



THE SWEDISH CLUB NEWS

The Swedish Club of Houston

Preserving Swedish Heritage on the Texas Gulf Coast Since 1986

Club Updates



Helena Wahlman/imagebank.sweden.se

- December 7 is the date for our Christmas and Lucia program. More details about our annual Jul gathering can be found on page 2.
- 2013 will be Margaret St. Clair's final year helping Lucia and her attendants. If you would like to take over this honor in 2014, email us for more info: newsletter@swedishclub.org
- SCH Children's Choir - Our first ever choir for kids! Please contact Marie Teahen for more info. lucia@swedishclub.org
- Check out pictures from the Smörgåsbord, courtesy of Karen Wolz: <http://bit.ly/Nov1SCH>

In the News



- TV network NBC recently bought rights to an English language comedy filmed for Sweden's TV4 called "Welcome to Sweden". Read more: <http://bit.ly/sweNBC>
- It seems Americans aren't the only ones confusing Sweden and Switzerland. A social media contest is underway in China to differentiate the two countries in people's minds: http://bit.ly/SE_CH
- Portugal and Sweden will duke it out for a spot in the World Cup next year in Brazil. They will play on November 15 and November 19: <http://bit.ly/WCgame13>

Christmas Traditions & Lucia Day Celebration



Helena Wahlman/imagebank.sweden.se

Please join us in celebrating the Swedish Club's Annual Christmas Traditions and Lucia Day celebration on **Saturday December 7, 2013** at Christ the King Lutheran Church, 2353 Rice Blvd, Houston from 3:00 PM until 5:30 PM. The event is free and open to the general public.

3:00 PM - Bazaar opens in Parish Hall

3:30 PM - Lucia Procession

4:00 PM - Reception in Parish Hall

Activities include: Lucia Procession, Bazaar, Music, Bake Sale, Rosmålning, Raffle, Children's Crafts, Glögg & Refreshments, Christmas Tree Dancing

This year's Lucia is **Sarah Garde**

In order to make our Christmas Traditions and Luciadagen the success we all want it to be, we need you! Helpers are needed to:

- Bake Swedish cookies (recipes can be supplied)
- Make baked goods for Bake Sale
- Make craft items for bazaar
- Help with PR for the event
- Contacting companies for donations / sponsors
- Sell T-Shirts
- Sell baked goods
- Sell raffle tickets
- Help in the kitchen
- Assist the Bazaar Chair
- Assist with arts/crafts at the Children's Table
- And of course, assist with the Lucia Procession

Contact Marie Teahen at lucia@swedishclub.org or sign up online: <http://vols.pt/6eJ8gd>

Historic Events *November and December*



November

Selma Lagerlöf was born on November 20, 1858 in Mårbacka, an estate located in the province of Värmland. She developed a deep love of reading as a child. Later, she would work as a teacher. It was while she was teaching that she wrote the first few chapters of the classic Gösta Berling's Saga. A few years later, she stopped teaching and devoted her time to writing. She would write several well known stories, including Jerusalem, Herr Arnes Hjord, and The Wonderful Adventures of Nils. She would later receive the Nobel Prize in literature in 1909. In 1992, her portrait was featured on the 20 kronor bill. The other side featured an illustration of a scene from The Wonderful Adventures of Nils.



December

On December 1, 1966 the town of Gävle started a Christmas tradition by placing a 43 ft. tall straw goat in the town square. It lasted until New Year's Eve when someone set it ablaze.

Despite this, the tradition continued. The illegal tradition of burning down the goat also continued. Since 1988, bookmakers in England have placed betting odds on the day it will go up in flames. Webcams were installed in 1996 to ward off any wannabe arsonists, but it has not stopped the illegal tradition of burning down the bock. Of the twenty-six times it has burned down, only four culprits have been apprehended. In 2001, a tourist from Ohio believed it was a real tradition to burn down the decoration. He tried to light just a piece, but the entire goat went up in flames in seconds. He was caught, put in jail, and ordered to pay a fine of 100,000 Swedish kronor. Read more here: <http://bit.ly/julbock13>

Info summarized from wikipedia.org

Swedish Genealogy Pages

Looking for useful and new genealogy pages? Try these sites:

Augustana College Swedish Genealogy Links:

<http://www.augustana.edu/general-information/swenson-center-/genealogy/links>

Swedish Genealogical Society of Minnesota Links:

http://sgsmn.org/Swedish_Genealogical_Society_of_MN/Research_Links.html

Genealogy Links - Sweden:

<http://www.genealogylinks.net/europe/sweden/>

About.com Swedish Genealogy:

<http://genealogy.about.com/od/sweden/>

Swedish Genealogy Research Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/SwedenGenealogy>

Doing Swedish Genealogy in a Computer World:

<http://ipgg.files.wordpress.com/2012/07/swedishresources072012.pdf>

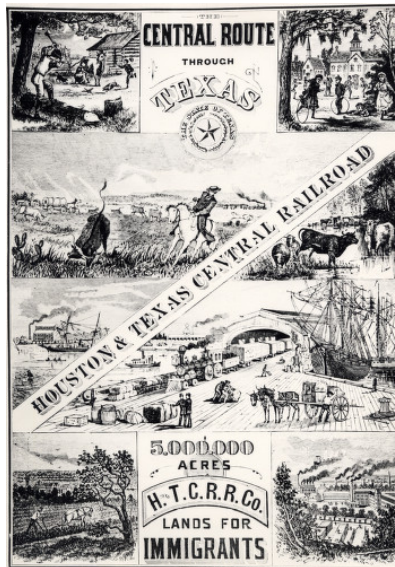


Image courtesy of Special Collections, University of Houston Libraries

Svensk Hyllningsfest 2013

by Sara West

Lindsborg, Kansas is home to the nation's largest festival honoring Swedish heritage. The Svensk Hyllningsfest started in 1941 as a way to honor the town's Swedish beginnings. The festival takes place every other year in conjunction with homecoming festivities for the local university named Bethany College. This year marked the 34th edition of the festival.



I was not expecting to visit the festival this year, but my family surprised me with a trip for my birthday. I was whisked away on a flight to Wichita and rode along the flatlands of the Kansas prairie all the way to Lindsborg! My mom and I arrived in town just in time to visit *Hemslöjd*, a large store chock full of Swedish and Scandinavian goodies. Afterwards, we visited *The Swedish Crown*, a newly renovated restaurant on Main Street where I enjoyed my first ever lingonberry BBQ hamburger! Then, it was on to *Scott's*, the only grocery store in town and one of the only groceries in the entire country with its own Swedish food section!

Lindsborg has a strong and proud connection to its Swedish roots. Everywhere you look, you will find signs of Sweden and Swedish-America. Tiny Dala horses dot the landscape, all sporting various themes (much like the well-known cow parade in other cities). Swedish and American flags fly from streetlights and utility poles. Almost every home has either a Välkommen sign or a Dala horse with the owners' last name painted on it. You can visit the Bibliotek to read books in Swedish or even stop by the Öl Stuga after work.



This year's festival took place on October 4 and 5 and was packed with activities. There were so many things to do, it was difficult to choose. There were arts & crafts, genealogy lectures, baking demonstrations, history presentations, fundraisers, folk dancers, church services, a well-attended parade, children's activities, musical events, and a smörgåsbord, of course!



The Smörgåsbord is so popular, there are three settings and an average of 1,400 attendees at the event. This is astounding when you learn Lindsborg is home to only 3,500 residents! The smörgåsbord is also the main fundraiser for Hyllningsfest, since the festival is run entirely by donations and volunteers. You are seated with other people you might not know. One man at our table was named Jack. He was 95 years old and told us all about the history of Lindsborg.

When he moved to town, he was one of only two residents who didn't speak Swedish! Nowadays, most residents don't use Swedish everyday, although students in school have the opportunity to learn it.

Students also learn traditional Swedish folk dancing in school. When Hyllningsfest happens, they have the chance to dress up in traditional folk costumes and show the town what they've learned. The main square is transformed into a folk dancing area, complete with 360 degree seating for spectators. Once the students enter high school, it is seen as a great honor to be a folk dancer since they are given the chance to visit Sweden at least once during their high school years to perform for audiences in the old country.



Our last day in Lindsborg was capped off by a performance from a band from Sweden called LYY (www.lyy.se). LYY plays modern day folk music by blending traditional instruments such as a fiddle and nyckelharpa together with acoustic guitars and percussion. The residents of Lindsborg, and tourists like us, were treated to a night of exciting, expressive, and memorable music from this talented group of musicians. The audience showed their appreciation for the band's talent with a long standing ovation at the end. The band stayed to meet the audience after the show and many people expressed appreciation for their incredible musicianship.



If you would also like to enjoy the wonders of Little Sweden U.S.A., be sure to mark your calendars for October 9th & 10th, 2015 when the 35th edition of Hyllningsfest takes place.



THE SWEDISH CLUB NEWS

The Swedish Club News is published 6 times a year by the Swedish Club of Houston.

Articles, photos, etc., are welcome.

We would especially like personal news of our members, explanation of family traditions and Swedish culture, news of Swedes and of Sweden, and your favorite Swedish shops, products or resources.

Please send your news to newsletter@swedishclub.org or by post to the return address below.

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SCH Events:

Lucia Celebration

December 7, 2013

Annual Meeting

January 25, 2014