

FLAGGAN

To preserve, teach and celebrate Swedish heritage.

Summer 2020

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Virtual Summer Camp

Aug. 17-21, 10 a.m. - 11 a.m.

Travel the world from home!

swedishamericanmuseum.org/2.0/summer-camp-signup



Photo: Henrik Trygg/imagebank.sveden.se

MISSION STATEMENT

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.

FLAGGAN

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Dear Members,

Swedes celebrate summer with Midsommar and Americans have 4th of July. To combine our Swedish heritage here in Chicago with our American one, we baked and sold kanelbullar and mazariner on Friday, July 2. Friday baking day started at the beginning of May when Lena Billgren and I decided to make kanelbullar and other pastries every week. This was a way to add something to our curbside



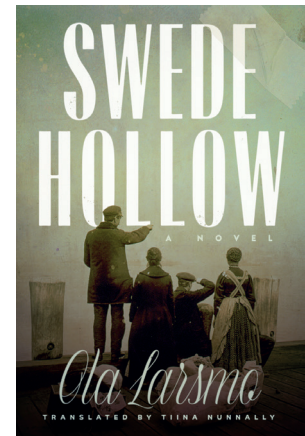
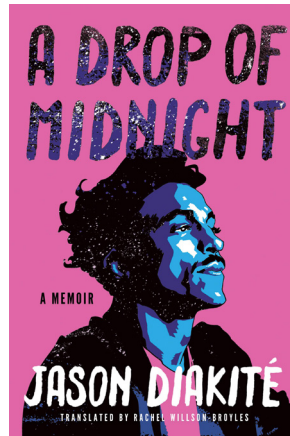
pickup of food from the Store in addition to trying some new pastries that we should include in our Museum Café going forward.

The Corona-19 pandemic put a new perspective on how we do things and how we can connect with each other. Although the Museum was closed from March 16 through

June 16 we have been seeing and talking with many of you over Zoom and via phone calls. The boundaries of how far we can reach has expanded at the same time as it has limited access for many of you without computers and internet service.

As of Tuesday, July 7, the Galleries and the “Dream of America” exhibit are welcoming visitors. Our hope is that our visitors are spread out naturally so that we don’t have to change the admission process to pre-purchased timed admission. Staff and volunteers will make sure everyone is following the city guidelines and high touch areas are frequently disinfected. We are excited to have more people come to see the beautiful weaving exhibit that we opened in March and is now here until August.

Although our family had not planned on travelling to Sweden this summer since we were home at Christmas, the pandemic has created a need to be more connected. Technology makes it possible to have regular access to Sweden including news, music, and other programs. A group of Museum members and friends have been watching “Bonus Family” and discussing the episodes in weekly Zoom meetings. Our book club has also met monthly via Zoom to discuss a variety of Scandinavian books.



Personally I have found that Swedish news podcasts are a great way to catch up on things, especially while I walk to and from the Museum every day. I have also reconnected with a summer tradition from when I lived in Sweden, which is listening to “Sommar on P1.” Famous people from all walks of life in Sweden have an hour to talk about something that is important to them and mix it with music they like. The program brings out a more personal side of people that you normally only see in light of their area of expertise. Recently I’ve listened to Greta Thunberg (Climate Activist), Anders Tegnell (Sweden’s Infectious Specialist), Micael Byden (Supreme Commander of the Swedish Armed Forces), Ulf Lundell (Musician) and Cathrine Winnes (Norwegian Music Conductor). A mix of ages, topics, backgrounds, and insights that are all very interesting. If you understand Swedish I encourage you to tune in to listen and learn.

