From the Director

At the end of April 1994, Augustana College and its Department of Scandinavian Studies will host the annual meeting of the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study (SASS). Some 300 persons from colleges and universities throughout the United States and Canada, as well as most Scandinavian countries, will assemble in the Quad Cities to hear and present papers on a variety of topics related to the cultures, literatures, languages, histories, and political systems of the Scandinavian countries.

SASS was founded in 1911, and since that time has been an important forum for the study and teaching of Scandinavia in this country. Since Augustana College—the oldest institution of higher learning founded by Swedes in this country—is the host for this year’s meeting, it seems appropriate to reflect on the role that the Scandinavian immigrants have played in the development of Scandinavian studies in American universities and colleges. (This was also one of the themes of the conference “Scandinavian Immigrants and Education in North America,” sponsored by the Swenson Center in the spring of 1992. The papers presented there will be published by the Swedish-American Historical Society in the spring of 1994, and the article by Larry Scott in that book, “Passing the Torch: Scandinavian Studies in American Universities,” is recommended for anyone interested in this topic.)

Scandinavian studies was established in the United States largely through the colleges founded by Scandinavian immigrants. Among the Swedes, Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois was the first (1860), followed by Gustavus Adolphus, Bethany, North Park, and Upsala Colleges. Departments of Swedish or Scandinavian were important dimensions of these schools' curricula. As late as the 1920s the Augustana College catalog stated that although all instruction was in English, Swedish had a special position in the curriculum and the school encouraged all its students to study the Swedish language, literature, and history.

Most professors in the first Scandinavian departments were themselves immigrants or children of immigrants, including Johan Enander and Jules Mauritsson among the Swedes and Ole Rolvaag among the Norwegians. These educators played an important role in Scandinavian-American cultural life around the turn of the century.

The Scandinavian-American colleges were not the only places where one could study Scandinavian-related topics. Many state universities introduced programs during the end of the 19th century, and in states with a strong Scandinavian presence, the immigrant groups often played an important role in this process. In 1875 the University of Wisconsin—a state with a particularly strong Norwegian population—established its Scandinavian department, with the well-known Norwegian-American Rasmus Anderson as its first professor. In Minnesota, the Scandinavians moved the legislature to develop the Scandinavian department at the University of Minnesota, and in 1883 the bill was passed to establish it. Professors who have taught there include J.S. Carlson, A.A. Stomberg, and Alrik Gustafson.

The Scandinavian department at the University of Washington at Seattle, which dates back to 1911, was also created through legislative action, introduced and supported by Scandinavian-American politicians. The first professor was David Nyvall, who later became president of North Park College. His successors include Walter Johnson and Sverre Arestad.

Swedish-Americans were also instrumental in getting Swedish introduced in the high school curriculum. The first high schools in the nation to offer Swedish were in Minneapolis, where in 1910 75 different Swedish-American organizations representing more than 30,000 members successfully petitioned the School Board on the issue. Similar campaigns for high school Swedish language study were launched in, among other places, Chicago and Worcester, Massachusetts.

By 1917 a survey shows Swedish offered in high schools in many parts of the country. In Minneapolis and

CONTINUED, P. 8 >
NEW COLLECTIONS

Our new collection on Vikings

The history of the Vikings is a topic which never seems to lose popularity. As discussed in last year’s Swenson Center News, Viking settlements on the North American continent have played an important role for Scandinavian-American communities in this country.

Recently, the Swenson Center was fortunate to receive a donation of a fine collection of more than 200 books on the general topic of the Viking presence in North America, given to the Center by Mr. C. Walter Mortenson of Newark, Delaware. Mr. Mortenson, a retired attorney at law, has been interested in Viking history since he was a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, where he began his collection on Viking and pre-Columbian presences in America.

This selection of works published over the last century and a half includes standard scholarly works along with many of the more popular accounts, and many works of fiction. It also includes several rare books, such as C.C. Rafn’s Antiquitates Americane Sive Scriptores Septentrional es Rerum Ante-Columbianarum in America, printed in Copenhagen in 1837. This is an early account of the Viking journeys to the North American continent, based on the original Icelandic accounts, with Danish, Latin, and English translations. Another rare item is Arthur Middleton Reeves’ The Finding of Wineland the Good. The History of the Icelandic Discovery of America, published in London in 1890.

