



Swedish Colonial News

Volume 1, Number 19

Spring 1999

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE

300 YEARS AGO

Greetings! Our Society continues to change and grow. At each Council meeting new members are accepted, life members are added and Forefather Members are approved. Recent activities include a successful 1998 Julmiddag. Thanks for this event go to numerous individuals: the hardworking committee, the key-note speaker, Rev. Kim-Eric Williams, who relayed the story of how he discovered his New Sweden roots, the engaging children and their parents who present the St. Lucia pageantry and all the members who participated.

The Translation Project with the Gloria Dei Church records continues to make progress and a special Thanksgiving Service hosted at Gloria Dei is planned for the fall.

The Council also reports other new developments — a newly designed Forefather Membership Certificate and a Distinguished Service Medal. In addition, the decision was made to create a web site for the Society on the Internet.

We are now making plans for our Forefathers' Day Luncheon to be held April 25th at the Corinthian Yacht Club. The first observance of this day was held on April 8, 1938, when the Legislature of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania voted to make it a legal holiday and officially designated it as "Forefathers' Day."

It is no longer a state holiday, but plan to celebrate this event with us. Meet our Amandus Johnson scholar, socialize with friends and honor our ancestors.

 William Neal

Founding Members of Holy Trinity Church

The 4th day of June 1699 (old style) was a day set aside for the largest celebration of the Swedes on the Delaware in the 17th century—the consecration of Holy Trinity Church near the site of old Fort Christina in what later became known as Wilmington, Delaware.

It was Trinity Sunday, and the church doors of the log church at Wicaco (Philadelphia) were closed as Andreas Rudman's congregation also went to Christina to join Ericus Björk's congregation in a celebration that attracted Swedes from four present states, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Maryland, as well as Delaware.

The church building, with inside dimensions of 60 feet by 30 feet, was massive for its time. As was customary in those days, the men's pews were on the right (south) side of the church, separated from the women's pews by a wide 11-foot aisle. It was the first of eight masonry Old Swedes' churches to be built in the Delaware valley area over the next century, soon to be followed by Gloria Dei Church at Wicaco (Philadelphia), which was consecrated in 1700.

Remarkably, Holy Trinity Church has now survived three centuries. Registered as a National Landmark, it still flourishes today as one of the nation's oldest church-buildings still in regular use for worship. This June marks its 300th anniversary. The event will be commemorated on June

6th—Trinity Sunday—at special services held at the church. It is fitting that we look back and honor its founding members.



Holy Trinity (Old Swedes) Church, Wilmington, Delaware.
PHOTO: RON HENDRICKSON

The following is a list of these members who were assigned pews on 24 June 1699, just 20 days following the consecration of the church. They are grouped by their place of residence. In the listing

Continued on page 5

FOREFATHERS

Charles Springer and his Family

The dedication of Holy Trinity (Old Swedes) Church in 1699 was a milestone in the remarkable success story for one of its members, Charles Christophersson Springer, who came from Sweden some 22 years after the Dutch seizure of New Sweden. It was he who wrote the 1693 letter asking for new Swedish ministers on the Delaware. It was he who lent his tireless assistance to pastor Eric Björk in the negotiations necessary to accomplish their goal of constructing the new church. And it was he who Björk singled out as the most important reason for the success of this venture.

Unlike his countrymen in America, Charles Springer came from an upper class household. His father was Christopher Springer, who died in Stockholm in 1669 after 40 years of government service. His mother was Beata Salina, Christopher Springer's third wife, who survived her husband for almost 25 years, serving as royal housekeeper for the dowager queen Hedwig Eleonora, widow of King Charles X.

Charles Springer was born in Stockholm in 1658 and seemed destined to follow in his parent's footsteps as a leader in Swedish society. He was sent as a young man to study in Riga, Latvia (then a province of Sweden). Following this he was sent to London to study English and mathematics. About to return home, Charles Springer, then 21, was kidnapped and carried aboard an English vessel bound for Virginia, where in his own words, "I was sold like a farm animal" and held in "very slavery" for five years. Upon his release as a supposed "indentured servant," he walked 400 miles to the Delaware, where he had heard other Swedes lived.

His initial residence, from 1684 to 1690, was in an area known as "New Stockholm," located on the north side of Raccoon Creek in Gloucester County. On 27 December 1685 he married Maria Hendricksdotter, daughter of Hendrick Jacobsson and his wife Gertrude. Around 1690, Charles Springer and his family moved to Oak Hill, located on the east side of Red Clay Creek in New Castle County.

This was his home until his death in 1738.

As one of the few Swedes able to read and write the English language, Charles Springer was frequently called upon to draft wills, deeds and other legal documents for his Swedish compatriots. (The courts wouldn't accept such documents in a foreign language.) His reputation was such that he served as a justice on the New Castle court for 35 years (1703-1738) in addition to his manifold duties for Holy Trinity Church as warden, vestryman and trustee. Earlier, prior to the arrival of Björk in 1697, Springer also had served as reader at the Swedes' church at Crane Hook.

Charles Springer's last official act was to travel to Gloucester County to prove in court on 24 May 1738 a deed he had witnessed on 9 May 1685, conveying land in "New Stockholm" to Mårten Mårtensson, Sr., and John Archer, two Swedes of Ammansland in Ridley Township. While crossing the Delaware on his return trip, 26 May 1738, Charles Springer died of a stroke. He was then eighty years old. He was buried in the church that he loved.

Maria Hendricksdotter, the first wife of Charles Springer, had been buried at Holy Trinity Church on 15 March 1727. Three months later Springer married Annika, daughter of Johan and Brita Gustafsson and widow of both Matthias Mårtensson and Jonas Walraven.

