



*Next Meeting:
September 13
2:30 p.m.
Program:
Power Point
Slide Show on
Iceland*

Vasa Order of America
Nobel-Monitor Lodge No. 130
September, 2023

Swedish Immigration to America

The organizations formed by the Swedish Americans typically represented their need to preserve their ethnic identity. One of the largest Swedish national organizations, the Vasa Order of America, had as its charter: "To render aid to sick members of the corporation, whether such sickness be temporary or incurable, to render aid towards defraying the funeral expenses of members, and to promote social and intellectual fellowships among its members." The Vasa Order that started in 1896, the Independent Order of Vikings founded in 1890, and the Independent Order of Svithiod established in 1880, eventually shifted from their initial focus. In time, their energies and resources were directed more toward the preservation of their Swedish heritage and traditions. While they continue to manage care facilities for the aged, most of their activities include Swedish education, music, and dance classes. Although the Vasa Order of America still exists today, the membership is less than half of what it was in 1929, when Swedish culture was at its peak.

The Swedish Americans' pride in their heritage did not take hold until their immigration to America. America's rise as a world leader at the turn of the century and the celebration of heritage by other European immigrants led to the Swedes' nationalistic sentiment. Most Swedish Americans expressed American patriotism, and they were especially honored to think that they had brought to America all the best that Sweden had to offer.

The earliest immigrants found it especially tough to learn the English language. The young Swedish Americans learned the language of their adopted country more readily than did their parents and grandparents. This caused tension between the generations. The youth balked at their elders' conservatism, while the elders worried that the youth would ignore their Swedish heritage. World War I brought this issue to a close when legislation was introduced that discouraged all immigrants from using their native tongue. Within and outside the home, English became the primary language of Swedish-Americans by the 1930s.

True to form, the Augustana Synod and the *Hemlandet* criticized those who pushed Americanization. They saw the Swedish language as key not only to preserving their heritage but also to the success of their education programs. The synod had support on this issue from Vilhelm Lundstrom, a respected professor at Gothenburg University, who believed in the need to preserve Swedish culture even on the American side of the Atlantic. In 1925, he expressed his frustration in several Swedish newspapers.

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**Peace
Lutheran Church
3740 Mayfield Rd.
Cleveland Hts.
just east of
Severance Center**

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September /October
Birthdays 3



Celebrate with us at
Shooter's on the Water

Swedish Immigration (Continued from P.1)

Lundstrom wrote: “Once the will to remain Swedish has died out within the Augustana Synod, it will have betrayed its historic mission, and it will then be swallowed up by a common Anglo-American Lutheranism, in which every trace of Swedish tradition will soon be swept away. Sweden’s church is indissolubly bound up with Swedish language and Swedish culture, and with their preservation and cultivation in the world. If Augustana breaks with that tradition, it breaks with the church of our fathers and with its own proud past.”

America’s reaction to the incoming Swedes varied. Americans usually welcomed the Swedes because they provided the expanding country with practical skills and labor, but many viewed the Swedish as working-class immigrants who would not advance from their social standing. One writer described those immigrants he saw arrive at Castle Garden in 1882. After he harshly criticizes the incoming Italians, Jews, Russians, and the English, he describes the meekness of the Swedish immigrants: “Here come the quiet, modest group of Swedes, true-hearted tillers of the soil in coats that bear the mark of the parish tailor, and demure women with flaxen hair and light blue eyes.”

Hans Mattson, a prominent Swedish-American statesman in the late 1800s said, “Our people in this country did certainly earn a name for integrity and honesty among their American neighbors, which has been a greater help to them than money.” Although certainly not unbiased in his feelings, Mattson expressed the opinion of many Americans toward the Swedish.



September Program



Halldor Gudmundsson will be presenting a very nice power point slide show about Iceland for our program on September 10.

Halldor is the pastor at Church of the Redeemer in Cleveland Heights. He also serves as the CEO of the Icelandic Bible Society in Reykjavik, Iceland.

Pastor Halldor is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. He earned his Master of Arts in Lay Ministry from Trinity Lutheran Seminary in 2008 and Master of Sacred Theology with focus on congregational leadership from the same school in 2010. Earlier, Halldor finished a degree in theology from The University in Iceland and was ordained as a deacon in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Iceland in September, 1997.

Halldor moved with his family to the United States in 2006 for graduate studies. After living in Columbus, Ohio, and Chapel Hill, NC, they moved to Shaker Heights in 2013.



Vasa Order of America
Nobel-Monitor Lodge #130
3236 Berkeley Avenue
Cleveland Heights, OH 44118-2055

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Grattis På Födelsedagen!



September

- 9 Diane Forsmark
- 10 Merryl Carlsson
- 12 Dana Elfvin
- 17 Neal Perrine
- 25 Ellana Miklos

October

- 5 Marty Bergman
- 9 Twyla Sales
- 13 Michael Patterson
- 18 Valerie O'Brien
- 19 Kristina Risk
- 20 Betsy Pehek
- 23 Tillie Malm
- 27 Sharen Tizzano

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Ole had not been in church for quite a while. The preacher saw him on the street one day, so he asked Ole about his absence. Ole said it was because of his shabby clothes. He was ashamed to go to church. The minister was moved by the story and handed Ole \$20, telling him to get some new clothes. The following Sunday, Ole wasn't in church and when the preacher met Ole the next day, he asked him why.

"Vell, Reverend," said Ole, "dat new suit made me look so good I decided to go down da street to da Episcopal Shursh."

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A nurse in the hospital came out to the waiting room to tell Ole that his wife had just had a baby. "I'm happy to tell you that you have a little girl," said the nurse, "but I'm sorry that I have to tell you that one leg is a bit shorter than the other."

"Vell, dat's all right," responded Ole. "Ve vere planning to call her 'Eileen' anyway."