED (GEORGE) LANGE**; First Swede known to settle in Milwaukee. Clerk and translator who guided settlers including Unonius to land claims. Business clerk. Moved to Chicago in late 1860's.
- ❑ **POLYCASPUS VON SCHNEIDAU**; Arrived 1842 as a Pine Lake settler and moved to Chicago in 1844 becoming a daguerreotypist (Photographer). His daughter was an aunt of Winston Churchill.
- ❑ **FREDRIKA BREMER**; Swedish author and traveler, visited Pine Lake in 1850 and wrote about it in "Houses in the New World"
- ❑ **THURE KUMLIEN**; Arrived in Wisconsin from Sweden in 1843 to Koshkonong settlement. Ornithologist and zoologist who taught natural history. Early staff member of what became Milwaukee Public Museum. Died 1888 – age 69
- ❑ **KNUTE D. PETERSON**; Private secretary of President of Northwestern Mutual Life. Grandson of Knute (Bengt) Petterson of Unonius colony. His grandfather was buried at cemetery near Pine Lake. Grandfather came to U.S on same boat in 1843 as did Thure Kumlien.



THURE  
KUMLIEN



FREDRIKA  
BREMER



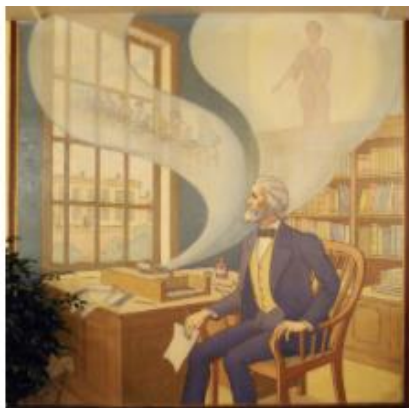
POLYCASPUS VON  
SCHNEIDAU



# Wisconsin Swedish-Americans



Byron Kilbourn, by Thorsten Lindberg.



Christopher Latham Sholes, by Thorsten Lindberg. The Invention of the Typewriter.



Milwaukee Industry, by Thorsten Lindberg



Wisconsin Agriculture, by Thorsten Lindberg

- ❑ **GEORGE P. LINDEMAN.** Tailor and prominent **Milwaukee business man**, active in public and political life of Scandinavian Republican Club. **Led local Lincoln campaign in 1860** and was grand master of downtown torch light parade for Lincoln)
- ❑ **OLAF E. DREUTZER.** Born: Gothenburg, 1816. Came to U.S. in 1830. Studied law in Milwaukee, moved to **Waupun, elected county judge**. Appointed by President Lincoln as **American Counsel in Bergen, Norway**, during the Civil War
- ❑ **CHARLOTTE BERGWALL.** Her family was part of the early Unonius settlement at Pine Lake. She was an early graduate of the Whitewater Normal School and taught for a time in rural schools. She later **joined the staff of Milwaukee Public School System**. In the 1890's was appointed **principal** of the newest Milwaukee School built on the south side.
- ❑ **HAKANSON Brothers. EMIL** and **RUDY HAKANSON** were prominent early **auto dealers** in Milwaukee and public figures. **Emil** was a notable **auto racing driver**, driving historic types of stock cars noted for speed and durability. His brother **Rudy** was active in city civic affairs and in **1934 elected President of the Milwaukee Brewers Baseball Club**.
- ❑ **THORSTEN LINDBERG.** A Swedish born **Commercial Artist**, Lindberg was trained in Stockholm's Royal Academy. He came to the U.S. in 1900 (Chicago) and moved to Milwaukee in 1911, specializing in mural painting. Examples of his mural work can be seen today in what was the **Milwaukee Auditorium's Juneau, Walker and Kilbourn Halls**.
- ❑ **OTTO D. BJORKQUIST.** B. 1822 D. 1903. A very successful 19th century Swedish American **businessman**. After several decades of successful business in Central Wisconsin, he moved to Milwaukee in 1869, becoming a jobber and later **manufacturer of boots and shoes**. By 1881, his firm was doing several hundred dollars in annual trade that extended throughout the Midwest. His son, also named Otto, became his partner. When the father retired in 1903, he was listed in the Milwaukee City Directory as a "retired capitalist"

