

Swedish Roots in Oregon

An Immigration Research Project



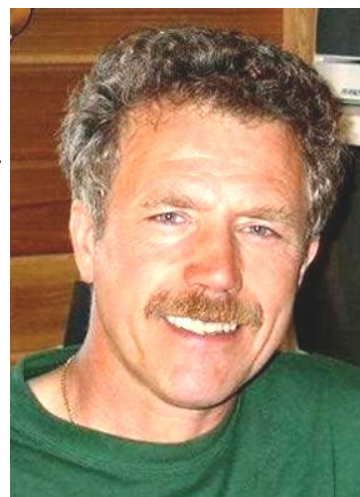
December 2014 Newsletter

Editor: Leif Rosqvist

Volume 30

Message from your President - Lars Nordström

This fall Swedish Roots In Oregon celebrates 15 years of sustained genealogical and historical research. Looking back, a great deal has been accomplished and it has been wonderful to witness the enthusiastic response and support from the Swedish-American community. The result of our on-going genealogical detective work has finally reached a point where many Oregon Swedes now can be found by anyone—free of charge—through the “Genealogy” page on our website. This work continues and new names are added to the database on a regular basis. If you have not visited that page on our website, please swing by and check it out. If you have names to contribute, please forward them to our genealogist.



As far as historical research goes, SRIO has also accomplished a lot. We have published a dozen booklets, which were eventually included in our award-winning volume *Swedish Oregon* (2008). That was the first-ever book in English about the Swedes of Oregon and has now sold more than one thousand copies! Two volumes of oral histories have followed, as well as a number of stories and recollections on our website. They can all be found on the page called “Stories.” There you will find hours of interesting reading, stories that add many illuminating perspectives on the “push – pull” forces behind the Swedish immigration to Oregon.

It is impossible to publish—in book-form—everything we come across, but we are always open to post interesting material on our website. Our weekly web statistics tell us that we have an average of about one hundred individuals from around the world who visit our website every day. So we know that what we post there gets read. Perhaps you have an old Swedish immigrant diary, letters or post cards, newspaper articles or stories that you would like to share with us and our interested readers? If you do, please get in touch.

Over the last 15 years, many members on the SRIO Board have served and moved on. However, much work remains to be done, and we are always looking for willing hands and curious minds. We meet about once a month during fall, winter, and spring, and then usually take the summer off. If you would like to be part of our small, friendly group, let us know. We would love to have you join us. *Välkommen!*

God Jul och Gott Nytt År!

SRIO at Summer Events

by Ingeborg Dean

On June 14, 2014 SRIO joined other Scandinavian organizations in celebrating Midsommar at Oaks Park, where in the past, Swedes gathered in great numbers to mark these important festivities. It was like a day in the old country with a beautifully decorated Maypole, music, dancing into the night, and food. Although times have changed, Oregon Swedes still consider Midsommar important and are drawn, with other Scandinavians, to a day of celebrating summer. For SRIO it is an opportunity to introduce our work to the Oregon Swedish community and others. It is always a most enjoyable day of interesting stories that widen the picture of Swedish Oregon for us, as well as for visitors who stop at our information table.

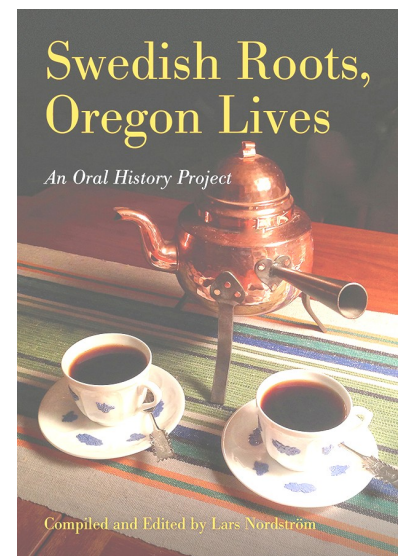
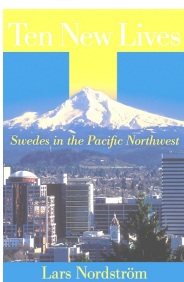
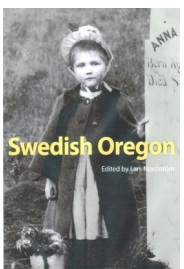
On July 26, 2014, SRIO also participated in the 4th Annual Beaverton International Celebration where we had an opportunity to introduce a wide variety of visitors to the longtime Swedish presence in Oregon.