Charles Springer had eleven known children, all born by his first wife, Maria Hendricksdotter:

1. **Anna Elisabeth Springer**, born c. 1687, married c. 1706 Samuel Hall, an Englishman who died as a weaver in Kennet, Chester County in 1738. His will named his wife Elisabeth, eight daughters (Mary, Sarah, Phoebe, Elisabeth, Hannah, Dinah, Susanna and Margaret) and four sons (George, Samuel, James and Charles).

2. **Rebecca Springer**, born c. 1689, married c. 1708 Jacob Stilley, Swedish, son of Anders Stille. She died in Christiana Hundred after 1764, and had ten children (Jonathan, Andrew, Maria, Peter, Susanna, Elisabeth, Margareta, Rebecca, John and Lydia).

3. **Maria Springer**, born c. 1691, married on 31 July 1716 William Cleneay, probably of French origins. She died in Christiana Hundred by 1736 after having nine children (Rebecca, William, Charles, Jane, Maria, Hannah, Jane, Samuel and Sarah).

4. **Charles Springer, Jr.**, born in 1693, married in 1722 Margareta Robinson, daughter of Edward Robinson and Anna Walraven. He died in Christiana Hundred and was buried 26 Aug. 1759. They had twelve children (Maria, John, Anna, Charles, Catharina, Edward, Jacob, Gabriel, Margareta, Rachel, Rebecca and Elisabeth).

5. **Christopher Springer**, born 12 May 1696, married in 1722 his first cousin Catherine Hendrickson, daughter of John Hendricksson and Brita Mattson. Christopher died in Christiana Hundred and was buried 31 July 1755. They had nine children (Charles, John, Brita, Peter, Susannah, Solomon, Abraham, Joseph and Catharina).

6. **John Springer**, born blind c. 1698, married [1] his first cousin Maria Hendrickson, daughter of John Hendricksson, in 1727, [2] Mary Dempsey, English, 31 August 1736. He died in Christiana Hundred in June 1772. By his first wife, he had four children (Charles, William, Mary and Joseph). By his second wife, six more (Elisabeth, Rebecca, Israel, John, Margaret and Andrew).


7. **Anders Springer**, born c. 1700, died unmarried in January 1731.

8. **Jacob Springer**, born in 1703, married c. 1732 Mary Bishop, English, daughter of Nicholas and Dorcas Bishop. He died in Christiana Hundred and was buried 18 December 1763. They had eleven children (Dorcas, Charles, Susanna, Maria, Rebecca, Nicholas, Anna, Elisabeth, Jacob, John and Thomas).

9. **Israel Springer**, born c. 1705, died unmarried in January 1731.

10. **Magdalena Springer**, born c. 1707, married [1] Jesper Robinson, 11 November 1725; [2] Paul Paulson 19 November 1728; [3] Morton Justis, 5 December 1747. All three were Swedish. She had ten children (Jesper Robinson, Dorothea, Maria, Rebecca, Paul, Charles, Peter, John and Anna Paulson and Helena Justis).

11. **Joseph Springer**, born in 1709, married in 1731 Annika Justis, Swedish, daughter of Måns Justis and Catharina Walraven. He died in Christiana Hundred in 1799. They had twelve children (Charles, Anders, Beata, Maria, Joseph, Catharina, Sarah, Rebecca, Anna, Rachel, Eleanor and Hannah).

 Dr. Peter S. Craig

HISTORIC SITES**Hendrickson House:
The Oldest Stone House
in America?**

Holy Trinity Church knew a good deal when it saw one. Forty years ago the church was offered an old stone home, reportedly of historical significance to the Swedish community, on the condition that the structure be dismantled and removed from its site immediately. By acting quickly, Holy Trinity became the owner of a brand-new, yet 310-year-old structure which had been built for a young Swedish farmer as a wedding present in 1690, and which is—quite possibly—the oldest stone house in America.

The history of this old stone house began in 1653 when Sweden's Queen Christina agreed to answer Johan Printz's repeated pleas for more men and supplies. Two vessels, *Örnen* (*Eagle*) and *Gyllene Hajen* (*Golden Shark*), were recruited for duty, and preparations were made to replenish the far-off New Sweden colony.

Sven Skute was commissioned to recruit 50 soldiers and 250 colonists for the voyage. He was especially successful finding colonists in the forested area of northern Värmland, where he encountered *skogsfinnarna* (the so-called Forest Finns). These Finnish-speaking people had come to Värmland from Savo, a border province between Protestant Finland (then part of Sweden) and Orthodox Russia. They practiced *huhhta* (the cultivation of rye in the ashes of burned spruce forest) and had been encouraged by Swedish monarchs during the 1500s and early 1600s to clear the ground for eventual farm use. By 1640, however, their Swedish neighbors complained about the burnings, and soon the Forest Finns eagerly volunteered for the voyages to New Sweden.

The *Golden Shark* was damaged and unable to make the Atlantic crossing. The *Eagle* set sail from Gothenburg harbor on the icy, winter morning of 2 February 1654. Aboard were 350 souls, including Peter Mårtensson Lindeström, who would describe this voyage in his famous work *Geographia Americae*, and Johan Risingh, who was destined to become the last governor of New Sweden.



The Hendrickson House on the grounds of Holy Trinity (Old Swedes) Church, Wilmington, Delaware.

PHOTO: RON HENDRICKSON

Overcrowding, poor sanitation and illness combined to take their toll on the ship's passengers and crew. When the *Eagle*, after a four month voyage, dropped anchor at Fort Christina on 22 May 1654, more than 100 people had perished.

Among those who survived the voyage were Johan Hendricksson and his sons, Hendrick and Johan Johansson. The father was sick on arrival, but still living in September 1655 when he signed an affidavit describing the surrender of Fort Trinity to the Dutch. He made a purchase of linen and sewant (wampum) from a Dutch trader on the Delaware in April 1657, but he is lost from the record thereafter.

