

Swedish American Historical Society of Wisconsin

OCTOBER 2026



COMING EVENTS—

October 17—Fika Meeting-Program by
Birgit Moxon

November 20-22—Holiday Folk Fair

December 13—Lucia Celebration

Fika and Business

The final Fika meeting of the year is scheduled on October 17, at 1:30 PM at Martin Luther Lutheran Church, 9235 West Bluemound Road, Milwaukee, located just east of the Milwaukee Zoo. First the annual Business meeting will be conducted including election of board members and presentation of Annual reports by officers and committee leaders. Immediately following the Annual Meeting member Birgit Moxon will present the Program: **"A tale of two Islands"**

After the presentation enjoy traditional Fika the Swedish way. If you can, bring a dish to share. Do you have a favorite Swedish recipe you want to share? If so, bring it and we can add it to the website Swedish [Food Heritage page](#).

Update on Volunteering

SAHSWI is a non-profit all volunteer organization dependent on member volunteering to lead and participate in programs and events. There are two open positions in continued operations of the organization: Hospitality Committee Leader and Membership Committee member.

Election of directors

During the Annual Meeting, one director will be on the ballot. John Engel and Janet Taylor were appointed to be members of the nominating committee. Tracy Redman has completed a three-year term and has been nominated for re-election. In accordance with the bylaws, additional nominations may be made only by petition in writing by two or more Society members to the Secretary, along with written consent of each additional nominee, prior to the opening of the Annual General Meeting.

REMEMBERING GEORGE LOFGREN

George Lofgren, 94, passed away on September 13, 2026. Our deepest condolences to his wife Carol and family.

George volunteered for SAHSWI for many years and served on the board of directors from 2008 to 2021. Being an Engineer and a Quality professional he engineered and built the May Pole used at the annual Midsommar Celebration at Heidelberg Park in Glendale.

George supervising the assembly of the May Pole at 2018 Midsommar celebration

George treasured his Swedish ancestry and worked diligently in preserving Swedish traditions for present and future generations. He was very active in the preservation of the site of the Friman family who were the first Swedish settlers and property owners in Wisconsin. He also guided the investments to continue maintenance of the Historical Marker in Genoa City honoring the Friman family."



George Lofgren Obituary: <https://www.jsonline.com/obituaries/pwix1570421>

Hospitality Committee Leader for 2027

Fika is a traditional Swedish activity, taking a break mid-morning and mid-afternoon with family and/or friends, sit down to enjoy a cup of coffee and some sweets. This tradition is a key element in our Swedish American Historical Society of Wisconsin in all our Fika meetings and most celebrations and events. For this to work, we need a volunteer to coordinate and lead this important part of our activities. So, for 2027 we are looking for **the Hospitality Committee leader**. This position has been held by **Janet Taylor** for several years, and she has been doing a terrific job, but now she deserves a break. This will involve 4 fika meetings, in January, March, May, and October for Fika meetings held at **Martin Luther Lutheran Church, 9235 West Bluemound Road, Milwaukee** located just east of Milwaukee Zoo. At the meetings there are usually several people that will help and members and guests at the meetings will bring pastry and other food. As the Committee leader you can organize it based on your own ideas.

If you have any questions, please contact **Janet** (e-mail: jbtaylor765@gmail.com) in. The Schedule for 2027 will be released by mid October 2026.

Membership Committee member

The Membership Committee objective is to maintain and grow membership. This includes tasks such as contacting potential new members, welcoming new members, and several administrative tasks managing membership including updating membership application forms, managing membership renewal process, maintaining organization brochures, etc.

For more Membership Committee information please contact Bev Wenzel (e-mail: wenz113@outlook.com)

There are two major events left this year which still have volunteer opportunities: Holiday Folk Fair International and St Lucia Celebration.

2026 Holiday Folk Fair International Cultural Booth Attendants

SAHSWI is participating, together with **Vasa Order Linde Lodge no 492**, representing Sweden in the 2026 Holiday Folk Fair International. The fair is held **Nov 20 through 22 at the State Fair park**. We are participating in the **Nordic Council Cultural Exhibit booth**. The Nordic Council is coordinating the event for the Nordic Countries Denmark, Norway Finland and Sweden. The theme this year is **“Celebrate the Culture of Traditional Dance”**.

2026 HOLIDAY FOLK FAIR INTERNATIONAL

Friday, November 20 - Sunday, November 22

State Fair Park Exposition Center · 8200 West Greenfield Avenue · West Allis, Wisconsin 53214

America's Premiere Multicultural Festival ... Explore the World of Music, Food, Dance, and Arts

**Travel Around the World at the 83rd Annual
Holiday Folk Fair International**



Holiday Folk Fair International, America's premier multicultural festival and a program of the International Institute of Wisconsin, celebrates the cultural heritage of the people living in southeastern Wisconsin. You can explore the ways music, food, dance, and art weave together a message of welcome.