SRIO will be at the 30th Annual ScanFair Event

Join us to celebrate the sights, sounds and tastes of a Swedish Christmas. And most of all come and celebrate our new exciting book about Oregon lives. The book will be available for purchase at the event together with the rest of our publications.

The ScanFair event will be at Portland Veterans Coliseum, December 6 & 7, 2014



SRIO Researching Swedish Loggers in Oregon 100 years ago

by Lars Nordström

It has been a very exciting year for SRIO, because a project that we have discussed for years, has finally gained traction. Earlier this year, SRIO President Lars Nordström, met several times with Mathias Nilsson, the Executive Director of the Sweden America Center in Karlstad, Sweden, to see if we, in a joint effort, could shed some light on a fascinating and now mostly forgotten aspect of the Swedish experience in the Pacific Northwest—the life of the loggers and their families. These meetings resulted in a decision to go ahead with the project.

In Karlstad, the Sweden America Center will make its exhibition space available starting May 2016. Prior to that, various logging artifacts for display in the exhibit will be brought in. In Oregon, Lars Nordström has assumed the task of collecting historical photographs, facts, stories, and all kinds of logging lore to be included in a book that will initially be published in Swedish. The publication of the book will coincide with the opening of the logging exhibit at the museum. Following the publication of the Swedish edition, SRIO will work on an English language version of the same book.

We need your help, and we need it now! Please share with us any information and/or artifacts you may have that will make this project a success. If you have old photographs, postcards, letters, articles or newspaper clippings, please get in touch. You can find all the contact information on our website. We are also looking for actual things for the museum exhibit, anything from old saws and axes, to authentic boots and clothing. SRIO is a registered, educational, non-profit 503(c) (3) corporation and all contributions to SRIO are tax deductible under section 170(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.



SRIO Needs Help with Marketing

SRIO is, as many of you know, an educational, non-profit organization. We are a small research group that usually meets every month or so. Each member is asked to focus on some of the many tasks we do throughout the year. Still, even though our combined skills add up to a great deal of expertise, we need help with marketing the books we produce. Would you like to help us preserve and make the Swedish history of Oregon better known by promoting our books to bookstores and Scandinavian gift shops? We could really use your help and would love to hear from you!

The SRIO Website has gained two new Stories

by Herje Wikegård

Mr. Rolf Erlandson and the Sweden he left

Edited by Ingeborg Dean

In the book, Swedish Root, Oregon Lives, I tell the immigration story of my father and grandparents who emigrated from Sweden in 1948. My father at that time was 17 years old and spoke no English. What follows are some memories that he wrote several years ago as he reminisced about his childhood in Västerbotten

—Rhonda Erlandson, August 2014.

Rötter i Vindeln möts 2009 i Palm Springs, Kalifornien (in Swedish)

By Catarina (Nygren) Martin

Då fick jag rysningar och tappade fattningen. "VINDELN? Sa du VINDELN??? Där kommer jag också ifrån!! Min mamma och pappa bor fortfarande där

And don't forget the ones we have had published for a while. Maybe you haven't read them yet?

The Churches	A life story - A Mystery of a Gravestone revised
Linnea Society	A life story - by Hans Gösta Andersson
The Singing Societies	A Life Story about Per Johan Anderson
The A Life Story - The Granat Family History	Per Wilhelm Wicklund - A loggers journey through life
A Life Story - A Swedish immigrant soldier's life	

It is final!

by Ross Fogelquist

On Tuesday October 10th the Scandinavian Heritage Foundation (SHF) signed the official documents granting a Life Estate to Ross Fogelquist. The Scandinavian Heritage Foundation will now assume the ownership of the Fogelquist estate, excluding the contents of the home. Ross Fogelquist will have the legal right to live at Fogelbo rent free until his death. Upon his death the entire contents of Fogelbo will be willed to SHF. The Life Estate was made possible by generous grant from Barbara Osher Pro Suecci Foundation, and Swedish Society of Linnea plus smaller grants from New Sweden Cultural Heritage Society, Nobel Lodge, Order of Vasa and Harmoni Lodge, Order of Vasa. In the future all large events, everything over 20 persons, will have to be scheduled through SHF. This new ownership of Fogelbo will give SHF a four and half acre campus to use for many different events. Construction is progressing well on the new building of the New Scandinavian Culture Center next to Fogelbo..It has been just a little over a month since the ground breaking ceremony. The building will be completed sometime in the Spring of 2015.

