

A large yellow crane is lifting a blue and yellow cylindrical structure, likely a water tower or ventilation stack, from a rooftop construction site. The structure is suspended by cables and is being lowered into place. The background shows a brick building with a balcony and a white building with windows. A banner for 'SWEDISH AMERICAN' is visible on the brick building, and a sign for 'MIENA' is visible on the white building. The sky is clear and blue.

# SWEDISH AMERICAN MUSEUM

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

# SWEDISH AMERICAN MUSEUM 2017

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*On the cover: the Water  
Tower replacement being  
installed in August 2017.*

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## GREETINGS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Emilia Terragni (Phaidon) and Magnus Nilsson with Dan and Karin Abercrombie at a tribute dinner held at Tre Kronor Restaurant. (Photo by Karl Soderstrom)

Looking back at 2017 it feels that the year flew by and there were still things on the “Wish and ToDo List” at the end of the year. Yet, we accomplished more than I would have been able to imagine when the year started. Before I go into an overview of the year, I want to thank everyone: staff, board, trustees, members, volunteers, and friends of the Museum for their ongoing support and dedication to the Museum and to all of us. We continue to grow thanks to being a community.

We welcomed three new staff members in 2017. Our small staff of five full-time and two part-time operated at skeleton level for half of 2017. We started the year looking for a Curator and fortunately, we connected with Keith Ulrich who came aboard in early March. He was familiar with the Museum, since he had volunteered in the collection area, and quickly became familiar with the collection and our exhibits.

Simultaneously we interviewed for a Member and Community Engagement Manager and Caroline Gerbaulet-Vanasse joined the staff in May. Caroline was also familiar with the Museum both as a volunteer and as a member since her family has been involved for many

years. She connected with members and volunteers and is always looking at how we can connect with our community at large.

The last addition to our staff in 2017 was our Store Manager, Frida Idesten, a graduate of North Park University with a one-year work visa. With Christmas around the corner, she had to quickly learn our inventory and engage with the volunteers who were more familiar with our products and customers. All throughout these changes Stacey Nyman, Education Manager, and Angelica Farzaneh-Far, Marketing Manager, helped keep us all connected thanks to their steady and calm approach and dedication.

In the middle of some of these changes, a group of volunteers planned and held a fabulous celebration for over 100 guests of the Museum’s 40 years in Andersonville. Paul Muhr’s talent as a videomaster was truly enjoyed by everyone through a photo slide show displaying our four decades. The ribbon cutting for the new Genealogy Center, by Barbara Raffail and Bengt Sjögren, was very special and many visitors have already

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## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S GREETING CONTINUED



*Wooden Spoon Cooking event, February 2017, with Kevin Palmer, Trinda Sheridan (The Wooden Spoon), David Anthonsen, Patty Rasmussen (Tre Kronor) and Karin Moen Abercrombie.*

enjoyed the new room on the second floor. We have Ulla Sivertsen to thank for a song about the Museum sung to the tune of Mamma Mia. Three Museum members, Paul Rimington, Annette Seaberg, and Bengt Sjögren, told the story of the Museum's Past, Present, and Future. We enjoyed food by Tre Kronor and Wikstrom's Specialty Foods.

As we celebrated the accomplishments of the last 40 years, we could not have guessed what 2017 would hold in store for us. In August we welcomed back the Water Tower to Andersonville and to our roof top. A very special day for all of us at the Museum. More about that later in this Annual Report. We embarked on the "Road to Recovery" in March 2014 without really knowing what we got ourselves into. In August it all came together when the steel and fiberglass structure was lifted off the ground on Clark Street, and myself together with the steel workers and our designer and architect Miles Lindblad stood on top of the platform on our roof to have the Water Tower be put in place over and around us. Slightly scary but so exciting!

Some of us knew at that time what the next big accomplishment was going to be but just like any project we didn't know what twists and turns it would take for the Museum to be owner of another building - 5217 N. Clark St. With the help of many at Bank of America and our member Annette Seaberg the financing was secured in time for the special day on Sept. 8, 2017, when we signed the documents. A new phase of our life in Andersonville had begun.

Two other celebrations that stand out from 2017 included our Aspire! Gala on Nov. 4, 2017, Co-chaired by Russell and Catherine Holmquist at Sunset Ridge Country Club. A special evening for our guests and honoring of Aldermen Harry Osterman and Patrick O'Connor, both whom are true supporters of the Museum on all levels. In addition we had a fabulous Midsommarfest in June with great music, lots of flower wreaths on many heads, and it was all under the direction of Steve Satek. The area in front of the music stage on Saturday evening with ABBA Salute singing and playing was packed with happy music lovers. It is so much fun for the Museum to be part of Andersonville's Midsommarfest for two full days.

In ending, we are proud to let you know that the Fundraising Committee with Co-chairs Bengt Sjögren and Kerstin Lane raised over \$1,000,000 for our 40th Anniversary Campaign. We set the goal without having a specific plan, we had faith and enthusiasm for the Museum and together with you our members and donors, we made it happen. The projects that were made possible by the campaign were worked on in 2017 and they will continue for the next 2-3 years. We will keep you informed and welcome you to join in our celebration.

All our events and daily activities at the Museum are successful thanks to our wonderful Volunteers who dedicate their time and talents to all of us. The staff is thankful for the support and the energy and enthusiasm that we get on a daily basis.

It was truly a special year and we are all proud of what we accomplished together. Now we are on the journey for the next year of known and unknown adventures.