The Swenson Center is very happy about this major new addition to its library, and we are convinced that the C. Walter Mortenson Collection, as it will be called, will be of great use to our patrons.

The Nils William Olsson Collection continues to grow

In August 1993, the Swenson Center received large parts of the archival collection assembled over the past five decades by Dr. Nils William Olsson of Winter Park, Florida. This collection complements the Nils William Olsson book collection which Dr. Olsson donated to the Center a couple of years ago.

A large part of the Nils William Olsson archival collection focuses on genealogical and biographical information about Swedish immigrants in the United States. For example, we have received much of the background material which Dr. Olsson used in his two books which detail Swedish passenger arrivals prior to 1850. With this new addition, we now have a set of records with biographical information of naturalized Swedes in Boston, 1802-1906.

The collection also contains an extensive subject file, with a wealth of information about Swedes in various states of the union in general, from Alabama to Wisconsin. We are very glad to have received this collection, and it has already been of great use to us and those who seek our assistance in research matters.

How to reach the Swenson Center

The Swenson Center is located on the main floor of Denkmann Memorial Hall, 3520 7th Avenue, on the campus of Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois.

Office hours are 8:30 a.m. to noon, and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, except for holidays. Hours may be limited during college vacation periods.

If you plan to visit the Center we encourage you to make an appointment by calling or writing in advance.

SWENSON CENTER STAFF

DAG BLANCK / director
CHRISTINA JOHANSSON / head of genealogical services
VICKY OLIVER / head of library services
JILL SEAHOLM / researcher

Direct all correspondence to:
Swenson Center
Augustana College
639 38th Street
Rock Island, Illinois 61201-2273
Telephone: (309) 794-7204
Telefax: (309) 794-7443

Swenson Center News is published by the Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center (ISSN 0895-7126).

DAG BLANCK / Editor
VICKY OLIVER / Assistant Editor

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Jill Seaholm of Moline, Illinois, has assumed the position of Researcher at the Swenson Center. She graduated from Augustana College with a degree in Scandinavian Studies and has studied and worked in Sweden. Her main responsibilities include genealogical and other research at the Center. As head of Library Services, Vicky Oliver has assumed the main responsibility for the library collections at the Center, while Christina Johansson as Head of Genealogical Services oversees the family history activities at the Center.
From the Genealogy department

Genealogical research can sometimes be frustrating, but once in a while the different pieces fall into place in an unexpected manner, as Jill Seaholm, Swenson Center Researcher, tells in this article.

One day in September of 1993, after returning from vacation, I was checking over some research that an Augustana student assistant, Keirsten Anderson, had done in response to a research request. The request came from Lindie Banks of California. Mrs. Banks knew that her paternal grandparents were E.E. Lindstrom and Emma Jakobsson, both born in the U.S., but wanted to know where in Sweden their parents were born. The student had found a local Moline address and occupation for E.E., but unfortunately could locate neither Mrs. Banks' grandfather's nor grandmother's parishes of origin in Sweden.

In reviewing the student's research for Mrs. Banks, I consulted one more source: the records of Geneva Lutheran Church in Geneva, Illinois, where Mrs. Banks thought that E.E. Lindström might have been born. We did not know E.E.'s full name, but in scanning a membership book (unfortunately not indexed), I located two Lindström families on page 19, the youngest child of one being Erland Edvin Lindström, with the same date of birth as Mrs. Banks' E.E. Lindström, October 6, 1857. It was the same person. The two families were the David and Johan Peter Lindström families. David was Johan Peter's father.

The Geneva membership records showed that the two Lindström families had emigrated in 1852 from Hylingaryd parish in Ålsborgs län. All of the emigrants had been born in Hylingaryd, except David Lindström's wife, Maja Lisa Andersdotter, who was born in Fivlered parish. I could not find Hylingaryd in any book or map; it didn't exist. However, I had visited Fivlered because an ancestor on my mother's side was born there, and I knew a nearby parish named Kölöngared, so I decided that must have been what was meant by Hylingaryd.