By 1671, Hendrick Johansson owned (together with Bärtil Eskilsson) nearly 600 acres of land in Ammansland (later Ridley Township). By 1673, Johan Johansson owned property on Marcus Kill. Hendrick Johansson and Bärtil Eskilsson partitioned their joint property into four separate parcels (each taking two). By November 1676, Hendrick was dead.

Hendrick Johansson was survived by three minor sons, Johan, Anders and Matthias Hendricksson. Hendrick's brother, Johan Johansson, and his neighbor Mårten Mårtensson were appointed overseers of Hendrick's estate and guardians of his minor children. When Hendrick's eldest son, Johan Hendricksson, came of age, he took possession of his father's homestead in Ammansland, the eastern parcel on Darby Creek. When Anders Hendricksson came of age, he took possession of his

father's other tract of land—the western parcel facing Crum Creek. It was here, at the confluence of Crum Creek and the Delaware River, that the Hendrickson House was built in 1690, and there it remained for 270 years.

To document the true historical value of the Hendrickson House, H. Edgar Hammond, long-time vicar of Holy Trinity Church, and Ruth L. Springer, wife of Courtland B. Springer (a descendant of Charles Springer) wrote "The Hendricksons of Crum Creek and the Old Swedes House" *Pennsylvania Genealogical Magazine*, 22:45-82 (1961) (reprints available at the Hendrickson House).

In *Crum Creek*, the authors propose that Johan Hendricksson, as the eldest son and new family leader, inherited not only the family homestead but also the task of supporting his younger brothers, which, in Anders' case, meant helping him build a good house to live in when he was ready to marry. The presence of a good supply of freestone dictated the material of choice. Thus was constructed a stone house for Anders Hendricksson and his bride, Brigitta, the daughter of Mårten Mårtensson, Anders' old guardian and neighbor whose great-grandson, John Morton, would sign the Declaration of Independence as a representative of the colony of Pennsylvania.

The *Crum Creek* history reports that the stone house measured 30 by 20 feet and faced southwest overlooking Crum Creek and the Delaware River across to

Continued on page 4

Hendrickson House - From page 3

New Jersey. In the center of each of the two longer walls, front and back, was a door, flanked by a window on either side. The gambrel roof was supported by the end walls and by heavy, hand-hewn pine beams which extended two feet beyond the face of the front and rear walls to form protective eaves over the first floor doors and windows. Inside, the northwest wall was completely filled by a huge fireplace, an adjacent wood closet (fed by a hatchway to the outside), and in the right-hand corner, a narrow, winding stair leading to the second floor. The large upstairs room was used for sleeping quarters and was heated by a second fireplace.

Anders and Brigitta had four children (Hendrick b. 1691; Jacob b. 1693; Helena b. 1696; and Catherine b. cir. 1700) before Brigitta died in December 1702. Anders soon remarried. With his second wife Catharine he had six more children (John, Peter, Gabriel, Maria, Christina and Rebecca).

Anders Hendricksson died in late Summer 1722 and was buried "in Christian and decent manner ... at Wicaco (Philadelphia)." The stone house and surrounding 164 acres on Crum Creek were devised jointly to the three youngest sons, John, Peter and Gabriel.

By 1726, John Hendrickson had reached majority. By 1735, he had married Magdalena and was considered the head of the household, where also lived his mother and his unmarried brothers. John and Magdalena had two known children, Isaac and Gabriel. In 1741, Peter Hendrickson purchased land in Greenwich Township, Gloucester County, New Jersey and left Crum Creek, perhaps by 1747, when he married Catharina Lock, granddaughter of the immigrant pastor Lars Carlsson Lock.

Late in 1746, John Hendrickson, and then his youngest son Gabriel, died. John's only child and sole heir, Isaac, was scarcely more than five years old. With no family member to care for the plantation, the land, but not the stone house, was leased.

Not long after John Hendrickson's untimely demise, his widow Magdalena married Charles Grantum, a justice of Chester County, whose first wife, Catherina Morton, was a granddaughter of Mårten Mårtensson. Magdalena and Isaac left Crum Creek to live at their new home

in Ammansland. On 4 January 1753, Magdalena Grantum died and was buried in the churchyard at Wicaco.

In 1763, Isaac Hendrickson became sole owner of the stone house and the 161 acre Crum Creek plantation. On 31 October 1769, Isaac married Margaret Nethermark, the widow of Luke Nethermark of Tinicum Island and daughter of George and Margaret (Justis) Webb. Isaac and Margaret had no children.

On 30 June 1788, Isaac Hendrickson sold the stone house on Crum Creek and the family plantation, which had grown to 182 acres of land and meadow, to John Crosby. Thus ended nearly 120 years of Hendrickson family ownership.

Now more than one century old, the Hendrickson House was in dire need of repair. Around 1798, the size of the original house was increased fifty percent (to 45 by 20 feet) by the addition of a new section, matching the existing section in both material and construction.

The house and grounds passed through a succession of owners until 1868, when the Ward family of Ridley acquired the property and operated a successful quarry business and brickyard for the next fifty years. In 1918, a large portion of their property, including the stone house, was acquired by the Baldwin Locomotive Works, who owned it until 1956.

In the summer of 1958 the new owners, the Vertol Aircraft Corporation (now The Boeing Company), offered the "Old Swedes House" on their property to Holy Trinity (Old Swedes) Church Foundation with the provision that the structure be removed as soon as possible. Plans were made to create a combination museum-library and church office on the grounds in Wilmington. Careful drawings were made and every structural detail was photographed before the house was painstakingly dismantled, stone-by-stone.

Rebuilding presented many challenges. Where original wood and hardware were no longer serviceable, proper reproductions were crafted or replacement materials secured. The beams (which had been damaged by fire) served as templates for duplication. The original door-frame and two window frames were retained as patterns. The original mantel and frame of the great fireplace are now in place in the restored house. Modern utilities, heat and air conditioning, a fire-proof storage vault

and a new straight stairway were installed.