## CHAIRPERSON'S LETTER



*Janet Nelson and Mattias Hallendorf at the Åsa Bengtsson tapestry installation at the Bishop Hill Heritage Association.*

**W**e started our 41st year with a bang. What excitement when the Water Tower took its proper place back on the roof of the Swedish American Museum. The Andersonville community turned out to watch the spectacle that they have supported and waited for.

The Museum has been in perpetual motion and, the kitchen remodeling reached its completion as well. It is a wonderful new addition to the Museum and will serve us well for many years to come. A lot of Swedish traditions revolve around food, so how appropriate that we are now able to introduce Andersonville to some traditions that we hold near and dear to our hearts.

Just when we were taking a relaxing breather from all the work, the building at 5217 became available for purchase. The executive director, board of directors and trustees immediately jumped at the chance to expand

the museum and our presence here in Andersonville. The decision was met with joy and excitement. What an opportunity for us to expand. Thank you one and all for being involved with the Museum, caring about its future and supporting its programs. Without caring members, friends and neighbors this would not be possible.

The staff at the Museum, though we have had turnover, has always met every challenge presented and superseded expectations. Thank you so much.

My joy and excitement has been watching and celebrating with members of the museum and the community as well. Thank you for this opportunity.

With joy and excitement for the future,

Janet Nelson

## THE ASPIRE GALA



Left to right back row: Nels and Alice Nelson, and Richard and Joanne Larsson. Front row: Rosemary Schnell, Russell Bruzek, and Lenore and Robert Johnson.



Chairs Russell and Catherine Holmquist with Master of Ceremonies Sara M. Dinges.



Alderman Patrick O'Connor, 40th Ward, and Alderman Harry Osterman, 48th Ward, Aspire! Gala honorees.

Aspire!



## THE ASPIRE GALA



*Kerstin Lane dancing to the music of Hugh Too.*



*Annette Seaberg celebrated her birthday at the gala.*



*Aspire!*

*Gala volunteers left to right: Stacey Nyman, Keith Ulrich, Bridget Hutson, Kate Sheehy, Anna Engström Patel, Linn Austin, Ariane Heffernan, Caroline Johansson, Kevin Williams, Linda Flentye, Christel Rydström, Caroline Gerbaulet-Vanasse, Else-Britt DeLong, Jill Ryder, Frida Idesten and Angelica Farzaneh-Far*

## OUR WONDERFUL VOLUNTEERS

Where would we be without our spectacular volunteers? Let us think of the many achievements made by, events and activities run in large part by, and the many daily components of the Museum's daily life that are facilitated by our volunteers. 2017 was a year that saw a 'changing of the guards' on multiple fronts including a new Curator, Store manager, and Member and Community Engagement manager. Our volunteers were so welcoming and helpful to our new staff members.



Kathy Voss, Kevin Palmer and Karin Moen Abercrombie

Volunteers are much more than helpers! Often they are the first faces our visitors engage with upon visiting the Museum or attending an event. At our big annual events, such as Midsommarfest, the Gala and Julmarknad are when the greatest number of volunteers get the chance to join in. It was such a wonderful sight to see regulars, occasional, and new volunteers join forces to help the Museum put its best foot forward! Our volunteers continued in 2017 to be a vital group. We would not be the same without them, and many of our fantastic events could not take place without their help.

*“I love to volunteer at many events, but my favorite is Pancakes with Pippi. The children’s excitement is catching and I love to see their smiling faces and hear their gleeful laughter at Pippi’s antics. Of course, the pancakes are wonderful too!”*

Vereen Nordstrom

*“I enjoy talking with the people visiting the Museum from Sweden. I enjoy hearing what they have seen and done in this country and I tell them about my visits to Sweden.”*

Wayne Nelson

Volunteer of the Year in 2017 was Kevin Palmer. Kevin has been a member and volunteer of the Museum for about 15 years. He brings a wonderful abundance of energy and dedication to every project, event, and committee meeting that he partakes in. He is a great support to the Brunk’s Children’s Museum Advisory Board and volunteers at family events such as Pancakes with Pippi and Breakfast with Tomten. He can also be seen creating flower crowns for young children at Midsommarfest. Furthermore, Kevin is a joy to work alongside, as he simply exudes the most wonderful attitude that brings smiles to everyone’s faces whether they be young or old.



# SWEDISH AMERICAN GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

**Y**ou never know what experiences you might have at the Museum's genealogy events.

Participants in the 2017 programs had a wide range of experiences. We learned about the poverty-stricken area of Småland through the eyes of a young boy left behind as many of his relatives emigrated to America. We participated in an immigration trivia contest to learn about the American immigration process experienced by our ancestors.

On another side of the world, we learned that Swedish culture is still preserved in Oberá, Argentina, once the largest Swedish colony in Latin America. We delved into the past and learned that the origins of the current royal family, the House of Bernadotte, lie not in Scandinavia, but in 19th century France and a Napoleonic marshal called Jean-Baptiste Bernadotte. Hence, the "French Connection."

Most of us do not have royalty in our family tree but might have soldiers or blacksmiths in our background. Participants were shown steps for locating military records for Swedish soldiers and learned of a database focused on blacksmiths. Both are helpful to genealogy research.

We discovered new features in ArkivDigital that provide access to over 68 million newly colored photographed images or about 136 million pages of historical records. We were awed to discover that 600,000 new images are added monthly.