Suddenly I remembered that my mother's maiden name was Lindström, so I immediately called my mother, Marjorie Lindorff Seaholm, and asked her who in her background was born in Kölöngared parish. She replied, "It was my grandfather, Johan Peter Lindström," and that his family had immigrated to Geneva! Bingo!

In my response to Mrs. Banks, I gave my title as "Researcher and second cousin once removed," since it was now clear we were related! Mrs. Banks was delighted to hear that she still had extended family in Illinois and was eager to learn about the background of the Lindström family in Sweden. My mother had not heard of Erland Edvin or his older sister who had also been born in Geneva, but she knew of the children born in Sweden, and had extensive genealogical information about the Lindströms of Kölöngared.

Had anyone else at the Swenson Center done the research, I would never have known that I had cousins in California, and the Banks would not have located the birth parish of their family in Sweden. Systematic examination of many different kinds of sources is, of course, the key to success in genealogical research, but sometimes serendipitous events such as this are also necessary!

Lutheran Brotherhood matches funds

We would like to bring it to your attention that Lutheran Brotherhood will match funds for contributions to the Swenson Center (Augustana College) for anyone holding a Lutheran Brotherhood contract.

Any contribution over $25 will be matched by Lutheran Brotherhood, up to $100 per calendar year. If you are currently a Swenson Center Associate ($25 donation per year) or Circle member—or would like to become one—we encourage you to pursue this option. Please contact your Lutheran Brotherhood representative for details.
California largest state in Swedish-America

In the most recent issue of Swenson Center News, we included some information from the 1990 Census regarding the current size of the Scandinavian-American communities. As more detailed information has become available since then, it is now possible to delve a little deeper into some characteristics of the contemporary Swedish-American community.

As we noted in the previous article, California is now the state with the largest number of persons who identified themselves as being of at least partial Swedish background. Minnesota comes in as a close second, and Illinois in third. This was also true in the 1980 census. Still, as anyone who visits the state knows, Minnesota's Scandinavian character is quite noticeable. The census figures also bear this out: close to one-third of the state's population responded that they had some Swedish or Norwegian descent.

On a more local level, two classic urban destinations for Swedish immigrants, Chicago and Minneapolis, still have large Swedish-American communities. In Cook County, Illinois (which includes Chicago), more than 116,000 persons claimed some Swedish background, while the figure was over 140,000 in Hennepin County, Minnesota, (home county of Minneapolis). In California, Los Angeles County is the home to some 110,000 persons of Swedish descent.

These figures give us an indication of how many respondents to the census questions identified at least some Swedish connection in their family backgrounds. They do not tell us what this identification with Sweden really means for the individual. Obviously, to some it means very little—perhaps only the knowledge that a grandparent came from Sweden—whereas for others it may mean taking an active part in Swedish-American activities and customs or learning the language. Language-use, often used as another way to try to measure the size of ethnic communities, has always been important for the maintenance of ethnic distinction. The 1990 census indicates that the vast majority of Swedish-Americans and Scandinavian-Americans speak English today. Still, the census results also suggest that Swedish and the other Scandinavian languages are still used in addition to English. For Swedish and Norwegian the census estimated that some 100,000 persons used each language on a fairly regular basis. This may seem like a surprisingly high figure, but we should keep in mind that the total number of persons who claimed at least partial Swedish or Norwegian ancestry was 4.6 and 3.8 million, respectively.

The number of first generation Swedish immigrants in the U.S. has obviously declined dramatically from its peak figure of more than 665,000 in 1910, and in comparison with other immigrant groups in the U.S. today, this number is quite small. In 1990, 58,000 Swedish-born persons were living in the U.S., making it the largest Scandinavian group (compared with 47,000 Norwegians, 37,000 Danes, 22,000 Finns, and 5,000 Icelanders.) The majority of these persons have been in this country for a fairly long time, but it is interesting to note that almost a quarter of the Swedish immigrants in the U.S. today arrived during the 1980s, most likely helping to solidify California's status as the number one Swedish state.