Review of C.J. Larson's book "Genom sexton länder"

by Mike Timshel

C. J. (Charles) Larson was an interesting figure in the story of Swedish immigration to Oregon. He was born in 1861, in Södermanland, Sweden. At the age of eight, he came to America with his parents and four siblings. The family was left impoverished when his father died shortly after their arrival. In order to survive, Charles was forced to go to work in the woods near Kansas City. After his mother remarried, the family homesteaded in Washington County, Kansas, where life was tough and the labor was hard. He described his education in English as "meager." At the age of twenty-six, he married and eventually homesteaded in Wallace County, Kansas. Two years of drought forced him to move to Colorado, where he lived until he returned to his parents' farm in Kansas. He stayed there for three years to help his parents with their financial troubles, and then drove a herd of cattle to Texas, where his sister lived. From there he traveled to Portland, Oregon.



He moved his family to Warren, Oregon in 1906, where he helped found its Swedish community. A devout Evangelical Lutheran, he was instrumental in establishing the Bethel Lutheran church. Besides being a successful farmer and businessman, he was a tireless promoter of immigration of Swedes and Swedish-speaking Finns to the Warren area.

After his wife, Betty, passed away in 1918, he, his twenty-year-old daughter, and her best friend undertook a grand adventure. They traveled extensively through the western states, including a visit to Mexico, seeing the sights, and visiting Swedish friends active in Lutheran congregations. They even bought an automobile at one point, and drove it into the ground. Eventually arriving in New York, they crossed the Atlantic, and toured Europe. After Europe, they exhaustively traveled through the Middle-East, visiting and writing about a number of places mentioned in the Bible. After months in the Levant, it was back to Europe to criss-cross Sweden, from Skåne to Lappland. After visiting Norway and Great Britain, they returned home, having visited sixteen different countries.

Mr. Larson documented his journey in letters to the Swedish language Portland newspaper, the Oregon Posten, which compiled and published them in one volume in 1928 titled "Genom sexton länder" (Through Sixteen Countries). His vivid descriptions of the land and life in post-war America, Europe and the Middle-East are written in the voice of an intelligent, if spottily educated farmer. He gives us a unique, street-level view.

Soon after they returned to Warren, Larson married his daughter's companion, Signe Ekström with whom he had a son, Carl. Larson continued to live and work in Warren until his death, in 1948.

THE HUNT FOR MATILDA JOHNSON

By Ann Stuller

One of the missing pieces of Pam Berven's family tree was her husband's great grandmother. The grandmother's name was Matilda Johnson Willing and Pam had tried various means to find her. She knew that she had lived in Sellwood which later became a part of Portland and she could trace that date to 1889 when she had married John Eric Willing. She found their marriage recorded in the church records of First Immanuel Lutheran Church. She also knew the date of birth of their only child, and where Matilda was buried in a cemetery in Milwaukie, Oregon, and her tombstone revealed the year of her birth, 1856. Apart from that, little else was known.

To begin her search, Pam had consulted with a relative, contacted First Immanuel, searched the Oregon Archives, and other Oregon genealogical resources. She tried to search in Swedish language newspapers from the Portland area but they started publication in the early 20th century after the death of Matilda. She subscribed to Arkiv Digital and a search was run; she contacted the Swenson Center at Augustana College and they also ran a search but were unable to find Matilda. They did provide her with a list of possibilities but nothing that could indicate Pam's Matilda. They also established a possible birthdate of December 11, 1855 from her age at the date of death. That would have conflicted with the tombstone.

Last April Pam contacted Swedish Roots in Oregon and sent a packet to Lars Nordström asking for assistance in her search. Since Pam lives in Minnesota she believed that it would help if someone in the Portland area could find more information. After the April board meeting, Lars mailed me the packet, and thus began my hunt for Matilda.

Using records available through Ancestry, I began a search for Matilda Jansson, Johansson, Jönsson, Johansdotter, Johnson. It was overwhelming and I was getting nowhere. I then started to concentrate on the marriage and baptism witnesses: sister-in-law, Greta Willing and Carrie Holm. I found Carrie's marriage record in the Oregon Genealogy Society's data base and was able to eventually trace her back to Mora, Dalarna, Sweden. Both Pam and I thought she might be related to Matilda but could find no connection. I also worked on Greta Erickson Willing as Pam had traced her origins to Västmanland. The last place she had lived before emigrating was Grytnäs, Dalarna. Somehow I had the feeling that Matilda was from Dalarna since regionalism was usually strong among immigrants in the Portland area from my own personal experience. Meanwhile I helped Pam fill in the holes in her tree with information about the community of Sellwood, Greta's children and her descendants, and located the house where Matilda lived. I went to the Portland Central Library and searched the microfilmed birth records for Matilda's son and for Matilda's death, and also the Portland city directories with no results.