*The new Genealogy Center*

*"One of the most important tools in searching for Swedish ancestors is the subscription website ArkivDigital. This meeting, led by Kathy Meade, informed me about new features and shortcuts. Informative and helpful."*  
Wayne Nelson

Participants heard about Sweden's local historical societies and discovered what is offered to genealogists touring their ancestor's homeland.

*"Upon our arrival in Gällerstå, the director and volunteers welcomed us to a tour of their Skansen-style historical village, visited the church and the 19th century childhood home of my grandmother. We never would have had this priceless experience without the knowledge I gained through this genealogy program led by Bengt Sjögren."*  
Melinda Pierce

We gathered together and shared recipes from ancestors and stories about family traditions at Christmas.

*"Two members surprised us by bringing samples of the old family recipe for spritz cookies made in the traditional S and O shapes. Another member brought a delicious cake to share. Yum."*  
Sue Nordstrom

One fantastic event we experienced was the opening of the new Genealogy Center. The updated Genealogy Center was made possible thanks to individual donors and a matching donation from the Delmar and Audria M. Olson Family Foundation. Researchers and volunteers are delighted with the modern furniture and new computers in this cheerful newly painted and carpeted room.

Thanks to the volunteers in the Genealogy Center who help beginning and advanced researchers with their ancestry journey on Wednesday afternoons and select Saturday afternoons: Sue Jackson, Shirley Koelling, Kathy Meade, Wayne Nelson, and Bengt Sjögren. Thanks also to the members of the Genealogy Advisory Board who plan the Saturday presentations, research times, and special events: Dr. Daniel Hubbard, Sue Jackson, Kathy Meade, Wayne Nelson, Sue Nordstrom, Vereen Nordstrom, and Bengt Sjögren.

It was a busy year for all. Come experience genealogy events with us.

# THE BRUNK CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF IMMIGRATION



Pioneer the World day camp.



The number of people reached by the Brunk Children's Museum of Immigration in 2017:

Children's Museum	School Tours	Birthday Parties	Special Events
12,285	3,969	1,327	1,500

**2017** was a delightful year at the Brunk Children's Museum of Immigration. As always, the Children's Museum was a bustling, high-energy place bringing in children and children at heart. From visitors yearning to experience a hands-on approach to early immigration to visitors looking for a place to dive into imaginative play, the Children's Museum provided both education and an outlet for creativity on a daily basis.

*"My son looks forward to camp each summer and always steps away with a great appreciation for the cultures studied."*  
Parent of a Pioneer Camper

School tours are a major part of our educational programming. In 2017, we led 93 tours exposing children and adults to authentic artifacts and the immigration experience. We also promoted Swedish culture to visitors of many different backgrounds through dance and traditional arts and crafts. The phrase, "this was the best field trip ever!" was often heard. Teachers reported that coming on a field trip to the Museum was the perfect supplement to their curriculum. The students aren't just being told about what life was like. They are seeing artifacts and hearing stories in our Dream of America Exhibit. They are touching, exploring and role-playing in our Children's Museum.

*"I thought the guided tour and discussion was outstanding. The information was presented at a level the students were engaged and could comprehend. The approach was in a way that did not make the students feel patronized due to their comprehension disability. She made their questions feel well thought out and important."*

Alan Garrard,  
High School Teacher at Marengo  
Community High School

Family programs make up another big piece of educational programming. This includes birthday parties along with special events

# THE BRUNK CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF IMMIGRATION



Breakfast with Tomten, Paul and Barbara Rimington with 4 of their grandchildren.



Isabell, Colin, Liam and Lucy playing in the Brunk Children's Museum of Immigration.

like Pancakes with Pippi, Pioneer the World Day Camp and our wildly popular Breakfast with Tomten. Not only do these special events feature engaging, educational and fun activities, but they provide a great opportunity for visitors to invite friends who have never been here before. Many people coming in for a special event return with their families to explore another time. We also see quite a few birthday parties booked because the host had been to a birthday party as a guest. A highlight from 2017 was the opportunity to, once again, be a guest organization at Millennium Park's Family Fun Festival. For seven days in June 2017, the Museum provided crafts for families visiting from all over the United States and beyond. We exposed visitors to Pippi

Longstocking, Vikings, Dala Horses, Midsommar and more. During our week, 11,221 people walked through the tent, many stopping to do a craft, read about the Museum, ask questions and collect marketing materials. Numerous connections were made that week. We have had quite a few visitors come to the Museum stating that they discovered us at Millennium Park.

*"Best field trip of the year! Very aligned with our curriculum and the staff is very knowledgeable. The experience is a perfect combination of historical learning/instruction and experiential learning."*

Susan Nordberg, 4th grade teacher  
at Greenbriar School

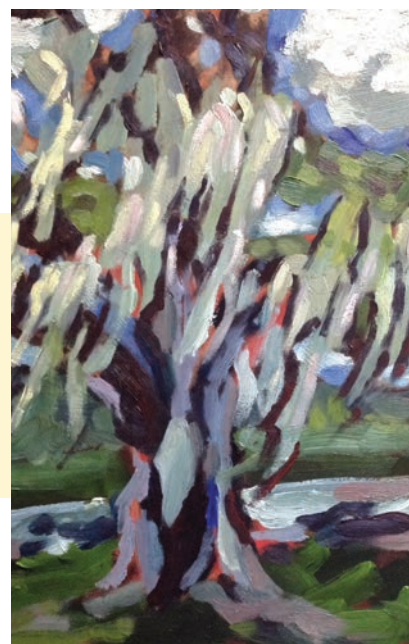
In closing, we'd like to invite everyone to the Children's Museum to experience the joy of play and exploration. You definitely do not need to be a child to enjoy a visit. Additionally, if you have any talents to share or a desire to volunteer, please do not hesitate to contact us.