While our doors have been closed we have continued to work on projects at the Museum. As you might understand they are moving a little slower than expected but we are making progress. The backyard at 5217 looks a lot different with newly poured cement pathways and ramps in preparation for the process of creating three openings from 5211 to 5217. One opening will connect the two retail spaces, one will connect the gallery to the backyard/courtyard/garden and one will simplify deliveries and improve our rental of the gallery space. We had planned on opening the Café in our current retail space this year but due to restrictions on how many people can be in one

space we will start the Café in our Gallery and keep both retail spaces for the Store. As city guidelines change we will adjust, but most likely this layout will remain for the rest of this year. If everything goes as planned, we hope to be able to use the backyard before the weather is too cold. We will keep you updated as the work progresses.

I am fortunate to live close to the Museum and even during the closure was able to walk to and from the Museum and take care of the building, deliveries, and my work as regular. The rest of our staff worked remotely but are now coming back to the Museum. Some changes had to be put in place this summer. We are closed on Mondays and the Brunk Children's Museum of Immigration will have to be closed until City of Chicago allows us to be open with specific guidelines. We miss seeing everyone and especially the children whose comments and abilities often bring smiles and laughter.

I would love to hug many of you and to see you in person and not behind a mask, but for now that is what we have to do. Hopefully there will be some fun stories and laughter to share very soon.

Please let us know if anyone needs a helping hand with grocery shopping or just to be connected. We miss you all and are truly looking forward to the time we can gather at the Museum again.

Karin M. Abercrombie



Soaking up the summer sun

By Catherine Selen

Summer is a special time for us in Chicago, and the feeling resonates for our friends and relatives in Sweden. After long, cold months of extended winter, all of us emerge to a short-lived and often rainy spring. Tulips and budding trees with the looming possibility of snowfall call in memories of Easter or Valborg. Toward the end of May, we begin to appreciate longer days and blossoming lilacs, signs that summer is upon us. In Sweden, this change is ushered in by possibly the best-loved holiday of the year, Midsommar! Known for imagery of flower crowns, lush foliage decorating the Midsummer pole, and sounds of cheerful “little frogs” dancing around it, this is truly an event to celebrate the solstice and connect back to the natural world after being cooped up in the cold. (Read more about Midsommar later in this issue).

This is also a time that many Swedes and Chicagoans venture out to their “Sommarstuga” (Summer cottage) to find peace and tranquility away from the hustle and bustle of the city. (More about this too in a different article). Summer is, for all of us “up north”, a hard-earned time for fun in the sun! There are many ways we can embrace Summer like our friends in Sweden:



Photo: Henrik Trygg/imagebank.sweden.se



Photo: Clive Tompsett/imagebank.sweden.se

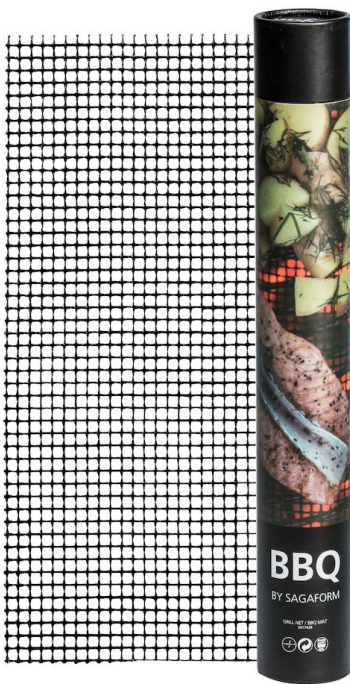
Go Camping! For Swedes, camping and exploring nature is an inalienable right. Allamansrätten, or the “the everyman’s right” is a freedom granted in the Swedish constitution which allows everyone the right to roam, ski, forage, and camp across the Swedish countryside. With the utmost respect for nature and each other, Swedes follow this law by the motto “do not disturb, do not destroy.” While we do not share the same freedom in

the U.S., we do enjoy many protected lands, including those of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) which are open for both developed and back-country camping. These nature reserves invite lovers of the outdoors to enjoy their bounty under a similar set of rules- simply, “do no harm”.