ElderHostel at Augustana

In June 1993, the Swenson Center once again took part in an ELDERHOSTEL program hosted by Augustana College on the topic of Scandinavia and Scandinavians in America. Some forty students from across the U.S. heard presentations on contemporary Scandinavia, Swedish-American history, and on how to do research in Swedish genealogy. Everyone spent at least part of the day doing hands-on research at the Swenson Center.

Earl F. and Elsie C. Kohler of Madeira Beach, Florida inspect microfiche in the Augustana College Library during the 1993 summer session of Elderhostel at Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois.

A similar ELDERHOSTEL is planned for early June 1994. For further information, please contact the coordinator for Augustana College's ELDERHOSTEL, Dr. Marsha Smith, Department of Sociology, Augustana College, 639 38th Street, Rock Island, Illinois 61201-2296, telephone 309-794-7270.
1996 designated Swedish-American anniversary year

In 1846 a band of Swedish immigrants made their way across the Illinois prairies, settling in Henry County and establishing the Swedish colony of Bishop Hill. This colony was one of the earliest Swedish settlements in America, and became an important magnet in the further course of Swedish immigration to the United States. 1996 marks the 150th anniversary of this migration, and has recently been designated as a year to celebrate the mass immigration from Sweden to America and the contacts which were established between the countries. Planning committees have been established in both countries; the U.S. committee is headed by Roger Baumann, Executive Director of the Swedish Council of America in Minneapolis.

The plans call for a variety of activities in both countries—obviously, the mass immigration of some 1.2 million Swedes to this country will be an important theme, but the continuing contacts up until the present time also will be discussed. The planning committees in Sweden and the U.S. are encouraging all interested individuals and groups to become involved in the 1996 celebrations and to use this year as an opportunity to focus on contacts and relations between the U.S. and Sweden. Events planned so far include exhibits, conferences, and increased emphasis on travel between the two countries.

The Swenson Center will also be a part of the 1996 celebrations. We plan to host a conference on the history of the early phase of Swedish immigration to the U.S., focusing on the histories of pioneer Swedish settlements in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, and Texas, along with their role in the continuing migration of Swedes further west—to the Dakotas, Kansas, Nebraska, California, Washington and other western points. We also hope to include field trips to some of the early settlements in our area as a part of the conference. Further information will be available as planning for this conference continues.

Augustana Summer School in Sweden

For those with a genuine curiosity to learn more about Sweden and the Swedes, Swedish culture or one’s Swedish roots, a knowledge of Swedish is essential. Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois announces its eleventh Summer School in Sweden, which provides an excellent opportunity to learn Swedish in Sweden. Now entering its second decade, this six-week program offers five weeks of intensive college-level Swedish language study at the folkhogskola (folk high school) in beautiful Grebbestad on the Swedish west coast, and one week in Stockholm, the Swedish capital. The program runs June 5 to July 16, 1994.

The program is designed for anyone from 16 to 90 years of age who is interested in intensive study of Swedish. This year we will offer three levels of language instruction: beginning, intermediate, and advanced Swedish. Each level corresponds to one year of college- or university-level study and may be taken for credit granted through Augustana College. Each course meets separately from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. daily, and small groups, conversation drills, and lectures on Swedish cultural history complement the basic curriculum.

The first five weeks will be at the folkhogskola in Grebbestad, a small, idyllic fishing village and popular summer resort in northern Bohuslän on the Swedish west coast, located midway between Göteborg (Gothenburg) and Oslo. There will be weekend excursions to Oslo and Göteborg, field trips, visits to areas of local color, as well as opportunities to meet with a Swedish family. Following the stay in Grebbestad, the group will travel to Stockholm to spend a week exploring the capital and surrounding areas.

The cost of the program is $2,500 (with reservation for major exchange rate fluctuations). This covers all books, ground transportation, meals, lodging.

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A word about finances

The Swenson Center is financed completely by gifts received from those who believe in the importance of its purposes. These gifts have taken two forms—endowment gifts and annual support. Endowments are funds in which the principal is invested with the income used annually for the purpose designated by the donor. Annual gifts are used during the year received.