*"My girls say they want to come to camp for as long as they are able. And when they are too old, they want to be counselors! I tell all my friends!"*

Parent of a Pioneer Camper



## 2017 MUSEUM EXHIBITS



*Above Left: Mats Alfredsson. Middle: Magnus Nilsson. Right: Christina Juran.*

The Swedish American Museum's two gallery spaces offers an opportunity to broaden every visitor's view of Sweden. 2017 was a particularly exciting year in the main gallery. We were honored to start the year with Lars-Birger Sponberg. His exhibit "Significance of the Ordinary" used bold colors and strong, sure strokes to pay tribute to the landscape of the Midwest. In Sponberg's words: "We often mark the significant events of our lives and fail to note the passages that lie in between. In using the Midwest landscapes as subjects of these paintings I am calling attention to the extraordinariness of the commonplace, the in-betweens of the celebrated places as well as the in-betweens of our lives".

In the spring we were introduced to the concept of sustainable housing in the northern part of Sweden.

The exhibit "22 Sustainable Houses from Bollnäs to Kiruna" included a series of photographs, descriptions and a talk by architect Ulf Nordwall. The visitors were introduced to the delicate balance between beauty, function and environment. Adaptive re-use, passive energy concepts and traditional building methods are just a few of the ideas these designs explored in their attempt to preserve natural resources and contribute to long-term ecological balance.

In the summer we were all a bit star struck. Magnus Nilsson, acclaimed Swedish chef and photographer, exhibited the pictures from his latest cookbook "Nordic". The larger than life pictures transported visitors to the kitchens and landscapes of the Nordic countries. The Museum had a summer of food with programs and talks on the

topic of the culture of eating and cooking. Magnus visit to Chicago was accompanied by events ranging from screenings of "The Mind of a Chef" and book signing to wonderful summer dinners inspired by the Nordic cookbook at Tre Kronor and Vincent in collaboration with Appellation and Big Jones.

Christina Juran is a Swedish-American artist who derives inspiration from her Swedish grandfather, also an artist. Christina's exhibit "Roots: Source of Inspiration" depicted the world around her in bold and vibrant ways.

"51% Swedish" is a travelling exhibit that picks up stories on the way. At every city it goes to, the artists pick up a couple of immigration stories to add to the collection in either pictures with stories or as a cartoon strip. The exhibit was just as

## 2017 MUSEUM EXHIBITS CONTINUED



Opening of “Chicago Streetwalk” by Mats Alfredsson in the Raoul Wallenberg Gallery.

entertaining as it was informative. As tradition states, every winter the Swedish American Museum brings out its collection of tapestry or Bonader. Bonader are meant to decorate the walls and ceilings of homes at Christmas time and on feast days, thus adding a note of color and gaiety to the otherwise dark interiors. Between festivities, these canvas or paper panels were taken down and carefully kept, to become a part of the family inheritance. The collection of Bonader at the Swedish American Museum is the eighth largest known collection.

### Main Gallery

Significance of the Ordinary  
Lars-Birger Sponberg  
Jan. 13 - March 12, 2017

22 Sustainable Houses from Bollnäs to Kiruna  
Ulf Nordwall and Thomas Olofsson

March 19 - June 4, 2017  
Nordic: A Photographic Essay of Landscape, Food and People  
Magnus Nilsson  
June 16 - Sept. 24, 2017

Roots: Source of Inspiration  
Christina Juran  
Sept. 29 - Nov. 26, 2017

51% Swedish  
Dec. 5, 2017 - Jan. 14, 2018

Bonader  
Dec. 5, 2017 - Jan. 7, 2018

### Raoul Wallenberg Gallery

2017 started with two photography exhibits in the Raoul Wallenberg Gallery. The first one was a series of black and white pictures by Björn Breitholtz. “Something has happened” takes the visitor back to a time when boat travel to America was still common.

We meet the excited travelers as well as their friends and family waving goodbye.

Swedish-American photographer Mats Alfredsson went on a “Chicago streetwalk”, capturing moments as he walks along. These snapshots of daily life also bring out the soul of the city.

Similarly, Gordon Strömberg finds his inspiration on the streets of Chicago. The things he finds turn into collages that tell the story of where he has been.

At Christmas a beloved tradition in Sweden was brought to the visitors. “It’s just ducky! A modern Swedish Christmas tradition” explained the fascination and importance that Donald Duck means to the Swedish population on Christmas Eve.

Something Has Happened  
Björn Breitholtz  
Nov. 6, 2016 - March 25, 2017

Chicago Streetwalk  
Mats Alfredsson  
March 30 - July 22, 2017

Nordic: A Photographic Essay of Landscape, Food and People  
Magnus Nilsson  
July 22 - Sept. 24, 2017

Streetwalks and Lamp Posts: 39 Collages  
Gordon Strömberg  
Oct. 13 - Nov. 19, 2017

It’s Just Ducky! A Modern Swedish Christmas Tradition  
Nov. 24, 2017 - Jan. 14, 2018

## 2017 PROGRAMS AND CLASSES

### Milestone Events

- New Genealogy Center opened
- The Water Tower returned to Andersonville
- The Museum acquired 5217 N. Clark
- 40th Anniversary Campaign closes at \$1 million
- Kitchen upgrade underway