www.blm.gov/programs/recreation/camping

The U.S. also has an incredible National Park system with an impressive network of campsites. One of the National Park System’s newest additions to the roster, Indiana Dunes National Park, is only a short drive from Chicago! The park is located near an old Swedish settlement from the late 1800’s, and includes a farmstead started by the Chellberg family in 1969. The Chellbergs expanded and worked on their farm for three generations, taking in other immigrant families along the way. You can see what remains of the farm on your way to spend a weekend camping at Dunewood Campground.

www.nps.gov/indu/learn/historyculture/chellberg.htm



Fire up the grill and have a picnic! Outdoor chefs from Chicago to Göteborg never miss an opportunity to show off their grilling skills. Whether it’s a fillet of salmon or a well-charred portabello, meat lovers and vegetarians have no shortage of options when it comes to picnicking. Swedes across the world also love a classic grilled hot dog - but don’t forget the toppings! No hot dog is complete without... mashed potatoes and shrimp salad? You best have “potatismos” at the ready to top off your sausage for a true Swedish delicacy. With a variety of meats (including Swedish hot dogs), cheese, grill accessories, and picnic supplies in our Museum Store, all you need for the perfect Swedish picnic is just a few clicks away. Order food for pick-up: www.swedishamericanmuseum.org/2.0/order-to-go

Swedish shrimp salad recipe (Skagenröra)

INGREDIENTS:

17 oz (500g) fresh cooked peeled shrimp
3 tbsp mayo
3 tbsp (1/2 dl) crème fresh or sour cream
3 tbsp fresh dill nicely chopped

1 tbsp of nicely chopped red onion
1 tsp lemon juice
Few drops hot sauce
Pinch Salt
Freshly ground white pepper

Soak up the magic of the forest! There is something so serene about spending time in the forest, and there's no better time than now! Whether you're picking strawberries in June, or "kantareller" in August, there are treasures to be uncovered at any point in the summer. The forests of Sweden, and those of Northern Wisconsin, Michigan and Minnesota share the same air of mystical bliss, with dew evaporating from the soft cushions of moss, and rows of creaking birch trees fluttering in the breeze. Chicago, too, has a wealth of forest preserves that harness the same regenerative energy that some may call natural magic. Whether you believe in magic or not, there is some science behind the health benefits of "friluftsliv" as Henrik Ibsen called it. Popular across Scandinavia and in Japan, forest bathing is proven to reduce the production of stress hormones and lower heart rate and blood pressure. This in turn can have a positive effect on the immune system and improves overall well-being. It's easy, too! Head to your nearest forest, and find some space in solitude. Much like meditation, it is best to leave your worries behind and focus on the present. Take in what the trees have to offer, and maybe leave a little something for the "Skogstomtar" so they don't play tricks on your way out! Read more about finding solace in the forest with these titles available in our Museum Store:



However you decide to take in the summer sun this year, we hope you get to enjoy it with loved ones both near and from afar!

Let's get outside!

By Stacey Nyman

Summer brings travel outside of and within hometowns, exploring new places and enjoying well-loved places. Gatherings with friends and family fill up weekends. Children are overjoyed to experience freedom from school work and the opportunity to be with friends for extended periods of time. They attend camps, either away or day camps. This summer, things are a bit different as we learn to social distance and keep closer to home. Caregivers everywhere are struggling to find ways to keep the children occupied that don't involve days filled with screen time and technology. It's a bit trickier to hear, "I'm BORED" and not have a lot of suggestions (though cleaning and reading are usually the answers to that statement in my home!).



