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2018

SALT LAKE INSTITUTE OF GENEALOGY

January 21-26, 2018 • Salt Lake City, Utah

BY ELISABETH THORSELL

In September I got an e-mail from Elaine Hasleton who works at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City. Elaine knows me from the SAG Workshop, and now she had a question for me: “would I like to come to Salt Lake City in January 2018 and be an instructor in one of the courses, *Researching your Swedish and Finnish Ancestors*, at SLIG 2018?”

After thinking about this for a day or two, I accepted. Then I was told that I had to write a couple of texts to be printed in the SLIG syllabus. The topics were “Inheritance and Death Duties - *Bouppteckningar*; Law and the Courts - *Domböcker and Småprotokoll*; The Military Archives - *Krigsarkivet*; The Merchant Marine - *Sjömanshus*; Swedish Nobility - *Riddarhuset*.”

It all had to be done before the deadline of 1 November which I almost made.

Then on 20 January I took an early flight from Stockholm to Paris, France, and from there directly to Salt Lake City. Due to the difference in time I arrived in the middle of the afternoon, which was very nice. A taxi soon took me to the hotel, and I was finally able to relax.

Later Jill Seaholm and her husband Dave arrived from Rock Island, and computer guru Dave helped me to connect to the internet.

After some information meetings on Sunday, the courses started on Monday morning. Our course #5 with 28 students was just one of the total number of 14, with 386 participants in the various groups.

The topics were very diverse, mostly geared towards fairly experienced researchers in U.S. records, but also topics

as varied as Portugal, Great Britain, Quakers, and Pennsylvania Dutch. Also offered were courses on Writing Family Histories, Advanced Genealogical Methods, and Establishing Genealogical Proof with DNA.

The Swedish-Finnish course was coordinated by Elaine E. Hasleton, AG, and Jeff Svare, AG. Other instructors were Geoffrey Fröberg Morris, AG, Karen Mauer Jones, CG, FGBS, Jan Myhrvold, and myself.

The students were very interested in the lessons we offered and had many questions that we tried to explain to our best abilities. One that came up frequently was that not all had understood that Finland was not a separate country until 1809, when the Russian tsar conquered it. Finland was then listed as a Grand Duchy of Russia until 1918, when it declared its independence.

Before 1809 Finland was a part of the Swedish realm since at least the 1200s, and was a province just like Småland or Närke.

One interesting lesson was given by Jan Myhrvold from Norway, on Skype. He spoke on the *Forest Finns in Sweden*, including an interesting DNA project to follow their lines back to Finland. The technology worked fine!

Lessons started at 8:30 in the morning and went until 4 p.m. with breaks. In a large room was the SLIG Central where one could get coffee, or browse a huge bookstore, or meet with people from various genealogical societies.

On Monday evening there was a Plenary Session when all coordinators and instructors were presented, an amazing gathering of top genealogists.



Some of the Course 5 instructors: Jeff Svare, Elisabeth Thorsell, and Elaine Hasleton.

In the evenings there were opportunities to visit some local places of genealogical interest like Ancestry’s local offices, The Family History Library, and the Utah State Archives.

Last day, Friday, all the students got their diplomas, and I hope the ones in Course #5 will continue networking with each other.

SLIG 2018 ended with a fine banquet, where all kinds of awards were presented. John Philip Colletta, PhD, FUGA, gave a nice speech on how words have changed their meaning during the centuries.



Jill Seaholm gets her diploma! (notice Å, Ä, Ö buttons!)

Then it was time for me to leave warm Utah for snowy Sweden!