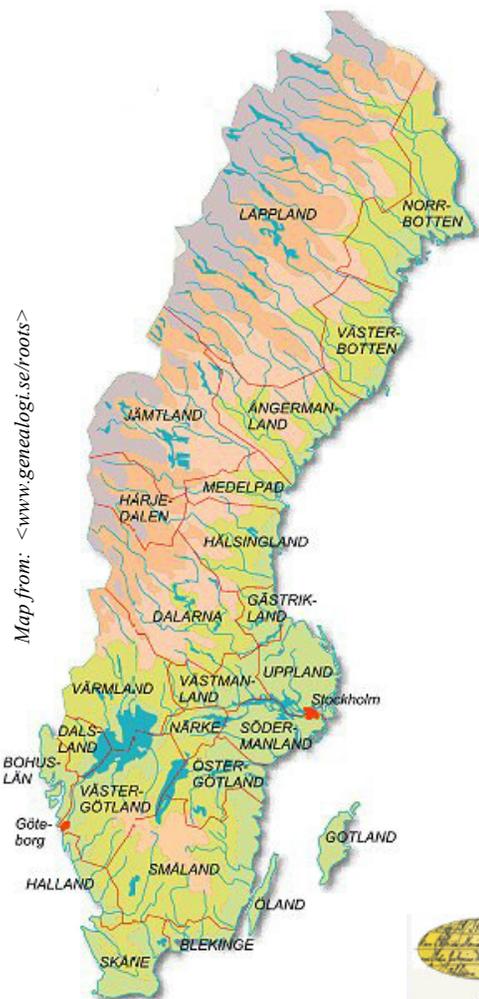


Member Spotlight: The SwedGen Tour comes to Salt Lake City

Submitted by the MGS member, Anne Young <french.cat@verizon.net>



My father's parents were born in Sweden, and came to the United States in the late 1880s. Even though I was quite young when they died, I remember them both with great affection. Upon their arrival in America, they went to Rockford, Illinois, where they had aunts and uncles living. Eventually, my grandfather bought a farm in Henry Co. Ohio where the soil was good and the price of land was low. He moved his family there in March of 1908, much to the chagrin of my grandmother, who had to leave all of her Swedish friends in Rockford and go to a strange place where no one spoke Swedish. I spent every summer of my youth on that farm, helping with the chores, and taking care of the animals. In the evenings, my father's brother and sister, who lived on the farm, would tell stories about the old days in Rockford, and about the relatives in Sweden.



Anne Young's immigrant ancestor Ludvig PETERSSON who became Ludvig LJUNG in America.

When I became interested in genealogy, about eight years ago, my first goal was to find out about my ancestors in Sweden. I knew almost nothing when I started, but thanks to the LDS microfilms of the old Swedish church records, I was able to trace my lines back into the 1700s. There were still some unanswered questions, and I hadn't managed to find out any personal stories or tidbits of information that make these long dead ancestors more real and interesting. But I thought that I was lucky to have found so many dates and places for these long gone Swedish ancestors. I stopped doing the research because I thought there was nothing more that I could do.

A screenshot of the Genline website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for "News", "FAQ", "Contact Us", "About Genline", "Terms & Conditions", and "S". Below this is the "genline" logo in a stylized blue font. Underneath the logo is a row of buttons: "Products", "Buy", "Get Started", "Swedish Church Records", "Genline FamilyFinder", and "Resource". On the left side, there is a yellow box with the text "Now! Over 14,588,461 images available in the Swedish Church Records archive." To the right of this box is a row of six small, sepia-toned historical photographs showing various groups of people, including families and individuals in different settings.

When I met Kathy Meade, the Genline representative, last June at the NGS conference, I decided to try a subscription to Genline. I found so many things that I hadn't been able to find (or was too lazy to look for) in the LDS microfilms, that I decided to rekindle my interest in Swedish research. In mid August, Kathy told me that the SwedGen tour was coming to Salt Lake City [for the 2005 FGS Conference]. I hadn't planned to attend another genealogy conference so soon, but I thought this might be the chance of a lifetime to get some of my questions answered. So, long story short, I went to Salt Lake City.



There were 10 people in the Swedish group, representing 3 different genealogy groups in Sweden—SVAR-- the Swedish National Archives <www.ra.se/indexengelska.html>, the Federation of Swedish Genealogical Societies <www.genealogi.se/roots>, and Disbyt, the Computer Genealogy Society of Sweden. Kathy Meade, the American representative for Genline was there as well. The graphic at the left is the logo for SVAR. **The workshop was an all-day presentation divided into three parts.** In the first session, Ted Rosvall and

Olof Cronberg demonstrated the new CD-ROMs available for Swedish ancestor hunting. The most impressive was Emibas, a new index of everyone who emigrated from a Swedish port. You can search for your ancestor and when you find him, it will tell you the year of his emigration, his last residence, his parish and date of birth and the other members of his emigration group, and the page number on the household rolls where he is listed! There are also CD's for the 1890 and 1900 Swedish census, and the index for anyone who died in Sweden 1947-2003. They have an index of convicts, and another for sailors.



Graphic courtesy of <www.genealogi.se>

The afternoon sessions were held in the computer lab in the Family History Library. There were demon-

strations of Gensline, the many databases at SVAR, and best of all, Disbytt, the Computer Genealogy Society of Sweden. You can join for a small fee, and submit your family tree. Then they will match your ancestors with everyone in their database. I was amazed to find 10 cousins in Sweden. I have been corresponding with one of them, and he has helped me find still more relatives. He has answered a ton of questions about little things that I had always wondered about, and he has even helped me with translations. Disbytt also has a lot of great things on their website.

On the second day, all of the Swedes were in a special room at the FHL with their computers. There was also a bank of the library's computers reserved for Swedish research. With so many friendly and knowledgeable people to help,



Anna-Lena helping find the emigrant ancestor. Photo courtesy of the author, Anne Young.

it would have been hard to walk away without learning something. I was thrilled to find my grandfather on the ship leaving Norway, not Sweden. Apparently he left without his papers because he didn't want to do his military service, and so he couldn't leave from a Swedish port. I had looked for him for years, but I had never thought to look in Norway. I also found out why my grandfather chose the name Young when he came to the New World.

At the FGS conference, the SwedGen Group had a large booth in the exhibit hall, and they were available every day of the conference. Although I attended some of the lectures at the conference, I confess that I had more fun hanging out at the Swedish exhibit.



Photo courtesy of the author, Anne Young.

I'm glad that I decided to go to Salt Lake; it really was the chance of a lifetime for me.



Next summer is going to be my SwedGen tour.

I'm planning my first trip to Sweden!