For the past forty years the Old Swede's house has served as an integral part of the Holy Trinity Church/Hendrickson House/Christina Community Center triad of buildings that form the Swedish presence in Wilmington, not far from Fort Christina Park. In 1960, the house saw the first of its royal visitors when H. R. H. Princesses Brigitta and Desiree admired the rebirth of the ancient Swedish structure. On 29 March 1963 (to coincide with the 325th Anniversary of the Swedes landing at "the Rocks"), this area hosted Vice-President Lyndon Johnson, H. R. H. Prince Bertil, Governor Carvel and other dignitaries who designated Fort Christina and Holy Trinity Church as national historic landmarks, accepted the presentation of the Stallcup log cabin, and officially dedicated the Hendrickson House. In 1976, H. M. Carl XVI Gustaf visited the Swedish landmarks as part of America's Bicentennial celebration and in 1988 the Swedish King returned with Queen Silvia to mark the 350th Anniversary of the ancient Swedes' arrival in the New World.

Today the Hendrickson House serves as headquarters for the Holy Trinity (Old Swedes) Church Foundation and principal meeting place of the Delaware Swedish Colonial Society. Its vault contains the Church's treasures, including the 1718 Communion silver presented by the grateful parish in Sweden where Holy Trinity's first pastor, Ericus Björk, served after leaving New Sweden. In the upper floor gallery may be viewed the altar cloth, bearing a central cross embroidered by H. M. Gustav V, and presented to Holy Trinity in 1950. Students of the earliest settlers visit the library's holdings and throughout the house visitors enjoy Swedish-American antiques and furnishings. Perhaps its proudest role, however, arrives each December when the gift shop offers delightful Swedish treats and the Hendrickson House is decorated for Lucia and a traditional Swedish Christmas.

The 310-year-old Hendrickson House (America's oldest stone?) stands today as both a monument to the Delaware Valley's first permanent settlers and a vital asset rebuilt to meet the needs of the present-day Swedish community.

 Ronald A. Hendrickson

Founding Members - From page 1

below, the pew assignment list has been supplemented with the names of other members who are identified by contemporary church records as donors of cash or labor who, because of age, infirmity, indifference or distance from the church, did not require assigned pews. These additions to the pew list are identified by an asterisk (*).

The service area of Holy Trinity Church was extensive. On the east side of the Delaware River, it covered the area from Raccoon Creek in Gloucester County on the north to Salem Creek in Salem County on the south. On the west side of the Delaware, the service area extended from Marcus Hook on the north to Appoquinimink Creek on the south and westward as far as Sahakitko (present Elkton, Maryland).

New Castle County, Delaware:
Christina

John Stalcop and wife Annika
Lulof Stedham and wife Catharina,
widow of Anders Stalcop
Asmund Stedham and wife Margaret
Lucas Stedham and wife
Samuel Petersson's widow Brita
Peter Peterson, her son
Matthias Peterson and wife Elisabeth
Christiern Andersson
Anders Grelson Mink
Jöran Orrhan
Hendrick Orrhan Snicker

North side of Brandywine

Jacob van der Veer's widow Catharina
Cornelius van der Veer, wife Margareta
William van der Veer and wife Alice
John van der Veer's widow

Skilpot Creek

Hans Peterson and wife Annika
Paul Peterson and wife Margaret

Bochten

Peter Petersson Smith and wife
Catherine, widow of Adam Stedham
Måns Pålsson's widow Elisabeth
Peter Månsson and wife Catharina
John Månsson and wife Gertrude
Hendrick Tussey and wife
John Tussey and wife Anna
*Olof Tussey
Matthias Tussey
Benedict Stedham and wife Anna
Thomas Jones and wife Anna, widow of
Olle Tussey
Jacob Clementsson's widow Brigitta
John Clementson
Lasse Hendricksson

Marcus Hook

*Mårten Knutsson and wife Maria
*William Talley and wife Eleanor,

widow of Johan Johansson
Peter Johnson Walkow, her son
*Olle Rawson's widow Brita
*Lars Rawson

Hans Justis and wife Maria

Deer Point

Broer Sinnicks and wife Sophia, widow
of Anders Jöransson
Jöns Andersson
James Sinnicks
Jesper Walraven and wife Christina
Jonas Walraven and wife Sarah
Edward Robinson and wife Anna

West of Brandywine Creek

Hendrick Jacobsson, widower
Hendrick Hendricksson
John Hendricksson and wife Brita
Matthias de Foss and wife Sarah
Edward Mathew and wife Helena
Anders Friend and wife Isabel
Charles Springer and wife Maria
John Andersson Cock and wife Karin
Peter Stalcop and wife Catharina
Conrad Constantine and wife Kirstin,
widow of Pelle Hendrickson

*Peter Pålsson and wife Geize
Jöran Andersson and wife Maria
Eric Andersson and wife Brita
Charles Hedges and wife Elisabeth

Bread & Cheese Island

Arent Vandenburg and wife Barbara
Olle Thomasson and wife Eleanor
*Bengt Pålsson and wife Margareta

Feren Hook

Olle Pålsson's widow Christina

Long Hook

Hendrick Båtsman
*Peter Jaquet and wife Ingeborg

Mill Torp

Peter Clawson

Crane Hook

Hendrick Andersson's widow Margareta
Hendrick Evertson and wife Elisabeth
Eric Ericksson and wife Anna
Paul Paulson and wife Elisabeth
*John Skrika

New Castle

Richard Reynolds and wife Anna
*Hypolitus Lefever and wife Catharina

Red Lion Creek

Matthias Skrika
Thomas Skrika
Peter Andersson and wife Magdalena

Appoquinimink Creek

Matthias Ericksson and wife Ingeborg

Cecil County, Maryland:

Sahakitko [Elkton]

John Hansson Steelman and wife Maria
*Hendrick Petersson Parker and wife
Simon Johansson and wife Anna

Gloucester County, New Jersey:

Raccoon Creek

*Nils Justison Quist and wife
Knut Justison Quist

Frederick Hoffman and wife
Måns Hoffman
Nicholas Hoffman
Måns Halton and wife
*Jöns Halton, his son
Hans Halton and wife Brigitta
*Lasse Halton
*Carl Halton
*Johan Andersson Sträng, wife Brigitta
*Olof Petersson and wife
Pål Pålsson and wife

Oldman's Creek

*Hans Olleson and wife

Salem County, New Jersey:

Piles Grove

Anders Hoffman and wife Maria
John Hoffman and wife Berthil
*Carl Hoffman
Hans Peterson and wife Sarah
Gabriel Peterson
John Sinnicksson and wife Gertrude
*Jonas Keen's widow Catharina

One Tree Hook

Johan Hendricksson and wife
*Anders Hendrickson, his son
Isaac Savoy's widow Brita

Boughttown

Jacob van der Veer, wife Catharina
*Olle Fransson, widower
Olle Franson, Jr., and wife Anna
*Lars Peterson
*Hendrick Petersson
Olle Nilsson and wife Margaret
Matthias Nilsson Stark and wife Anna
Israel Nilsson Stark's widow Ingrid

Lucas (Carney's) Point

William Slubey and wife Sarah
John Mink and wife Elisabeth
Paul Mink and wife Gertrude
Lucas Peterson

Salsbury Point

Edward Mecum and wife Walborg,
widow of Jonas Scoggin
*Lars Tussey

Finns' Point

Staffan Jöransson and wife Christina
Lars Hendricksson's widow Maria
Lars Hendrickson, Jr., and wife
Jöran Liten and wife Christina
Jacob Hendricksson and wife Magdalena


Chestnut Neck

Anders Sinnicksson's widow Sarah
*Peter Bilderback and wife Ingrid
John Hendrickson, Jr.

Eric Jönson Hutt
Eskil Jönson Hutt
Anders Andersson Vinam, wife Anna
Michael Vinam and wife Elisabeth
Lasse Vinam and wife Catharina
Peter Peterson and wife Christina

Fenwick's Grove

Hendrick Slubey and wife Magdalena
Johan Scoggin's widow Elisabeth

 Dr. Peter S. Craig

EDUCATION

The New Sweden Colony Portrayed in New Jersey Education Text Books

Several years ago I was curious about what kinds of historical materials on the New Sweden Colony had been used over the past 50 years in New Jersey schools. I found 13 elementary-level text books published between 1948 and 1990 in the College of New Jersey library in Trenton. The sample was sufficient to understand part of the reason why the public knows so little about the colony and are so often misinformed on what they do know.

The average length of space devoted to New Sweden per book was 244 words—less than one column in our newsletter. Of necessity, compressing so much information into such a small space means a high degree of generalization. In one book the whole story was condensed into one sentence in parenthesis and in another left out entirely. Since this is state history, it seems strange to leave out part of the story.

Every text had one or more factual errors. Some were minor errors such as placing Fort Elfsborg at Finns Point or misdating the beginning (1639) or ending (1651 or 1657) of the colony. Other errors are more disturbing:

"Queen Christina died in 1655. The Dutch saw their opportunity and overtook the colony."

(The facts are that Queen Christina abdicated the throne in 1654 and settled in Rome, where she died in 1689.)

"In 1651 Governor Stuyvesant challenged Governor Printz for control of the Delaware River. Governor Stuyvesant led a small army to New Sweden and forced the Swedes to surrender or give up."

(In actuality, Governor Stuyvesant challenged Governor Rising with seven armed ships and over 300 soldiers.)

"...there were never more than 98 in the colony."

(At the time of the Dutch takeover, scholars estimate there were approximately 300 men, women and children.)

Sometimes there was conflicting information in different books:

"East Jersey drew many New England, Swedish and French religious refugees."

"But colonists were hard to get. The Swedes were Lutheran and Lutherans were not persecuted."

"When Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden gave the West India Company charter there was little trouble in finding people who wanted to be colonists."

Sometimes the facts are outrageous. Consider the following:

"The Swedes were farmers and river people. The intricacies of pioneering, lumber-jacking, hunting and building were beyond them. But the Finns were just right for the task. No sooner were the ships anchored than Minuet sent the soldiers and Finns ashore to get the new settlement underway. Very quickly, the Finns had patterned what became a distinctly American dwelling—the log cabin."

Sometimes the misinformation is not directly stated, but inferred. For instance the text with no mention of New Sweden contains a chronological listing of NJ historical events and New Sweden is included as follows:

"1638 - Swedish settlers arrive.

1643 - 80 Delaware Indians are murdered in a raid."

Since nothing is said of the particularly good relations between the Swedes and the Indians in this or any other text it might be assumed that the Swedes were responsible for the massacre. In fact, the claimed massacre never occurred.

Sometimes the statements are simplistic.

"Christina, Queen of Sweden decided she would like to own the Delaware River Valley."

Johan Printz is presented basically as fat and mean with only one source commenting on his remarkable abilities to keep a struggling colony alive under extremely difficult circumstances. He is described as

"harsh," "fierce," "stern," all of which he no doubt was. One description calls him *"jovial but dictatorial."* The one accurate assessment was probably *"a despot but good administrator."*

His unusually large size is understandably something of interest to children but one writer spent more than half of a short 177 word story describing his appearance. One might ask why, other than to discredit him?