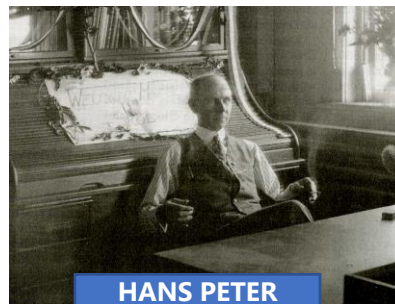




# Wisconsin Swedish-Americans



- ❑ **GRETA GARBO.** Internationally known actress in Sweden and Hollywood. She **owned real estate property** at several sites in Milwaukee.
- ❑ **HANS PETER DAHLSTRAND.** Born. 1874. Design Engineer at Allis Chalmers. Owned many **patents for steel turbines**. Trained as engineer in Sweden, he became famous in his field at Allis Chalmers in U.S.A.
- ❑ **CARL SANDBERG.** Reform -minded. **Journalist/Socialist political candidate.** Private Secretary for Milwaukee's 1<sup>st</sup> Socialist Mayor. Writer of excellent Lincoln biography
- ❑ **INGRID BERGMAN.** World famous movie actress. One of her best roles was biography of **Golda Meier**, famous Israeli political leader who spent much of her early life in **Milwaukee**.
- ❑ **IRVINE L. LENROOT.** 1869 – 1949 Lawyer, judge, United States Senator from Wisconsin. Born of Swedish immigrant parents. Elected to **House** of Representatives in 1908. Elected to **Senate** in 1918 and 1920. Appointed a **Federal judge** in 1928 and served until 1944.
- ❑ **WM. H. REHNQUIST.** Achieved judicial fame when he became **16<sup>th</sup> Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in 1986**. His Swedish immigrant grandfather was a skilled master tailor in Milwaukee and active religious leader in the Covenant Church.



HANS PETER  
DAHLSTRAND



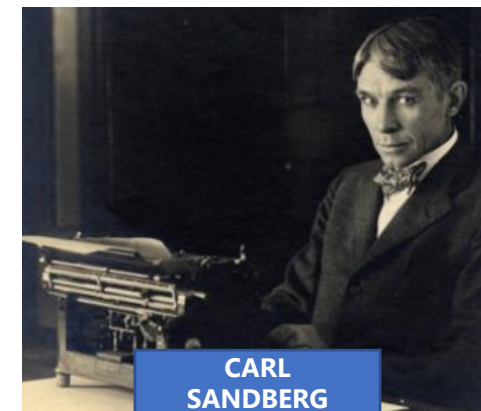
INGRID  
BERGMAN



GRETA GARBO



WILLIAM  
REHNQUIST



CARL  
SANDBERG





# Swedish American Historical Society of Wisconsin, Inc.



Website



[www.sahswi.org](http://www.sahswi.org)