### Exhibits

- Significance of the Ordinary by Lars-Birger Sponberg
- 22 Sustainable Houses from Bollnäs to Kiruna by Ulf Nordwall and Thomas Olofsson
- Jordi Arkö lithographs from his illustrated works of Frans G. Bengtsson's Viking epic "Röde Orm"
- Nordic: A Photographic Essay of Landscape, Food and People by Magnus Nilsson
  - Including private dinner attended by Magnus Nilsson, Book Signing with Magnus Nilsson, Guided Tour with Magnus Nilsson, Nordic Mingle, Andersonville Tribute Dinner, Viewing of "Mind of a Chef"
- Roots: Source of Inspiration by Christina Juran
- 51% Swedish
- Bonader
- Something Has Happened by Björn Breitholtz
- Chicago Streetwalk by Mats Alfredsson
- Streetwalks and Lamp Posts: 39 Collages by Gordon Strömberg



*Gunborg and Rolf Larsson, David Anthonen, Annette Seaberg, Astrid Thoren, and Ulla Norberg enjoying Herring Breakfast.*

- It's Just Ducky! A Modern Swedish Christmas Tradition with related events included opening celebrations, Gallery Walk, Start with Art and Family Nights.

### Guided Tours

- The Dream of America - Swedish Immigration to Chicago
- Walking Tour of Andersonville

### Special Events

- Appreciation Brunch
- Fettisdag (Fat Tuesday)
- Herring Breakfasts with Tre Kronor Restaurant
- Celebrating 40 Years Party
- Volunteer Appreciation Dinner and Annual Meeting
- Traditional Swedish Fika
- Aspire! Gala
- Got Glögg? Tasting and Competition

### Holiday Celebrations & Programs

- Easter Craft Workshop
- Midsommarfest including Children's Crafts, Swedish Stage and Beer Tent
- Christmas Preview and Sale
- Julmarknad and Julmarknad Preview Sale
- St. Lucia celebration at Daley Center
- St. Lucia celebration with Ebenezer Lutheran Church
- Breakfast with Tomten
- Svensk Julgudstjänst - Swedish Christmas service with Ebenezer Lutheran Church
- Julmiddag - Traditional Swedish Family Christmas Dinner

### Museum Store On the Road

- Swedish Historical Society Midsommar Celebration in Rockford Illinois



## 2017 PROGRAMS AND CLASSES CONTINUED



Midsommarfest 2017 – Dancing led by Linda Westergren-Muhr.

- Sweden Väst in Geneva Illinois
- Evanston World Arts & Music Festival
- Scandinavian Day Festival in Vasa Park
- Edge Fest
- Chicago Estonian House Christmas Market in Riverwoods
- American Daughters of Sweden luncheon

### Concerts and Performances

- Gregory Maytan and Jonathan Sturm (violin concert)
- One Million Cats and Lots of Hats - Björn Söderbäck
- Dance and Music Party
- Chicago Swedish Mixed Chorus Concert
- Eurovision Viewing Party
- Merula Choir Concert in Celebration of Berit Hennington
- Annual Jenny Lind Concert
- Oskar Stenmark Trio - In My

- Grandmother's Footsteps
- Jaerv - Live in Concert
- Blue Eyed Blondes

### Lectures/Films

- Sustainable Housing
- Mats Alfredsson
- We All Come to the Table: Food as a Storyteller
- Food as Historical Artifacts
- Gardening in Urban Chicago
- Let's Go Fishing

### Family Programs

- Moon Monday
- Hejsan: Story and Craft Hour
- Bullerbyn Swedish Language Playgroup
- Pancakes with Pippi
- Millennium Park Family Fun Festival
- Pioneer the World Day Camp
- Candle Making and Christmas Crafts



Merula Choir under the direction of Ulla-Britt Sivertsen.

### Swedish American Genealogy Center

- Saturday Genealogy sessions
  - Book Discussion of "When I was a Child: an Autobiographical Novel" by Vilhelm Moberg
  - Swedish Military in ArkivDigital
  - Swedish Monarchy Genealogy: The Bernadotte Dynasty
  - The Swedish Blacksmith Database: A Goldmine for Genealogists
  - Sweden's local historical societies - a treasure trove for family research
  - New Resources
  - What's New in ArkivDigital?
  - Swedish Immigration in Argentina and Brazil
  - Immigration Trivia
  - Treasured Family Recipes from the Past

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## 2017 PROGRAMS AND CLASSES CONTINUED



Candle making at the Museum.



Chicago Swedish Mixed Chorus

### Classes and Workshops

- Swedish Language Series
- Scandinavian Dances with Linda Westergren-Muhr and Paul Muhr
- Scandinavian Jam Sessions for Musicians

### Community Events

- With Love from Andersonville benefiting Ebenezer Lutheran Church
- Chicago Volunteer Expo
- International Women's Day Celebration
- Everything But The House Andersonville Water Tower Fundraiser
- DePaul University Vincentian Service Day
- Andersonville Farmer's Markets
- Andersonville Food Tour
- Andersonville Summer Sidewalk Sale

- 22 Sustainable Houses exhibit shared with Swedish Historical Society of Rockford Illinois
- Loyola University Job, Internship and Service Fair
- Concierge Tour (Honored with Concierge Favorite)
- Andersonville Arts Week
- CCA InHerit Chicago - World Dumpling Fest
- Chicago Market Harvest Co-op Pop Up
- CCA InHerit Chicago - Music for All Ages
- Halloween-in-Andersonville
- First Fridays
- 48th Ward International Unity Day
- Andersonville Late Night

The Museum also participated in Ask A Curator Day and Chicago Museum Week.