This should alert you to the fact that children may be receiving little information in their schoolbooks on the colony and it may be misinformation as well. It is worth taking the time to look at your child's or grandchild's history book (4th grade) and assess its accuracy. We would appreciate receiving a copy of any material which misrepresents our story. One of the responsibilities of this organization is to get the story right. We would love to hear from you.

 Beth Linnerson-Daly

NEW FOREFATHER MEMBERS

Carol Bowman Kehler, Broomall, PA, descended from **Jonas Nilsson** via **Mounce Jones** of Amity Township, Berks County, PA.

Ellan Wheeler Stockwell Thorson, Annapolis, MD, descended from **Captain Sven Skute** via his daughter **Christina Skute** who married **William Warner, Jr.**

Marjorie E. Williams, West Chester, PA, descended from **Olof Stille** via **Anders Stille** of New Castle County.

Patricia T. Marshall, Milford, DE, descended from **Jürgen Keen** via his daughter **Anna** who married **James Sandelands** of Upland [Chester], PA.

Frances O. Allmond, Wilmington, DE, descended from **Timen Stiddem** via his son **Adam Stedham** of New Castle County.

Katharine A. E. Campbell, Malvern, PA, descended from **Rev. Andreas Rudman** and **Elisabeth Mattson** via their daughter **Anna Catharine Rudman** who married **Rev. Peter Tranberg**.

**Current List of SCS
Forefather Members**

Måns Andersson

Jerry L. Brimberry, Lilburn GA
Christina W. Lassen, Greenville DE

Peter Andersson (Longacre)

Raymond H. Longacre, Ephrata PA
Frances S. Baynes, New London NH
Antoinette W. Sorensen, Tacoma WA

Otto Ernest Cock (Cox)

Janet Robinson Beerits, Wiscasset ME
David R. Ross, Bryn Mawr PA

Peter Larsson Cock (Cox)

John B. Tepe, Greenville DE

Anders Larsson Dalbo

Aleasa Hogate, Pennsville NJ

Johan Ericksson

F. Leif Eareckson, Annapolis MD

Nils Larsson Frände (Friend)

James A. Friend, Edison NJ

Johan Grelsson (Archer)

R. Michael Borland, Colora MD

Johan Gustafsson (Justis)

John Walton Justice, Chattanooga TN
Elaine C. Nichols, Salt Lake City UT
Janet Justice Papke, Sylva NC
Anne W. Widtfeldt, Haverford PA

Måns Jönsson Halton

Joyce Stevenson, Mullica Hill NJ

Matts Hansson (Mattson)

Lawrence Mattson, Macedon NY

Israel Åkesson Helm

Eldon L. Angelo, Puyalop WA
Mary T. Bauer, Haddonfield NJ
Marie Bates Hiscock, West Chester PA
Elizabeth T. Scholl, Mullica Hill NJ
Martha B. Striedieck, Gradyville PA

Johan Hendricksson

Ronald Hendrickson, Moorestown NJ

Matthias Claesson Holstein

Perry F. Holstein, Raleigh NC

Peter Jochimsson (Yocum)

Y. Bernita Bundy, Barnesville OH
Peter S. Craig, Washington DC
Virginia Yocum Fraser, Seal Beach CA
David L. Greth, Bucyrus OH
June Yocum Greth, Shillington PA
Louana G. Johnson, Duluth MN
Ellen Ohnmacht, North River NY
Ralph H. Walker, Mansfield, TX
Matilda K. Williams, Seminole OK
Henry W. Yocom, Philadelphia PA
Stanley A. Yocom, Lancaster PA
Frederick W. Yocum, Jr., Iowa City IA
James Allan Yocum, Blue Bell PA
James R. Yocum, Tacoma WA

Anders Jöransson (Anderson)

David R. Anderson, Newark DE
Barbara T. Harrell, San Antonio TX

Jürgen Keen

Bonnie Hillman, Browte, Australia
Dawn Alexandra Hillman, Chicago IL
Heather L. Hillman, Bryn Mawr PA
Kendra Jean Hillman, Bryn Mawr PA
Tatnall Lea Hillman, Aspen CO
Paul J. Holsen, Naples FL
George M. Jenkins, Radnor PA
Gordon L. Keen, Jr., Strafford PA
Stuart Craig Keen, Jr., Venice FL
Patricia T. Marshall, Milford DE
Margaret Scott, Devon PA
Susan Thompson, Ft. Washington PA
William Thompson, Ft. Washington PA
Eleanor K. Williams, Berwyn PA

Peter Nilsson Laican (Lykins)

Maria F. Barr, Peachtree City GA
Elizabeth S. Farwell, La Canada CA
John J. Foley III, Baltimore MD
Alexander P. Hartnett, Moorestown NJ
John Kent Kane II, Yorktown VA
Peter Bayard Kane, Cazenovia NY
Andrew R. Likins, Denver CO
Bobby K. Lykins, Estill Springs TN
Frances Snyder Ramirez, Tampa FL
Audrey Ligget Snyder, Tampa FL
Joan Ligget Snyder, Tampa FL
J. Marc Wheat, Arlington VA

Paul Larsson Corvhorn (Paulson)

William B. Neal, Claymont DE
C. Donald Jess, Lancaster PA

Måns Svensson Lom

Virginia Hulings Hill, Oakmont PA

Hans Månsson (Steelman)

Gloria R. Hoppe, Big Sandy TX
James F. Steelman, Mays Landing NJ
Robert B. Steelman, Bridgeton NJ

Mårten Mårtensson (Morton)

Esther Morton Herr, Media PA
Mildred Meredith, Bloomfield IN
William Ward IV, Toughkenamon PA

Jonas Nilsson (Jones)

Carol Harmon, Traverse City MI
Doris S. Hopkins, Sun City West AZ
Carol B. Kehler, Broomall PA
Elizabeth A. McFarland, Haverford PA
Esther Ann McFarland, Haverford PA
George McFarland, Jr., Haverford PA
George McFarland III, Haverford PA
Megan D. McFarland, Haverford PA
John G. Taylor, Wallingford PA

