F.M. Johnson Archives and Special Collections
Brandel Library, North Park University
3225 W. Foster Ave.
Chicago, IL 60625
tel. 773-244-6224 ● archives@northpark.edu

Swedish-American Archives of Greater Chicago
Manuscript Collection #5
Swedish Pioneer Centennial Association Records, 1942-1949

SIZE: 5 Archives boxes

ABSTRACT: The records of the Swedish Pioneer Centennial Association comprise five boxes and document the development and activities of the Swedish Pioneer Centennial Association. The collection includes the correspondence files of the Executive Secretary, the President, and other officers and chairmen. Also included are the Association's financial and membership records, program and lecture details, historical statements, and records from three local committees.

HISTORY: On December 1, 1945, a group representing the Swedish-American communities of Chicago, Rock Island, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Rockford, and New York City met at the Swedish Club in Chicago to discuss plans for a 1948 centenary celebration of the settlement of Swedish pioneers in the Midwest. The suggestion for this celebration had been made that autumn by Naboth Hedin of New York.

One impetus for a 1948 date was the one hundredth anniversary of the Augustana Lutheran Church, which was being celebrated that year, particularly in Rock Island. It was decided by the group that instead of having one large event for the entire area, it would be wisest to encourage the celebration in many local areas. Invitations were extended to the Swedish government and to the governors of Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, and Kansas to establish commissions and help organize various events.

In June of 1947, the Board of the Association appointed Professor Nils William Olsson of the University of Chicago to be Executive Director. That summer, local chapters in Chicago, Rockford, Detroit, and Rock Island were organized. Later committees were organized in the Twin Cities, Omaha, Lincoln, Des Moines, Milwaukee, Princeton, IL, and Lindsborg, KS. New York and Philadelphia were also to take part.

The centennial celebration took place during the month of June 1948, starting with a program at the Chicago Stadium on June 4th, where approximately 18,000 people gathered to hear President Truman, Prince Bertil of Sweden, Carl Sandburg and others speak and perform. Prince Bertil took part in many of the celebrations throughout the Midwest and New York State.

In addition to the various programs organized for the centennial, commemorative stamps were issued in both Sweden and America. At the conclusion of the centennial, it was decided to convert the Association into an historical society. On October 15, 1948, it was officially incorporated as such. In March, 1949 all Association interests were transferred toward its reorganization as an historical society, and in early 1950 the Association changed its name to the Swedish Pioneer Historical Society.

ARRANGEMENT NOTE: Nils William Olsson, Executive Secretary of the Association, created the bulk of the Correspondence files. Two types of arrangement are used for his correspondence. General correspondence is organized chronologically; this is followed by correspondence arranged alphabetically by group or individual correspondent. Conrad Bergendoff generated some of these records prior to the employment of Nils William Olsson and Ingeborg Sylvander, secretary for the Association.

ACCESS RESTRICTIONS: There are no access restrictions on the materials, and the collection is open to all members of the public. However, the researcher assumes full responsibility for conforming with the laws of libel, privacy, and copyright that may be involved in the use of this collection.

PROCESSOR: Eric K. Lundberg, October 1984 - March 1985.

RELATED COLLECTIONS: Swedish Pioneer Historical Society Records, 1948-1983 (SAAGC MSS #4)

CONTAINER LIST:

BOX	FOLDER	FOLDER TITLES	SPAN DATES
HISTORY			
1	1	History (in Swedish)	1947
1	2	Proclamations and Certificates	1947-1948
1	3	Minutes of the National Board	1945-1948
1	4	Report of the Executive Secretary	1947
FINANCE			
1	5	Documents and Correspondence: Internal Revenue Service	1947
1	6	Statements and Reports	1947-1949
1	7	Ledger with cover letter	1946-1949
1	8	Bank statements: American National Bank, Rockford	1946-1949
PROGRAMS			
1	9	Chicago Committee	1948
1	10	Illinois, general	1947-1948
1	11	New York State	1948