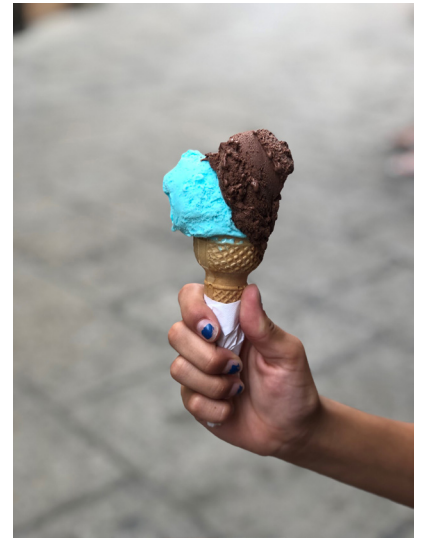
This is a great time to learn from Swedish parents. The website *Outside* claims that Swedish preschoolers spend an average of 6 hours a day outside during the summer and 90 minutes during the winter! There are even some pre-schools where the children spend almost the entire school day outside no matter what the weather or season. Swedes live close to nature and this summer would be the perfect chance to experience some more nature ourselves.



I have created a summer must do list, if your family needs some ideas. Add your own to this list as well! We'd love to hear all about your summer adventures. If you do any of these things or something not on this list, please share!

Things to do at home

- Make homemade ice cream
- Plant something
- Make art
- Have a backyard picnic
- Do a messy science experiment
- Play in a sprinkler
- Make a new recipe from food you grew or purchased at a farmer's market
- Read outside
- Roast marshmallows
- Play board games outside
- Play a game of Kubb!



Things to do in your neighborhood

- Paint kindness rocks and distribute them for others to find
- Ride a bike
- Create a nature scavenger hunt and complete it
- Explore a part of your neighborhood you rarely visit
- Go for a walk or run
- Walk your dog, or offer to walk a neighbor's



Things to do away from home

- Go hiking
- Go to the beach
- Go berry picking
- Go fishing
- Go camping
- Go to a farmer's market



Things to do anywhere!

- Find shapes in the clouds
- Jump in puddles after a rain storm
- Lay in a hammock
- Do good deeds for others

Summer at the Museum: Members and volunteers are our favorite advocates!

By Caroline Gerbaulet-Vanasse

It is safe to say that a lot has changed during 2020 thus far. It has been, and continues to be a delight to see how our community has persevered and arguably thrived! We have worked enthusiastically to engage with our members, volunteers and future visitors. In terms of new forms of engagement, 2020 is proving to be the catalyst many of us needed to move off the drawing table and into action.

It is exciting news that our Museum has begun to reopen its doors to the public! We look forward to taking you on this journey conscientiously and safely. We miss you, and we hope you are missing us too.

Reopening does not mean abandoning the momentum we have begun to build over Zoom and online in general. This summer members, staff and volunteers will be looking forward to keeping our love of the Museum burning while enjoying the long warm days. We encourage you to join us in person with your mask, participate online, and perhaps drop “Swedish American Museum” into your summertime conversations.

To this end, we spoke to a few of our members and volunteers, and here is what they had to say about this summer:



“I truly miss coming down to the Swedish Museum for the programs, lectures and of course the Pop-Up-Cafes. So I will be walking more and trying to practice exercising and my folk dancing steps. I tell all my friends about the Swedish American Museum in Chicago.” – Jill K. Crocker

“Since we can’t go out much, my husband and I have been making some improvements to our house. We bought new furniture and planted a vegetable garden on our rooftop deck, and we have been spending more time up there than we have since we moved in five years ago. I have been doing some serious summer reading - I have really enjoyed participating in the Museum’s monthly book club! I think our dog is enjoying this new normal more than anyone - she has never gone for so many walks!” – Liz Peterson



Whatever your plans are for this summer, and however you choose to interact with us at the Museum, we are thrilled to have you! Your support throughout this year has been heartwarming, and we love seeing and hearing from you over any medium! Here is to a Museum-lovers’ summer!

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Curator's Corner

By Emily England

Summertime often means vacation time! Swedes enjoy some of the longest vacations in the world with a minimum paid leave of 25 vacation days and 16 holidays per year. While that might seem bad for business (especially compared to the United States' 0 required paid days off per year), it hasn't stopped Sweden from being one of the best countries in the world for business – even topping the Forbes' 2017 rankings. Swedes credit this massive amount of time off as helping to greatly increase productivity and creativity at work. But just how do Swedes relax on vacation?