In honor of Lars-Birger Sponberg, shown above with wife Dallas at the opening of his exhibit "Significance of the Ordinary" in the main gallery.



## 2017 MUSEUM COLLECTION

This year, we accepted a wide array of objects for the Swedish American Museum's permanent, education, and furnishing and props collections, all of which help preserve the Swedish-American experience for future generations of researchers and historians. These objects reflect a range of interests and necessities, from Victorian-era hair jewelry and an 1897 Swedish version of "Uncle Tom's Cabin", to an Andersonville family's World War II food ration booklets.

By far, the largest donation we received in 2017 was from donor Rose Grossinger – more than 300 pieces, including puppets, stage sets, plates and menus from the defunct Swedish restaurant Kungsholm and its Miniature Grand Opera. Long-time Chicagoans may remember that many of these puppets and sets were on display at the Museum of Science and Industry. Thanks to Rose's efforts, they have now found a home with the Museum. As we continue to process the donation, wheels are turning and creative juices flowing with regard to display and performance possibilities with these amazingly well-preserved puppets!

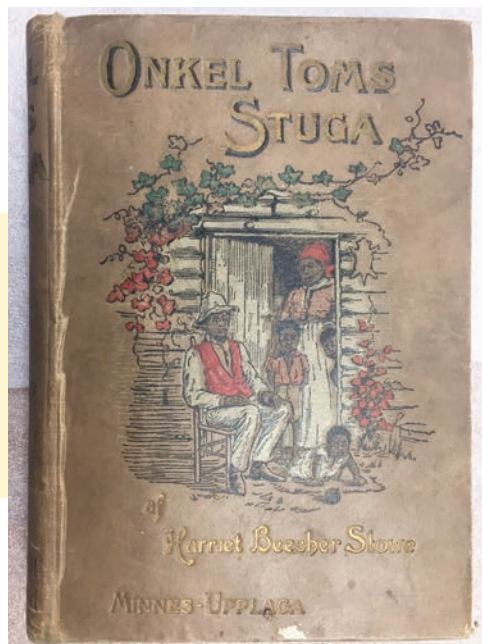
Some of the 2017 donations accepted for the permanent collection reflect the changes occurring in both the Andersonville neighborhood and the Museum. After the closing of Andersonville's revered Swedish Bakery, the owners donated plenty of ephemera related to the long-standing business, including bakery sticker boxes, aprons, advertising materials and four fun Styrofoam letters that



Wine bottle from Water Tower celebration and the 1897 Swedish version of "Uncle Tom's Cabin".

comprise "FIKA." Before the new Water Tower was installed, we made sure to preserve several pieces of the older iconic tower, including a section of ladder and bright yellow guard railing. To relay to future generations the neighborhood-wide celebration that took place that day, we accessioned an empty sparkling wine bottle that may have been discreetly shared on a sidewalk seconds after the new tower settled into its permanent home.

The Museum's permanent exhibit, The Dream of America, saw a few changes as well. We periodically change out objects on display in an effort to keep exhibited artifacts fresh and interesting for both new and returning visitors – refreshed sections include our Augustana Hospital case and mercantile window. For younger visitors, we reworked our Scavenger Hunt,



ensuring eagle-eyed kiddos have an interactive experience while traveling through time.

Last year was a good year for artwork donations. The Museum received two pieces of framed canvas art by Swedish American painter Carl Olaf Erickson (1867-1944). Erickson was a member of the Swedish-American Art Association, exhibiting at the Sheridan Beach Hotel, the Illinois Academy of Art, and the Michigan Avenue art show in Chicago. We also accepted a hand-drawn poster, in ink, for the Swedish-American Art Exhibition held in Chicago in 1912 by artist Arvid Nyholm (1866-1927). Nyholm was deeply involved in organizing and jurying annual art exhibitions of the Swedish Club of Chicago and was one of seven artists chosen to paint murals in the Swedish Club building in 1919.



## A YEAR OF CELEBRATIONS



Back row: Linda Westergren-Muhr, Paul Muhr and Cathy and Bob Anderson  
Front row: Harriet Bolling, Maude Westergren, Astrid Thoren, Ed Pritikin, Ulla Norberg, Barbara and Paul Rimington and Jill Crooker  
At the Museum's 40th Birthday Party.

In 2017 the Museum turned 40 years old, an event celebrated in style. The birthday party featured a treasure hunt, wall of memories, a video celebrating the accomplishments over the years as well as talks taking us back to the early days of the Museum. It was a cheerful event with a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Genealogy Center and a birthday cake with accompanying song. At the end of the evening people were not ready for the celebration to end, a feeling that continued through the rest of the year.