Endowments have always been the source of most of the Center’s income. The Center was founded with an endowment gift from Birger and Lyal Swenson. That gift was vital in getting the program started, but it is not large enough to cover the costs of our present activities. Fortunately, several other friends have since added endowments to provide continual support. Endowment income currently provides approximately three quarters of the Center’s income. An endowment is an excellent way to memorialize a loved one. Such a remembrance can take the form either as a direct gift or as a bequest. We would be pleased to discuss these possibilities with you.

The other form of financial support is annual gifts. While gifts of any amount are recognized and appreciated, many have chosen to participate either as a member of the Swenson Center Associates or the Swenson Center Circle. Annual gifts are vital to balancing our budget. We welcome you to become a partner with us through a program of annual support.

Swenson Center Circle and Associates

We invite you to become a member of the Swenson Center Associates or the Swenson Center Circle. More than 430 persons have enrolled as Swenson Center Associates, each making an annual contribution of at least $25. In addition to supporting the work of the Swenson Center, Associates receive a discount on research fees and all mailings from the Center and a reduced subscription to Swedish American Genealogist. For a $35 contribution, Associates receive a subscription to Swedish American Genealogist in addition to the above benefits. Swedish American Genealogist, edited by Dr. Nils William Olsson and published quarterly by the Swenson Center, contains a wealth of material on Swedish-American biography, genealogy and personal history.

Swenson Center Circle members support the work of the Center through an annual contribution of $250. Circle members receive all publications of the Center, including Swedish American Genealogist, and a guest invitation to a special dinner held in conjunction with the annual Ander lecture.

We thank those who support us through the Associates and Circle, and encourage you to consider becoming a member of either group.

Grant received from Wallenberg Foundation

We have received a grant from the Marcus och Amalia Wallenbergs Minnesfond, Stockholm, Sweden. Over the years, the Swenson Center’s library has grown significantly, through purchases and more importantly through donations of book collections. Two recent examples include the Nils William Olsson and the C. Walter Mortenson Collections.

During the last several years, significant advances have been made in the field of computerized and automated cataloging techniques. Together with other libraries in the United States and Sweden, the Center plays an active role in building computerized bibliographic databases of Swedish-American related materials.

Gifts

We acknowledge with gratitude the following gifts received since July 1, 1992:

**$1,000 and over**
- Earl R. Brolander
- Glen R. Johnson
- Robert N. Linrothe
- Milford J. Nelson
- Lawrence J. Plym
- Erick O. Schonstedt
- Lyal Swenson

**$250 and over**
- Conrad Bergendoff
- Betsey Brodahl
- Glen E. Brolander
- Arthur Dahl
- Ruth A. Gregory
- Nils Hasselmo
- Philip A. Johnson
- Albert Lestor
- Wendell Lund
- Gertrude Lundholm
- Nils William Olsson
- Ross Paulson
- Rudolph A. Peterson
- Arne Selbyg
- Gerald R. Sime
- George C. Simpson
- Harold Sundelius
- Mary Swanson
- Bertil G. Winstrom
- Detroit Swedish Council

**$100 and over**
- R.S. Peterson
- Robert Skold
- Drott Lodge 168, Vasa Order of America

The grant from the Marcus och Amalia Wallenbergs Minnesfond has been especially earmarked for the cataloging of the Nils William Olsson Collection. This collection is especially strong in the areas of Swedish-American biography, genealogy and local history. Vicky Oliver from the Swenson Center supervises this project, which is carried out in cooperation with the Augustana College Library.
Summer School ... FROM PAGE 5

in Grebbestad and room and breakfast for the week in Stockholm. A special APEX air fare Chicago-Gothenburg, Stockholm-Chicago of $838 has been secured for program participants.

For further information and application forms, please contact Dr. Larry E. Scott, Department of Scandinavian, Denkmann Hall 110, Augustana College, Rock Island, IL 61201. Phone (309) 794-7329, fax (309) 794-7443.