Hans Olleson

Stuart Henri Yost, San Diego CA

Samuel Petersson

C. Matthew Peterson, Bountiful UT

Johan Printz

Dorothea B. Clymer, Placentia CA

Peter Gunnarsson Rambo

Marianna Barneyback, Canton MO
Judy Baxter, Haverford PA
Sharon Holmberg, Indianapolis IN
George M. Keiser, Burlington VT
Jane Rambo Lohmeyer, W. Chester PA
Herbert R. Rambo, Berlin NJ
John Gunnar Rambo, Berlin NJ
Dr. J.H.T. Rambo, New York NY
Michael R. Rambo, Winston Salem NC
Jeannette S. Vollmer, Wynnewood PA
Jeffrey S. Waddell, Portsmouth RI
Virginia Waddell, Wyomissing PA
David E. West, Peoria IL
Ronald A. Wilson, Oneida TN
William R. Wilson, Norfolk VA

Rev. Andreas Rudman

Katharine A. E. Campbell, Malvern PA

Sven Skute

Julie Jensen Bryan, Philadelphia, PA
Ellan Thorson, Annapolis MD

Charles Springer

E. William Ross, Villanova PA
Gary E. Young, Centreville MD

John Andersson Stalcop

Janet S. Rontz, Albuquerque NM
Larry S. Stallcup, Virginia Beach VA
Richard Stevens, Kansas City MO

Timen Stiddem (Stidham)

Frances O. Allmond, Wilmington, DE
Margaret R. Nesbitt, Mesa AZ
Richard Steadham, Woodbridge VA
Jack Stidham, Morristown, TN

Olof Stille

Margaret S. Bridwell, Berwyn PA
Ruthellen Davis, Newtown Square PA
Robert F. Higginbotham, Fairhope AL
Mildred W. Hollander, Ames IA
James A. Kimble, Holland OH
Edward M. Ward, Sarasota FL
Rev. Kim-Eric Williams, W.Chester PA
Marjorie E. Williams, W.Chester PA

Lars Thomasson (Boore)

James W. Marvin, Jr., Wyncote PA
Sara Frances Marvin, Wyncote PA
Verna Marvin, Gladwyne PA

Johan Van Culen (Culin)

Christopher Cameron, Malvern PA
John C. Cameron, Malvern PA
Meghan Cameron, Malvern PA
Walter C. Culin, Burlington NC

OBITUARIES**John W. Widtfeldt**

Last fall on November 9th, our beloved former governor, John W. Widtfeldt, died leaving behind his wife of 50 years, Anne Wood Widtfeldt, a descendant of Johan Gustafsson (Justis), eight children, 38 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

He was born in Council Bluffs, Iowa, of Swedish descent and had served in the Navy for 29 years as a Navy commander. He retired in 1972. His service included three overseas tours in Korea, Japan and in Italy at the NATO Headquarters. Later he was in command of Navy reserve training centers in Hartford and Philadelphia.

After retiring from the Navy he settled into civilian life as head of buildings and grounds at Rosemont College for four years and as a plant manager for Drexel University for ten years.

We knew him first as a Council member, then in 1993-1995 as Sr. Deputy

Governor and finally as Governor from 1995-1997. During his term of office as Deputy Governor, he was instrumental in the success of Kids Celebrate, the 350th commemoration of Johan Printz's arrival held in 1993. Because John was a boat owner and knew the waterways very well and was familiar with large-scale outdoor events, he was invaluable in planning the logistics for the outdoor event at Johan Printz Park on the Delaware River. He also worked hard on updating the By-Laws for the organization.

Because of his deep interest in ship building he joined the Kalmar Nyckel Foundation's effort and worked closely with them in the early stages of construction of the Kalmar Nyckel.

As SCS Governor, he strongly supported the Year 2000 Project—the translation of the Gloria Dei Records—from the fundraising stages into the first phase of actual translation. He represented the society during Jubilee year—1996, the year celebrating 50 years of Swedish immigration. His visit to the midwest and the 50th Anniversary Conference of the Swedish Council of America, he recalled as an "eye-opening experience." He was startled by the scope and variety of Swedish American programs throughout the country. As a result, John organized a survey to focus the direction of our organization. He was concerned about clarifying our mission and not duplicating efforts of other Swedish groups.

John recently retired from the

Newsletter Committee where he faithfully saw to the mailing of each issue for the past five years. Our organization was enriched by this quietly capable, good-humored man.

In November Peter Craig received a letter from Elaine Nichols of Salt Lake City, Utah describing the funeral service held there.

"John Widtfeldt's funeral was here (in Orem near here) on Saturday. I'm sorry he's gone as I enjoyed him, but it was apparent in the spring when they were here for a granddaughter's wedding that he was not his usual energetic self. He sat quietly and spoke little. It was a fine funeral with six of his eight children speaking as well as a brother. There was singing by family members and the congregation.

Prior to the service all of John's and Anne's family gathered outside on the cool, crisp fall day and took myriad pictures and just enjoyed seeing each other all at once. Every child and grandchild was there. It was remarkable as they had come from many places. A few other family members such as Anne's brother and sister and a few cousins like me were also there."

Each governor leaves his stamp on our organization. John Widtfeldt will be known for his staunch support of our historical imperative, and as a man who understood the importance of diplomacy and good will within an organization. His active, caring manner also insured good relations with other like-minded organizations.

Edwin M. Ross

Edwin M. Ross, Forefather Member of the Swedish Colonial Society and former Council member died November 25th, 1998, at 88 years of age.