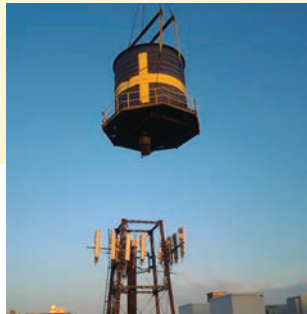
*"The view from my front porch is now complete – the Water Tower has returned!"*  
Vereen Norstrom

*"The day the Tower came back symbolized its importance as an Andersonville icon, as well as the strong community spirit that exists here! Hundreds of people spent the day outside eagerly watching the tower return to its rightful place. The Water Tower serves not only as a symbol of Andersonville's rich Swedish heritage, but also marks the center of Andersonville's thriving business district. Watching the Water Tower soar above Clark Street, shoulder to shoulder with business owners, patrons, and Andersonville residents, served as a reminder of Andersonville's uniqueness and its identity as such a special place."*

Andersonville Chamber  
of Commerce

The other highlight of the year was the long awaited return of the Water Tower. When the Water Tower started leaking and water threatened to damage large parts of the Museum in 2014 it was no longer safe to keep it on the roof. As soon as the Tower came down, the planning started to bring it back up again. Not only would it be a costly endeavor, but a difficult one. Without a Water Tower the Museum needed a new fire suppression system, this meant that staff and security had to be at the Museum 24 hours a day until a new system could be installed. "The staff had to do point checks every hour to make sure that everything was safe" education manager Stacey Nyman explains. Behind the scenes, work had begun to create a replica and to get the necessary permits to put a water tower back up. Many of the

# A YEAR OF CELEBRATIONS CONTINUED



## Water Tower Timeline

3/17/14 A leak in the Water Tower was discovered

3/18/14 Staff worked fast to make sure the collection was kept safe

3/20/14 The Water Tower came down

5/20/14 Top image: Parking lot fundraiser

5/1/15 The new water suppression system was approved

8/8/17 The Water Tower returns

old towers in Chicago are coming down; few are being put back up. The combination of generous donations, skilled work and sheer determination made the return of the Water Tower to Andersonville a possibility.

On a sunny August day the Water Tower made its slow climb back to its home on the roof of the Museum. It was a wonderful day where people gathered to watch, video and just enjoy. The Water Tower is one of the few remaining symbols that reminds us of Andersonville's Swedish past. The original tower was built in 1927. The new Tower is here to stay and will be enjoyed by generations to come.

*"When I first came to the Museum the Water Tower was already gone, its remains sitting in the parking lot. Three years later, I had come to appreciate how much the Water Tower meant to so many, what a powerful icon it is. I was deeply moved to have witnessed the commitment, hard work and outpouring of support that it ensured it would return.*

*On August 8, I think the Water Tower said – loud and clear – we are here to stay, we are proud to be part of Andersonville."*

Kate Sheehy

*"Amazing to see the Water Tower back in place on top of the Museum – to see what seemed unattainable attained! Andersonville is complete again!"*

Ted Johnson



## KERSTIN ANDERSSON MUSEUM STORE

The winds of change and transformation swept through the Kerstin Andersson Museum Store in 2017, and the numbers from this last retail year will confirm what we already knew, that the world of retail is undeniably moving from smaller businesses to the world of online retail. Although the Museum Store has this in focus for 2018, we could see a decrease in sales from the previous year. Whether this is a result of people ordering things online, if less people are in the neighborhood due to the loss of Swedish establishments like the Swedish Bakery, or if people are simply consuming less, cannot be said for sure. What we do know, is that most customers that come into our Store find something they like and are not leaving empty-handed. This makes us confident that our products, classics as well as new items, are popular to the people that visit and we need to embrace this when looking forward.

The year of 2017 did indeed bring many new products to the Store that should be considered great additions to the never-failing classics like the Dala Horse and Ekelund's linen and towels. The interest in Swedish and Scandinavian books seems to have increased as we in the Store find people looking for more titles and authors, most of which we are able to offer. Especially books regarding the Swedish themes of lagom and fika and the Danish hygge have grown in popularity and the Store is happy to offer a multitude of titles regarding these ideas. Other appreciated additions have been



nifty kitchen gadgets in Scandinavian design from Sagaform and new brands like Love STHLM with their handmade prints of archival ink on cold pressed watercolor paper.

As in years before, the Store also went on the road throughout the year. A new stop for this year was the American Daughters of Sweden Holiday Luncheon that was much appreciated from both sides. Other annual events were the Midsommarfest, which improved its sales from last year, and Scandinavian Day in Vasa Park, South Elgin. A great opportunity to connect with other Scandinavian organizations.

Despite the drop in sales, 2017 was a year of positive transformation for the Museum Store. Thanks to the amazing and tireless efforts of our

Store volunteers, it was possible for the Store to reduce and sell much of its inventory, leaving space for new, fresh opportunities and products to be brought in. To move and change the inventory was a goal throughout 2017, and to now see us succeeding tells us that we are on the right path into the new year. Again, this transformation should very much be credited to the Museum's Store volunteers. The Store has the privilege of having an incredible group of people giving their time and effort to the Museum Store, a group that excitingly has been growing over the past year. They all work to provide the best help and service to all that come visit our Museum and it is thanks to them that the Store continues to be one of the cornerstones for the Museum as a whole.



### Museum Acquired Another Historic Building

The Swedish American Museum purchased the three-story building on its north side last September, adding to the architectural tradition of Andersonville. When planned improvements are completed, the Clark Street storefronts at 5211 and 5217 will become one historic site.

The adjoining buildings are similar in style. The 5217 structure was built by Swedish architect Anders (Andrew) Norman in 1914. Sources suggest that he may have been involved in designing the original 5211 building. He also was the architect for nearby Ebenezer Lutheran Church in 1904.

“This opportunity to grow is exciting to us,” said Executive Director Karin Moen Abercrombie. She added that enlargement of the 42-year-old Museum enhances the Scandinavian character of the historic community, where in recent years other Swedish businesses have closed.

Stressing the cultural impact of Museum enlargement, Abercrombie added that “we are excited with this chance to help continue the work of making Andersonville a wonderful neighborhood with a significant history.” The expansion will add almost 20 percent to the street-level presence of the Museum.