Using the EMI CD database, I came up with a list of possibilities between the years of 1860 and 1885. I shared the list with Pam and we looked for a Matilda who fit the birth date of December 11, 1855. None came close from that list of hundreds. I also searched records from Iowa since Matilda's husband had Iowa as his destination from the shipping lists and we thought they might have met there.

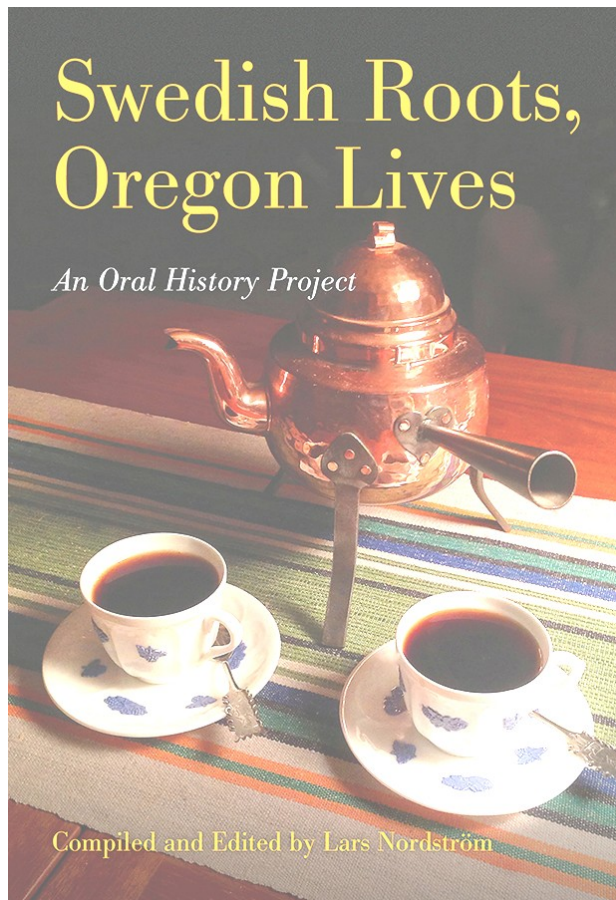
I also was able to trace John Eric's sister who had also emigrated. She had settled in Nebraska, married, and had descendants. So loose ends were cleared up for the Willing family members but Matilda still remained a mystery. Where was she from and when had she left Sweden? Why was there no mention of her in the Portland City Directory? We knew that she was married in September, 1889, her son was born in 1890, and she died in 1891. Three years out of her life was all that could be verified.

In September while looking for the death of the mother-in-law of Matilda, Pam found a Charlotte Matilda Johansson appearing on the same farm but not at the same time. She also had a different birthdate and disappeared after 1874. I turned to the EMI CD again and typed in her name. Looking through the possibilities, I spotted a Matilda Johansson from Grytnäs, Dalarna. I checked her age and year of emigration: 1889. I then went to Swedish Church records on Ancestry and found Matilda's birth record: January 11, 1856. I also found her on a shipping list with her destination listed as Oregon!

Then began the search for Matilda's family in Sweden leading to the discovery of at least one living relative: the end of one search after 5 months and the start of more.



Efternamn	Förnamn	Ålder	Församling	Län	Utvdrår	Destination
JOHANSSON	MATILDA LOVI	26	NORRKÖPING	E	1877	CHICAGO
JOHANSSON	MATILDA OLSS	63	ASARUM	K	1921	NEW YORK
						CHERRY WALBY
JOHANSON	Förnamn: MATILDA					ATCHISON
JOHANSON	Efternamn: JOHANSON					NEW YORK
JOHANSON	Ålder: 33		Kön: K			IRONWOOD
JOHANSON	Församling: GRYTNÄS		Län: W			BOSTON
JOHANSON	Titel/Anm:					NEW YORK
JOHANSON	Utresehamn: GÖTEBORG					NEW YORK
JOHANSON	Utvandrdag: 1889 06 28					NEW YORK
JOHANSON	Destination: NEW YORK					NEW YORK
JOHANSON	Medåkande: NEJ					HASTINGS
JOHANSON	Källkod: 39:401:632					BRADDOCKS
JOHANSON						BOSTON
JOHANSON	MATILDA	27	LEKÅSA	R	1891	SIOUX FALLS
JOHANSON	MATILDA	19	BOLSTAD	P	1891	NEW YORK
JOHANSON	MATILDA	19	GRYTNÄS	W	1895	NEW YORK
JOHANSON	MATILDA	18	GRYTNÄS	W	1895	BOSTON



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