

Inventory of the

Swedish Cultural Society
Rockford Chapter

Records

In the

Regional History Center

RC 273

INTRODUCTION

Robert Borden, the last Treasurer of the Swedish Cultural Society, Rockford Chapter, donated the organization's records to the Northern Illinois Regional History Center on April 13, 2006 and June 26, 2006.

Property rights in this collection belong to the Regional History Center; literary rights are dedicated to the public. There are no restrictions on access to the collection.

Linear feet of shelf space: 1.5
Number of containers: 3 boxes
Northern Illinois Regional History Center
Collection 273

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Swedish Cultural Society Collection dates from 1951 to 2005, with the majority of the materials dating from 1980 to 2005. These records consist of meeting minutes and agendas, correspondence, program materials, membership lists, bylaws, newspaper clippings, and several photographs relating to the Rockford Chapter of this organization. The annual reports from 1971 to 1975 are written in Swedish.

Also located within this collection are items from the Chicago Chapter and National Council of the Swedish Cultural Society, including twenty years of the "Kulturarvet," the Swedish Heritage newsletter. The Swedish Council of America is also represented here, as well as material from various Swedish organizations in Rockford and Geneva, Illinois, and Minnesota. General information on Swedish costumes and songs are also found here.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

On December 15, 1950 twenty people of Swedish decent met in the Rockford home of Axel Rehnberg to see if there was enough interest to form their own chapter of the Swedish Cultural Society in America. On February 4, 1951 they held their first official meeting at which bylaws were adopted and officers were elected, with Mr. Rehnberg chosen as President. The purpose of their organization was "to create a bond between Swedes and Swedish descendants residing in the [Rockford] area. To rekindle, sustain, and strengthen interest in and love of Swedish culture in its various forms. To preserve the Swedish language to the greatest possible extent."

The Swedish Cultural Society in America was originally organized in 1910 when Augustana College and the Augustana Synod held its 50th anniversary celebration. In 1920 the Society reorganized and local chapters were established in locations where large Swedish

populations existed. Although Rockford had a large Swedish population it's chapter was one of the last to be established.

Over the years the Rockford Chapter met regularly at the Tabor Lutheran Church and held entertaining and informative programs, as well as traveled to joint meetings with the Chicago and Minneapolis Chapters. Members of the Rockford Chapter also attended meetings of the Central Swedish Committee in Chicago.

As with many organizations of this type, as the members grew older the society saw its numbers decrease. At the November 5, 2005 Board of Director's meeting, Betty Rottman, the Society's President for the previous five years, resigned. In the discussion which followed the board noted that all of the board's members had served for many years as there were no other members willing or able to do so, and that attendance at the meetings was dwindling. It seemed that this might be the proper time to disband. A letter was sent to all the members of the group inviting their vote on the issue of disbanding at the November 13th meeting. A vote was taken on the motion to disband and the majority of the twenty-two people in attendance voted in favor.

SUBJECT TRACINGS

Chicago
Erlander Home Museum
Geneva
Rockford
Rockford, Swedish Americans
Swedish Americans
Swedish Council of America
Swedish Cultural Society
Swedish Historical Society

COLLECTION INVENTORY

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
1	1	Swedish Cultural Society, Rockford Chapter: History and Bylaws, (1951-2004)
	2	Photographs, 1985, 2003
	3	Officers and Directors, (1951-2005)
	4	Membership Directory [with photographs], 1985
	5	Membership Lists and Correspondence, 1994-2004
	6	Memorials (Obituaries), (1999-2005), n.d.
	7	Programs and Banquets, (1982-2005)
	8	Program Ideas for Future Dates
	9	Meeting Minutes and Reports, 1969-2005; [1971-1975 Reports are in Swedish]
	10	Correspondence, (1987-2005)
	11	Correspondence for Swedish Immigration Jubilee Year 1996, 1994-1996
	12	Certificates from Swedish Council of America, 2003, 2005
	13	Rockford's Swedish Heritage, (1991-2002)
	14	Swedish Historical Society/Erlander Home Museum, Rockford, 1997, 2002
	15	Rockford Swedish Community Newspaper Clippings, (1998- 2002)
	16	Chicago Trips by Bus, (1986-1991)
2	1	Swedish Cultural Society, Chicago Chapter, (1973-2004) Swedish Cultural Society in America, National Council
	2	Bylaws, 1970, 1991, 2000
	3	Programs, Agendas, and Brochures, (1973-2002)
	4-5	"Kulturarvet" Swedish Heritage Newsletter, 1980-2000
	6	Records in Archives at North Park University, 1985
	7	Swedish Council of America, 1995-2005
	8	Swedish Day, Geneva, IL, June 1982
	9	Minnesota Swedes, (1987-1995)
	10	Swenson Swedish Immigration Research Center brochure, ca. 1999
	11	Swedish and Scandinavian Resources, (1989-2005)
	12	Swedish Songs and a Blessing
	13	Swedish Costumes
	14	Swedes and the Stanley Cup, 1996

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
3	1	Swedish Cultural Society, Rockford Chapter: Membership Book, 1952-1957
	2	Membership Card Files, (1965-2005)
	5 vols.	Treasurer's Records, March 1971-May 2005
	1 vol.	Meeting Minutes, December 1950-1971 [in Swedish]