Traditionally, many people would take a 4-6 week long summer vacation to one of Sweden's 600,000+ summer cottages, or sommarstugor. Taking several shorter vacations each year has grown increasingly common nowadays, but an extended stay at a sommarstuga, especially one located near one of Sweden's many bodies of water, is still a hallmark of a classic Swedish summer vacation. It's estimated more than 50% of Swedes have access to a sommarstuga through family or friends, and plenty more are available for rent for locals and out-of-towners alike.

Similarly, vacations to summer lake houses are also a popular tradition in areas of the Upper Midwest that were heavily settled by Nordic immigrants, such as Minnesota and Wisconsin. Minnesota alone counts approximately 122,000 “seasonal recreational dwellings” in the state. Whether the lake house tradition here is more due to historical Nordic influences in the region or to the abundance of waterfront property around Minnesota's 10,000 lakes is up for debate, though there is plenty of anecdotal evidence in support of early Nordic settlers building the first summer lake houses, some of which continue to be passed down through families.

This year, most of us will be vacationing a lot closer to home both here and in Sweden, but I thought it might be fun to share some historical images of summer fun from the Museum's archives!



Erick Erickson and Gunbild Erickson on their annual fishing trip to Wisconsin.



Photo postcard from Sweden sent to family in Chicago, 1949. X on the house likely marks their sommarstuga.



Friends picnicking under a tree in Lake Geneva, 1937.



Picnic with friends.

Summer supplies from the Museum Store

By Catherine Selen

Whether you're spending your summer in the backyard grilling, reading on the porch, or camping in the wilderness, we have so many great items to help you enjoy the outdoors and soak up the warm weather!

Beach Reads!- We have several new titles in the Store this summer! Our newest release, *The Golden Cage* by Camilla Läckberg is a page-turner that's perfect for a day in the shade.

Baseball Caps- Keep the sun out of your eyes with our many Swedish baseball caps for kids and adults.



Sandwich Trays- The perfect accessory for any picnic, our sandwich trays come in all sizes and a variety of designs!

Sagaform BBQ grill mats- These fiberglass mesh mats keep food from falling through the cracks or sticking on your grill, keeping the essential barbeque station nice and clean.

Magisso Bottle Cooler- A clever Finnish design concept: just dip the ceramic vessel in water, and it magically keeps bottles cool even in the heat.

Dala Horse Ice Cube Trays- Swedify your summer drinks with these tiny Dala horse ice cubes! Better yet, flavor your ice with some Swedish lingonberry saft for a refreshing treat on a hot day.



Beach Ready Tote Bags- Don't forget to pack sunscreen!

Pen Pal Essentials- Write to your friends around the world in style! We have a great selection of beautifully designed cards by Kerstin Sevig, Bengt Lindström postcards, and Ballograf pens to help you keep in touch from any distance.

Sea Salt Spray Sanitizer- Our favorite Swedish Dream Sea Salt scent is now available in a convenient spray hand sanitizer! Easy to pack in any purse or keep handy in the car.

Sagaform Picnic Blankets- These micro-fleece blankets with a water-resistant backing are the ultimate picnic accessory. Easily rolls up with a convenient handle for carrying to your favorite park or campsite.



AUG. 1-31

MAGISSO SALE!

A still life photograph featuring a wine bottle in a black sleeve, a bunch of green grapes, and two black and white ceramic cups on a cork coaster. The background is softly blurred with warm lights.

MEMBERS 20% OFF
NON-MEMBERS 10% OFF



Genealogy done differently

By Vereen Nordstrom

With the start of the stay home order in Illinois, we added something new to our genealogy methods: ZOOM! Some participants in the genealogy sessions also learned new vocabulary: “mute” and “chat.” Managing the photos of people participating proved interesting and sometimes challenging. Since meeting people outside your immediate family was discouraged, the Museum and the Swedish American Genealogical Society promoted two spring sessions via Zoom, a cloud platform for video and audio conferencing. I’m glad to say that it has been very successful.