Mr. Ross was a chemical engineer active in international business and a native of Philadelphia. He was an executive in several Philadelphia companies; Betz Laboratories, Betz Dearborn Chemicals and Key Chemicals, in addition to overseas companies; Crossford Pollution Services in England and SealOSafe in Switzerland. Most recently he was chairman of Pelmore Laboratories in Newtown owned with his son. After retirement he took a leadership role at the Beaumont Retirement Community of Bryn

Mawr from 1989-1995.

In addition to his active professional career he was keenly interested in his ancestry and was a member of many clubs and societies, including the Swedish Colonial Society. He was actively involved in the 350th commemorative preparations in 1988 and, as a Forefather descendant of Charles Springer, was seated on stage with other Forefathers and the Swedish King and Queen at the American Swedish Historical Museum's Commemorative Dinner.

Mr. Ross is survived by a son, E. William Ross, also a Forefather Member, a daughter, Sarah R. Fernley and five grandchildren. His wife of 63 years, Frances Ort Ross, died in 1997.

Calendar of Events

April 11, 1999

Delaware Swedish Colonial Society Luncheon, Wilmington, DE. For info call George Orescan at (302) 999-0185.

April 25, 1999

Swedish Colonial Society Forefathers' Luncheon, Corinthian Yacht Club, Philadelphia, PA. For info call Bill Neal at (302) 798-7375.

NOTE: CHANGE OF DATE

May 22 & 23, 1999

New Sweden Farmstead Military Muster and Open House, City Park, Bridgeton, NJ. The Royal Swedish Musketeers' annual encampment. For info



**Christmas 1998
Julmiddag and St. Lucia Pageantry**

Photos from top left:

Rev. Kim-Eric Williams, guest speaker at the 1998 Julmiddag. PHOTO: BETH LINNERSON-DALY

Alyshia Endy portraying St. Lucia surrounded by her attendants, Starboys and Tomte. Each year, Katarina Sheronas (second from left in back row) organizes members' children for the lovely Swedish tradition.

PHOTO: LINDASMITH

Society members (from left) James Marvin, Jr., Dr. Benkt Wennberg and Dorothy Wennberg, his wife, enjoy the Julmiddag luncheon. PHOTO: WILLIAM NEAL

call (609) 455-9785 and leave message or call Herbert Rambo at (609) 768-5325.

May 22 & 23, 1999

John Bartram 300th Anniversary Living History Festival, Bartram's Gardens, Philadelphia, PA. Historic site hosts the replica *Kalmar Nyckel* and living history interpreters. For info call (215) 729-5281.

June 6, 1999

Holy Trinity (Old Swedes) Church, 300th "Trinity Sunday" Celebration, Wilmington, DE. Bishop of Delaware, the Rt. Rev. Wayne Wright and diocesan clergy celebrate the Holy Eucharist as the year-long celebration continues. For info call (302) 652-8605.



The St. Lucia Festival of Lights at Christ "Old Swedes" Church is attended by Revolutionary War reenactors portraying officers from the Continental Army. Left to right: Malcolm Mackenzie, William Oliver as Admiral John Paul Jones, Charles Fifer as General Anthony Wayne, James Gallagher as General George Washington and Herbert Rambo as Ezekial Rambo.

PHOTO: JANE HUSTON

CONGRATULATIONS**Dr. Nils William Olsson
Nears 90th Birthday**

Dr. Nils William Olsson of Winter Park, Florida, a member of the Swedish Colonial Society, will celebrate his 90th birthday on June 11, 1999.

Born in Seattle, Washington, of Swedish parents, Dr. Olsson served in the diplomatic service of the U.S. State Department, including many years in Stockholm. After his retirement in 1967, he earned a Ph.D. from the University of Uppsala. He has devoted his retirement years in tireless pursuit of Swedish-American history, biography and genealogy. He founded the *Swedish-American Genealogist* in 1981 and served as its editor for 17 years. In addition, he has written numerous books and articles about Swedes in America and is a Fellow of the American Society of Genealogists.

Happy Birthday, Nils William!

Membership Procedure

An application card for new membership must be signed by an active member-sponsor and mailed to the Registrar with a check payable to the Swedish Colonial Society for the class of membership desired. Action will be taken at the next meeting of the Council.

Annual Dues:

Individual \$25; Family (two adults, minor children) \$30; Life \$300.

Mail to: Mr. Wallace Richter, 336 So. Devon Ave., Wayne, PA 19087-2927.

Information: (610) 688-1766

Life Members

David R. Anderson
Newark, DE

Ronald A. Hendrickson
Moorestown, NJ

Linda R. Smith
Shamong, NJ

Steven E. Widtfeldt
Arlington, TX

In Memoriam

Alice W. Lindborg**
Newtown Square, PA
(Former Secretary)

Robert Nelson
Springfield, PA
(Former Captain of the Color Guard)

Edwin Morrison Ross*
Bryn Mawr, PA
(Former Council Member)

John W. Widtfeldt*
Haverford, PA
(Former Governor)

Dagmar Zapf
Swarthmore, PA

* Obituary on Page 8.
** Obituary in next issue.

New Members

Frances M. Allmond, III
Wilmington, DE (Forefather)

Eugenia E. Eberle
Springfield, IL

Lynn Gemeinhart
O'Fallon, MO

Richard & Isabel Larson
Whiting, NJ

Jeffery B. Steelman
Aston, PA

Ellan Wheeler Thorson
Annapolis, MD (Forefather)

Donald C. Ward & Family
Boyertown, PA

Marjorie E. Williams
West Chester, PA (Forefather)

**Swedish Colonial News
Newsletter Committee**

Beth Linnerson-Daly, Editor
David R. Anderson Peter S. Craig
Brian Daly Ron Hendrickson
William Neal Herbert Rambo
Wallace Richter Jean Roll
Dorothy & Benkt Wennberg

Swedish Colonial News

*The Swedish Colonial Society
916 South Swanson Street
Philadelphia, PA 19147*