1	12	Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin	1948
1	13	Miscellaneous Itineraries and Schedules	1948
1	14	Miscellaneous Essays and Writings	1948
1	15	Registration Book	1948
1	16	Holland Centennial, Michigan	1947
1	17	Correspondence: Lectures and Universities	1947-1948
1	18	Correspondence: Lectures and Universities	1948
STAMP SALES			
2	1	Correspondence: Swedish Commemorative	1948
2	2	Correspondence: American Commemorative	1947-1948
2	3	Proofs and pamphlets	1947-1948
2	4	*Congressional Record*	April 1948
DEVELOPMENT			
2	5	Membership lists: Committees	1947-1948
2	6	Lists: Organizations and Individuals	1947-1948
2	7	Press Releases: Julian Jackson's Office (Public Relations)	1947-1948
2	8	Newsletter: *Pioneer Centennial* (continued in SAAGC MSS #4)	1946-1948
LOCAL COMMITEES: CHICAGO COMMITTEE			
2	9	Minutes	1947-1948
2	10	Financial Statements	1947-1949
2	11	Bank Statements: First National Bank of Chicago	1948
2	12	Subcommittees: Description of Exhibits Committee, Historical and Publications Committee, Minutes of Planning Committee	1948
2	13	Mailing	1947-1948
LOCAL COMMITEES: COOK COUNTY SWEDISH PIONEER CENTENNIAL COMMISSION			
2	14	Organizational Documents and Correspondence	1947-1948
2	15	Correspondence: Committee Appointments	1948
2	16	Membership list	1948
LOCAL COMMITEES: SWEDISH PIONEER CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE OF NEW YORK			
2	17	Reports	1948-1949
CORRESPONDENCE: CONRAD BERGENDOFF			
3	1	President's files	1945-1948
CORRESPONDENCE: C. GEORGE ERICSON			
3	2	National Secretary's files	1945-1947
3	3	National Secretary and Chicago Treasurer's files	1947-1948
CORRESPONDENCE: C. G. CARLFELT			
3	4	National Corresponding Secretary's files	1942-1946
3	5	National Corresponding Secretary's files	1947

3	6	National Corresponding Secretary's files	1947-1948
CORRESPONDENCE: ANDREW RYLANDER			
3	7	Detroit Committee Chairman's files	1948
CORRESPONDENCE: E. GUSTAV JOHNSON			
3	8	Chicago Committee member's files	1942-1948
CORRESPONDENCE: NILS WILLIAM OLSSON, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY			
3	9	General	Jan-Sept1947
3	10	General	Oct-Nov1947
3	11	General	December 1947
3	12	General	January 1948
3	13	General	February 1948
3	14	General	March 1948
4	1	General	March 1948
4	2	General	April 1948
4	3	General	May 1948
4	4	General	May 1948
4	5	General	June 1948
4	6	General	July-Dec1948
4	7	General	n.d.
4	8	American Scandinavian Foundation, New York	1945-1948
4	9	American-Swedish New Exchange, New York	1945-1948
4	10	Conrad Bergendoff, Rock Island	1947-1948
4	11	C. G. Carlfelt, Rock Island	1947-1948
4	12	Eskil Carlson, Des Moines	1945-1948
4	13	Consul General C. F. Hellstrom, Minneapolis	1947-1948
4	14	Bengt Janson, Stockholm (Swedish/English)	1947-1948
4	15	Vilas Johnson, Chicago	1947-1948
4	16	Emory Lindquist, Lindsborg, Kansas	1945-1948
4	17	Herman Nelson, Rockford	1945-1948
4	18	Nils Reistad, Springfield, Illinois	1947-1948
5	1	Andrew Rylander, Detroit	1946-1948
5	2	Per Sandberg, Stockholm (Swedish/English)	1947-1948
5	3	Carl Sandburg	1947-1948
5	4	Theodore Sohlberg, Escanaba, Michigan	1947-1948
5	5	Roy Swanson, St. Paul	1947-1948
5	6	Warren O. Swanson, Omaha	1945-1948
5	7	Swedish American Line/G. H. Lundbeck	1947-1948
5	8	Swedish American Line/G. H. Lundbeck	1947-1948
5	9	Swedish Colonial Society, Philadelphia	1948
5	10	Swedish Embassy, Washington D.C. (Swedish/English)	1946-1948
5	11	Nils Testor, Rockford	1945-1948

5	12	Stig Wiren, Kenosha, Wisconsin	1945
5	13	Governor Luther Youngdahl, Minnesota	1947-1948
5	14	Centennial Organizations in Michigan	1947-1948
5	15	Centennial Organizations in Minnesota	1947-1948