

President's Annual Report
Swedish American Historical Society of Wisconsin, Inc.
September 30th, 2020

Our Society has experienced a very unusual year as we tried to continue in our efforts to honor the history of the Swedish American presence in Wisconsin and to keep many traditions of our Swedish heritage alive in spite of the many restrictions the current Covid-19 pandemic has placed in our path.

In some ways we have made considerable progress and we are certainly becoming familiar with ways that modern technology can help us stay connected. What we really miss is gathering to share our stories and the camaraderie of having Fika together.

Our Programs from October 2019 to October 2020 included:

- October 5 -- Scandinavian Festival – Presented by the Nordic Council of which we are a member
- October 12 -- SAHSWI Annual General Meeting – Program, “History and Tradition of the Dala Horse,” presented by member, John Elliott
- December 8 -- Lucia Pageant, Sonia Hummel, Director. Approximately 175 people participated/attended.
- January 11 -- Meeting rescheduled for February due to a snowstorm
- February 8 -- Program, “Swedish Opera Singer, Christina Nilsson,” presented by Carol Gustafson and Mary Stetson. (Christina is Carol’s Gr Gr Aunt.)
- March 14 -- Meeting cancelled due to gathering restrictions because of the virus spread. Information about the planned program, “Exploring our Swedish Food Heritage,” was made available on our Website.
- May 9 -- Meeting cancelled. Program was to have been presented by Monica Obnisky, curator of the “Scandinavian Design” Exhibit at the Milwaukee Art Museum.
- May 15 -- “Scandinavian Design” Exhibit at MAM also cancelled and rescheduled for 2023.
- June 28 -- Midsommar Celebration at Heidelberg Park – cancelled.

We are now in the process of planning a virtual Annual Meeting for Saturday, October 10th, at 1:30 p.m. via Zoom.

Projects Underway:

Historical Records – Member, Bev Wenzel, met with Craig Gross, an archivist referred to us by the Milwaukee County Historical Society, to further organize our historical files, make our holdings archival safe, and sort out appropriate records to be transferred to the Milwaukee County Historical Society’s archives. This has been accomplished.

Historical Projects – Member, Harry Anderson, is compiling selections of some of his writings to be published under the guidance of Director, Martha Bergland. We hope to complete this project in 2021.

Currently, Director, Jan Ehrensen, is researching the possibility of requesting the State of Wisconsin establish a permanent historical marker near Pine Lake in Chenequa, WI, where Gustav Unonius and a group of Swedish immigrants created the first Swedish Settlement in Wisconsin.

These projects are being funded by the Marge Jothen Fund.

Website -- Thanks to Director Jan Ehrensen, our Website is continuing to expand and improve, not only providing the latest Society news, but also including entertaining and informative information. Be sure to look in at sahswi.org.

The Latest News:

The Board of Directors has made the decision to allow dues for 2020 to be carried over as dues for 2021. Please note that your additional donations are always welcome. There are currently 117 dues paying members.

We are sad to report the passing of long time member and Director, Doug Foss, earlier this year. Doug served the Society faithfully for many years as Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair, and he is sorely missed.

Another major challenge we are facing is the fact that our meeting place, Redemption Lutheran Church, has recently been sold. The new owner will be taking possession December 1st, so we are in the process of exploring potential meeting place possibilities.

Thank You:

I would like to express my grateful thanks to all of our officers, committee chairmen, and especially to our dedicated members. Let's hope 2021 brings us the opportunity to gather again so we can enjoy our Swedish heritage together.

George Lofgren, Vice President and Finance Chairman
Joann Kreimendahl, Secretary and Newsletter Publisher
Martha Bergland, Karin Konrad, John Elliott, Jan Ehrengren,
Directors

Marge Jothen, Genealogy & Hist. Files
Bev Wenzel, Publicity & Memb. Sec'y
Pat & Fred Sommer, Hospitality
Denise Herzog, Assistant Treasurer

Respectfully submitted

Barbara G. Froemming
President