**Biographical data for family history database**

The Swenson Center has a collection of family histories which we continuously receive as donations. We are in the process of setting up a computer database in which we enter the names of first generation immigrants from the family histories.

Due to the amount of time it takes to extract these names from family histories, our new policy will be to enter names from only those family histories which are accompanied by our new, specially-designed form. The form asks for the specific information we would like to know about the immigrants. Other donated histories will be accessioned and acknowledged, but they will not be entered into the database without the completed form.

If you would like to donate a copy of your family history, please call or write to the Swenson Center and request a Family History Database form.

**Larry Plym Dies**

The Swenson Center mourns the death of Lawrence J. Plym on March 12, 1993. Larry Plym was proud of his Swedish background and became one of the Center's strongest benefactors. This interest began through genealogical studies of the Plym family completed at the Center. During his lifetime, gifts totaling $500,000 established the Plym Endowment for Swedish-American historical studies. In recognition of this support, the main reading room at the Swenson Center is named the Plym Research Room.

Formerly president of the Kawneer Company of Niles, Michigan, one of the world's largest manufacturers of architectural aluminum products, Larry Plym took a strong interest in Swedish-American activities. He was a member of the Board of Directors of Swedish Council of America and had been awarded the Order of the North Star by the King of Sweden.

**Correction...**

We have a correction from our most recent newsletter, No. 7, 1993, regarding the newly acquired microfilms of passenger indexes from Stockholm and Norrköping.

The article states that the index of passengers leaving the port of Stockholm covers the years 1860-1920. Unfortunately, this was incorrect, for the passenger lists begin in 1869. The passenger records for Norrköping do begin in 1860, but there are only a handful of names in the indexes for the period 1860-1868.

We regret any inconvenience this may have caused.

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**How you can support the Swenson Center**

Please enroll me in the following category of support for the Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center:

- **SWENSON CENTER ASSOCIATE** (annual contribution of $25 or $______)
- **SWENSON CENTER ASSOCIATE with one-year subscription to Swedish American Genealogist** (annual contribution of $35 or $______)
- **SWENSON CENTER CIRCLE** (annual contribution of $250)
- **SWEDISH AMERICAN GENEALOGIST** (one-year subscription of $20)
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St. Paul alone Swedish was taught at four high schools. Examples of other locations include Duluth, Cokato, and Svea, Minnesota; Chicago, Moline, and Rockford, Illinois; Worcester, Massachusetts; Jamestown, New York; Turlock, California, and Moscow, Idaho. It is estimated that at least 1,800 students were enrolled in high school Swedish in the United States that year.

The academics who got together in Chicago in 1911 and formed SASS included both Scandinavian-Americans and persons without any personal connections to Scandinavia. Henry Goddard Leach of Harvard, Lee Hollander of the University of Wisconsin (who had attended Ibsen’s funeral as a young man) and Chester Gould of the University of Chicago joined forces with Jules Mauritzson from Augustana, Knut Gjerset from Luther College, and David Nyvall from the University of Washington to promote the study of Scandinavian languages and culture in American universities and colleges.

As time passed, the organization grew and Scandinavian studies was introduced at more and more institutions of higher learning. By 1940 some 45 colleges and universities in the U.S. offered courses in Scandinavian languages and literature, and today the figure is around 50. Languages and literatures still dominate among the courses offered, with Swedish and Norwegian being the most popular. However, one may also take courses in Scandinavian art, geography, history, music, politics, and film.

Shortly before his death in 1930, Jules Mauritzson, professor of Swedish at Augustana College and twice president of SASS, spoke of the future of Scandinavian studies in America. He was convinced that the discipline would continue to flourish long after he and his contemporaries were gone. Mauritzson was right, and today the sense of Scandinavian distinctiveness in America is very much rooted in the daily work of teaching and studying in the Scandinavian Studies programs in American colleges and universities. Here, students may study the Scandinavian cultures, including the different Scandinavian languages, literatures, and histories, but also the films of Ingmar Bergman or the concept of the Scandinavian welfare states. Jules Mauritzson and his colleagues would have been pleased with how the work they began almost a century ago has endured.

—DAG BLANCK