

6-1-2007

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Recommended Citation

(2007) "News from the Swenson Center," *Swedish American Genealogist*: Vol. 27 : No. 2 , Article 3.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.augustana.edu/swensonsag/vol27/iss2/3>

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News from the Swenson Center

Rock Island, Illinois

May 7, 2007

Dear Friends,

This letter is to invite you to the upcoming conference at the Swenson Center called "Friends and Neighbors? Swedes and Norwegians in the United States." It will take place October 19-20, 2007, and will mark the 25th anniversary of the Swenson Center. We are very happy that, as has been the case in the past, the Swedish-American Historical Society will join us as co-arrangers of this conference.

The conference will explore the contacts and interaction between Swedish and Norwegian immigrants and their descendants in America. Swedes and Norwegians were often neighbors, had similar occupations, married each other, cooperated, and developed comparable – but not identical – religious, cultural, and ethnic traditions. The relationship was not always harmonious. There was also friction and competition, and H. Arnold Barton, the well-known historian of Swedish America, talks about a "sibling relationship between Norwegians and Swedes" in America.

Conference presenters will include leading scholars from the U.S., Sweden, Norway, and Denmark. The conference will address a wide variety of topics dealing with the immigrant experience, but always with a focus on Swedish-Norwegian inter-relationships or comparisons. We will discuss settlement histories, politics, work to preserve cultural traditions, religious aspects, intermarriage patterns, and literature.

The conference will take place in Wallenberg Hall on the campus of Augustana College. It begins on the evening of Friday, October 19, with the 2007 O. Fritiof Ander Lecture in Immigration History. It continues all day Saturday, October 20, and concludes with a dinner that same night. As usual, the conference is free and open to the public.

A final program with registration information will be available and distributed by late summer. You can also check our website **www.augustana.edu/swenson** for more information.

I look forward to seeing you in Rock Island in October for what promises to be a very exciting event!

With best wishes

*Dag Blanck, Director,
Swenson Center*