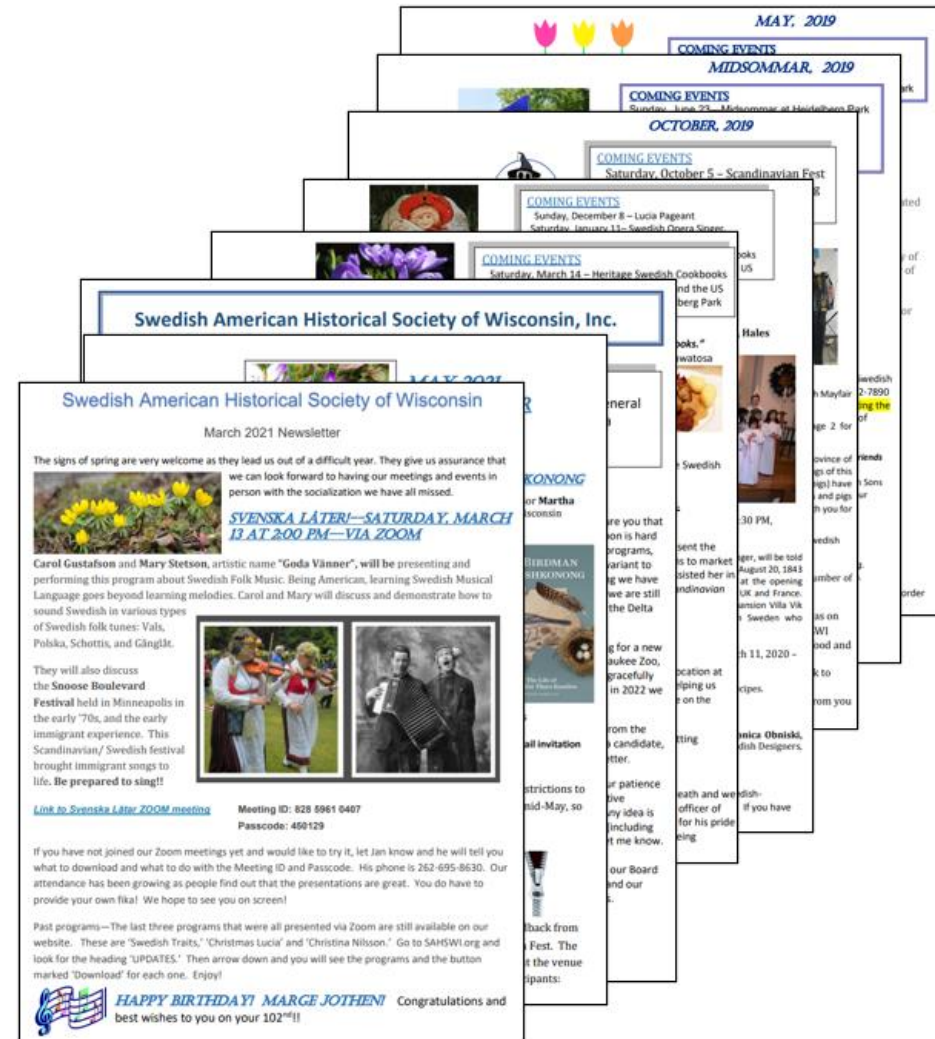
[@sahswi](https://www.facebook.com/sahswi)



# SAHSWI Newsletter



- Editor Joann Kreimendahl
- 4 - 6 issues per year
- E-mail or US Postal Service
- Announcements
- Meeting information and schedule
- Historical short stories





# Swedish American Historical Society of Wisconsin, Inc.



You are welcome to contact us !

☐ If you wish additional information

☐ E-mail: [swedishamericanhistoricalwisc@gmail.com](mailto:swedishamericanhistoricalwisc@gmail.com)

☐ Contact Jan Ehrengren, President

☐ Phone (262) 352-8630

☐ E-mail [jesahsow@outlook.com](mailto:jesahsow@outlook.com)

☐ Membership

☐ Download and Send application form to

☐ Swedish American Historical Society of WI, Inc. c/o **Bev Wenzel**,  
4205 Kamala Ln., Brookfield, WI 53045.

☐ \$10 check payable to "Swedish American Historical Society of WI,  
Inc. c/o Bev Wenzel"

☐ Application form: [Download](#)



Swedish American Historical Society of Wisconsin

Membership Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address line 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Address line 2: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Send newsletters to my e-mail address: Yes: \_\_\_ No: \_\_\_

Add me to the Genealogy Research Group Mailings: Yes: \_\_\_ No: \_\_\_

Swedish heritage, city, province, names, years, etc.: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Membership:

Membership fee \$10 annually

Please print and mail completed form and a check for the membership fee to Bev Wenzel, 4205 Kamala Ln,  
Brookfield, WI 53045

Please make check payable to:

"Swedish American Historical Society of WI, Inc. c/o Bev Wenzel"