Our first speaker, Bengt Sjögren, presented his program from his home in Sweden. Bengt took us back to the sixteenth century and continued his discussion of “The Four Estates,” the lines of division in Swedish society. The nobility had been discussed in 2019 and now Bengt focused on the Burghers, comprised of close to 100 craft guilds and many trading companies. These societies were well documented and can provide context to genealogy searches.

Our second speaker was Kathy Meade, who presented her program from Chicago. We had good participation with attendees from the Chicago area but also from California, New York, Colorado, Michigan, British Columbia and Sweden. Kathy presented “What’s New in ArkivDigital?” earlier in the year and discussed “Searching by Name: Swedish Records Using ArkivDigital” via Zoom. Attendees learned about updates, such as partial English translations, and were provided with step-by-step procedures to use in the various indexes - a very helpful tool.

The Genealogical Society began 2020 with a viewing of “Lucky Strike,” a documentary about a part of World War II history that many people had never heard about. German fighter planes hit many planes flown by American airmen. More than 1,200 bailed out of their planes and reached the security of Sweden, where friendships between the Swedish population and the downed airmen were formed. In some cases, love developed and many women accompanied their American husbands to the United States. The documentary followed a few of these women and also Swedish-American children left in Sweden.

Lori Johnson, a Genealogical Society member and moderator, was able to provide personal information, as her father was an American crewmember on a B-17 bomber that made a forced landing in Malmö.

With or without Zoom, the genealogy sessions will continue. Of course, individual research help is always available.



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While you were at home

By *Angelica Farzaneh-Far*

When the Museum closed its doors on March 15, we had no idea that the next time we would open our doors would be on June 16 for the Store and July 7 for the Museum itself. We are still waiting to be able to open the Children's Museum. Just like many others, the Museum staff started working from home with only Karin Moen Abercrombie walking over to check up on the Museum building. Old buildings are beautiful but need a lot of loving attention. Karin had to make sure that the humidity in our collection storage remained at safe levels and that the spring storms didn't flood the basement or come through the ceiling.

While we were all away from the Museum, work continued in the garden. The stay-at-home order resulted in a delay for permits from the City of Chicago for the openings between buildings and out into the garden. When it was finally approved, we immediately started the work by removing the old garage foundation and then preparing for the new walkways from 5211 to the garden. The openings are next, and we are able to use bricks from 5211 as part of the new wall on the east side toward the alley.

We started with curbside pickup of food early during the closure period, and since early May, we have been baking on Fridays to add to our regular store offerings. Since the completion of the kitchen, visitors have been able to come to the Museum to enjoy pop-up cafés on a regular basis. Like most cultures, food plays an important role in the Swedish culture. What says Sweden like a cinnamon roll? For weeks now, people have been able to place orders during the week for Friday afternoon pickup. The rolls, cookies and cakes are baked on Friday morning and are still warm when picked up for a wonderful afternoon fika. You can pre-order your baked goods on our website.





Photo: Work on the opening from the Gallery to the garden.

This time at home made us all think more creatively about how the Museum can continue to be important to our members and friends. Some of our programming moved online, and we are excited to welcome people from all over the U.S. as well as Sweden to our online programs.

Our website expanded to include information and ideas for people to try at home, such as baking videos and crafts. Since we were unable to welcome visitors to our exhibits we took them to you. There are videos on our website that walk you through both our permanent exhibit “The Dream of America” as well as the temporary exhibit about double weaving in Sweden.

Even more invisible to our visitors was the work on our new computerized system that will soon be introduced. It will incorporate everything from the Store to our membership. As a visitor it will speed up check-in when visiting or coming to events and will make reservations a whole lot easier. The modernization and cataloging of our collection is also an ongoing project not visible to our visitors but vital in the preservation of our history. It has been a busy time behind the scenes at the Museum.