To best represent Sweden in this multi-cultural event we need help from our members. We will have a booth set up with exhibit items, this year focusing on Traditional Dance, however the display can include other typical Swedish items as well.

Swedish displays from previous years



The booth should be attended by a minimum of 2 people for 3 to 4 hours for each shift. There are a total of 8 shifts over 3 days, so we need a minimum of 16 volunteers. By volunteering at one of the shifts, you represent Sweden. There are chairs at each table so you can sit or stand as you wish. We will have information available about **Sweden** and about the theme **Traditional Dance**. People will come over to the booth sometimes asking questions, which normally are very basic, or you can start a conversation when you see them looking at the display. If this is your first time volunteering at the Folk Fair we can assure you it is quite interesting and fun. One activity, especially for children, is stamping passports, they can see which and how many countries they have stamps for in their passports. The volunteer ticket may be used for Folk Fair entry all three days and parking costs will be reimbursed by SAHSWI.

If you are interested in volunteering attending one of the shifts, please contact by e-mail Jan Ehrengren jehrengren@outlook.com.

Volunteers needed and Volunteer sign up status:

Friday November 20

9 am to 1 pm Liza Ekstrand, John Engel, Jan Ehrengren

1 pm to 5pm

5 pm to 9 pm

Saturday November 21

10 am to 1 pm

1 pm to 4 pm

4 pm to 9 pm

Sunday November 22

10 am to 2 pm

2 pm to 6 pm Lisa Ekstrand, John Engel, Jan Ehrengren

2026 Lucia Celebration Program participants

St. Lucia is celebrated in Sweden on Dec 13 every year. 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. 2026 Lucia celebration will be at Fox Point Lutheran Church, 7510 N Santa Monica Blvd, Fox Point, WI on December 13, 2026, at 2-4 PM. The celebration will be similar to 2025 Lucia which is described in the link below. 2025 Lucia Celebration [2025 Lucia challenge | Swedish American Historical Society of Wisconsin](#)

If you know of anyone, child or young adult, that want to participate in the Lucia program, please contact Program Director Stina Lemery, dannbergs@gmail.com. Please see message from Stina.

[Stina's message](#)

A TALE OF TWO CITIES—ONE VERY OLD AND THE OTHER IN THE NEW WORLD.

Lund, Sweden, 10 miles from Malmö, was founded in 990 A.D. The year was determined after finding the remains of the stave church built by the Danish Viking king Sven Forkbeard who reigned from 985 to 1014 A.D. Scientists used dendrochronology to establish the age of the stave church which became the founding of Lund.

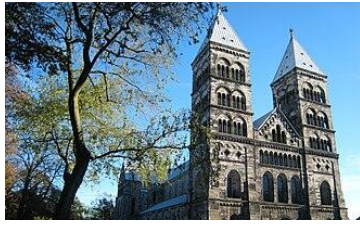


Figure 1 Lund Cathedral

Drotten's Church near the main square is the oldest stone church..

Archaeologists excavated foundation walls that were 12 feet below street level over 30 years ago. The remains of the Viking stave church were found in the Drotten Church cemetery and are now the core of the Drotten Church Museum and its depiction of medieval life.

Lund's cathedral was begun in 1080 A.D. and was consecrated in 1145. In addition to many ancient artifacts, it has a unique astronomical clock that strikes the hour several times a day, followed by the procession of intricately carved wooden figures.

Nearby is the Main Building of Lund University. Established in 1668 with a goal of instilling Swedish identity in the area that had been Danish just 10 years previously, it is a world-class university with many buildings scattered throughout the city. Lund because of the university has grown to over 132,000 people and is a center for high-tech industry.



Figure 2 Lund University Library

ANDERSONVILLE, ILLINOIS

Carl Sandberg wrote the following in tribute to Swedish settlers: *"They shared in the making of America from the wilderness days...Their toils, endurance, and valor...are woven as a scarlet thread in the American story."*

Andersonville was sparsely populated area when the first Swedes settled there in the mid 1800's. There are several sources for the name: a small schoolhouse in the area--Andersonville School; a highway commissioner named John Andersson who farmed in the area; and Rev. Paul Anderson, a Norwegian, who also lived and farmed in the area.

After the great Chicago fire of 1871, there was an influx of people, many of whom came by horse-drawn streetcars. Swedish businesses prospered—Hedstrom's Shoes, Gustafson's Haberdashery, Lind Hardware, Johnson Brothers Grocery. Churches were established with services in Swedish; most members were immigrants from the old country.

During the silent film era, Andersonville was an entertainment capital. Essanay Studios made many movies and Gloria Swanson, Charlie Chapman, Edgar Bergen, and others made their debuts in Andersonville.

After the decline caused by the Great Depression, the residents decided to revitalize with a new chamber of commerce. In 1964, the governor of Illinois, the mayor of Chicago and other dignitaries came for a rededication of the Andersonville neighborhood. The Swedish American Museum Center serves to remind visitors how Swedes helped in the building of Chicago and to preserve customs like Lucia—as many SAHSWI members will attest!