Planning has begun for eventual use of the facility when the leases of current occupants expire during 2018. In addition to the retail storefront, apartments are located



on the second and third floors, plus useful space in the backyard.

The Museum purchased the abandoned Lind & Severin Hardware building in May 1987, returning the structure to its role as the cultural gathering place for Swedes in the Andersonville neighborhood.

Built in 1927 for the growing hardware firm that had been established in 1888, it flourished until the 1960s. Lind survived the Great Depression, but could not overcome demographic changes and the shift of population to growing suburban areas in the years that followed World War II.

Occupied by transient businesses during the following two decades, the venerable structure was acquired by leaders of the growing nearby Museum. Sweden’s King Carl XVI Gustaf was present for the grand opening ceremony on April 19, 1988.

In 2001, Sweden’s Queen Sylvia attended the opening of the third floor as the Brunk Children’s Museum of Immigration. In this popular facility, youngsters can learn about Scandinavian heritage as they play.

Swedish residents and tradesmen visited the Lind building years ago for supplies, coffee and conversation. The Swedish American Museum now offers a wide variety of exhibits, programs, genealogy expertise and lessons in Swedish language and dancing.

As one of the few vestiges of Scandinavian heritage in a city that once had a Swedish population second only to the capital city of Stockholm, the Museum continues to fulfill a mission that is clear to the staff, the volunteers, and the boards of directors and trustees.

# SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS AND PARTNERS



## 2017 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The Museum had another positive year in 2017 with net assets increasing \$383,943.

Revenue was down slightly with lower public support mostly offset by donations for the 40th Anniversary campaign. Expenses were around \$835,000, roughly flat compared to 2016.

On the balance sheet, the purchase of the adjoining building at 5217 N. Clark St. for \$1,275,000 caused fixed assets less depreciation to nearly double to \$3,282,470. On the liability side, the related mortgage roughly tripled debt to \$1,449,796.

Investment gains were strong driven by the endowment's equity investments.

Revenues	2017	2016	2015
Contributions and dues income	\$268,011	\$279,500	\$356,198
Admission fees	\$37,560	\$39,069	\$36,157
Memorials and restricted gifts	\$278,769	\$331,205	\$338,145
Gift shop sales	\$174,487	\$201,519	\$195,157
Special events/programs (net of program costs)	<u>\$80,676</u>	<u>\$123,233</u>	<u>\$61,138</u>
<b>Total public support</b>	<b>\$839,503</b>	<b>\$974,526</b>	<b>\$986,795</b>
Grants from government agencies	\$33,507	\$80,056	
Other income and net assets released from restriction	<u>\$345,033</u>	<u>\$204,780</u>	<u>\$142,116</u>
<b>Total Public Support &amp; Other Revenues</b>	<b>\$1,218,043</b>	<b>\$1,259,362</b>	<b>\$1,128,911</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Program services	\$685,228	\$665,189	\$690,082
Management and general services	\$104,982	\$118,578	\$116,808
Fund-raising services	<u>\$43,890</u>	<u>\$44,122</u>	<u>\$45,278</u>
<b>Total Functional Expenses</b>	<b>\$834,100</b>	<b>\$827,889</b>	<b>\$852,168</b>
Change in net assets	\$383,943	\$431,473	\$276,743
Prior period adjustment/Special expense			
Net assets - beginning of year	<u>\$3,644,870</u>	<u>\$3,213,397</u>	<u>\$2,936,654</u>
<b>Net assets - end of year</b>	<b>\$4,028,813</b>	<b>\$3,644,870</b>	<b>\$3,213,397</b>
<b>Balances at year end - 2016</b>			
<b>Assets</b>			
Total current assets (cash, grants, and inventory)	\$2,214,482	\$2,381,428	\$1,993,006
Fixed assets, less depreciation	\$3,282,470	\$1,696,588	\$1,580,901
Contributions receivable (noncurrent portion)	\$32,350	\$43,250	\$129,788
Total other assets	<u>\$74,731</u>	<u>\$74,731</u>	<u>\$74,731</u>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$5,604,033</b>	<b>\$4,195,997</b>	<b>\$3,778,426</b>
<b>Liabilities and Net Assets</b>			
Total current liabilities	\$125,424	\$49,872	\$43,048
Long-term and deferred debt, net of current portion	<u>\$1,449,796</u>	<u>\$501,255</u>	<u>\$521,981</u>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$1,575,220</b>	<b>\$551,127</b>	<b>\$565,029</b>
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>\$4,028,813</b>	<b>\$3,644,870</b>	<b>\$3,213,397</b>



## OUR MISSION, VISION AND CORE VALUES

### OUR MISSION

Through its arts and educational programs and its permanent collection, the Swedish American Museum interprets the immigrant experience for children and adults and promotes an appreciation of contemporary Swedish-American culture.

### OUR VISION STATEMENT

To be the preeminent Swedish-American immigration museum in the greater Chicago area and a unifying force within the Midwestern Scandinavian community.

### OUR CORE VALUES

- Celebrate Swedish culture, customs and traditions
- Honor the Swedish immigration experience
- Recognize contributions of volunteers and supporters
- Foster collaboration with the broader community

SMEDISH  
AMERICAN  
MUSEUM

BRUNK  
CHILDREN'S  
MUSEUM *of*  
IMMIGRATION



Swedish American  
Museum and the  
Brunk Children's  
Museum of  
Immigration

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