Now we have started welcoming visitors back to the Museum and it is wonderful to see our friends and members again. We have learned so much during this time and look forward to continue including our friends from other states and countries in our future programs. A list of events that includes both online events and those in the Museum can always be found on our website calendar. Be sure to also visit the online resource page on our website for ideas on fun things to do at home or to learn something new about Sweden. As we navigate this new normal, the Museum is taking every precaution to create a welcoming and safe environment as we welcome you back through our doors.

History of Midsommar

By Elise Beck

June marks the season of the summer solstice for the Northern Hemisphere. It is the time at which the sun is the farthest north and therefore stays in the sky for the longest amount of time. In parts of Sweden, the sun stays in the sky all day and all night, also known as the “midnight sun.”

Historically, Midsommar began as a celebration of summer, known to Scandinavians as the “season of fertility.” In some areas of Sweden, people would decorate themselves in ferns. They also would decorate maypoles and dance around them, possibly as early as the 1500s.

Midsommar arrived to Chicago about a century after the first Swedish immigrant. According to the Swedish Press, the first Swedish immigrant arrived to Chicago in 1838. Two years later, another Swedish immigrant John Anderson arrived to the area and farmed the land, also serving as highway commissioner 1850 - 1857. He is often attributed with coining the name “Andersonville.”

Swedish immigration to the neighborhood only picked up after the Great Chicago Fire in 1871. City ordinance prohibited building with wood as a result of the devastation. At the time, Andersonville was outside of city limits and attracted Swedish and Swedish-American populations who constructed their homes from wood. Thus began the association of Swedes with Andersonville.



*Photo:
Andersonville Midsommarfest 2019*

According to the Andersonville Chamber of Commerce, “On October 17, 1964, Andersonville was rededicated in a ceremony attended by Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley and Illinois Governor Otto Kerner. The following summer, the annual Swedish tradition of celebrating the summer solstice blossomed into Midsommarfest, which has since grown into one of Chicago’s largest and most popular street festivals.”

Now in Andersonville, Midsommar means a huge, lively two-day community-wide celebration! Hundreds of guests from Chicago and the surrounding area flock to our streets for Swedish food, music, local shopping, and festivities. The Swedish American Museum is a huge participant in the celebration, typically making flower wreaths for those in attendance. We also sell Swedish treats and even operated a food stand last year. It had wonderful reviews! While COVID-19 restricted celebrations this year, the staff was still able to raise a maypole while social distancing. The Andersonville Chamber of Commerce also organized an online Midsommar which can still be viewed at andersonville.org/midsommarfest/andersonville-at-home. In addition, Swedish singer Sofia Talvik performed a live concert in celebration of Midsommar that can also still be accessed at www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=2581733072093761&ref=watch_permalink.



Photo: Andersonville Midsommarfest 2020

Even though Midsommar is technically over, we are still selling Midsommar crafts and snacks at our museum store! We’re stocked with herring as well as “snaps spice mix.” As the beautiful summer weather continues, it is never too late to celebrate the season Swedish style. You can visit the store in limited capacity or order for curbside pick-up on our website.



Museum Trustee, Wayne Nelson and I are thrilled to co-Chair the 2020 Aspire Gala for the Swedish American Museum of Chicago in honor of the Chicago Swedish Mixed Chorus. Save the date Nov. 7, 2020 and you will be hearing from us soon with more details.

Plans are currently underway for celebrating the 44th year of the Museum and in this very unusual year we especially need your support so stay tuned and thank you in advance for helping to make our Museum the best in Chicago.

Let us know if you would like to volunteer on a committee, donate to the on-line auction or if you have friends that would like to participate. See you soon...

Aspire Gala Co-Chairs
Wayne Nelson & Julie Benson

*We have a greeting from Per-Hugo Kristensson,
Museum member and member of other Swedish-American organizations in Chicago,
He sends his best from Göteborg, Sweden where he is from and after many years in Chicago
moved back to during 2019. Per-Hugo is doing well and sends his best to everyone.*

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