

Texas Swedish Pioneers Association Elects Its First Woman President

The Board of Directors of the Texas Swedish Pioneers Association (TSPA) elected its first woman president in its 93 year history. Elizabeth "Liz" Jean Sellstrom Cadwallader, whose ancestors include the Stark, Sellstrom, and Quist families of Round Rock and Austin, was named the new President at a board meeting in February, 2010.

President Cadwallader who has a deep interest in Texas Swedish history and traditions hopes to continue the vital work of the association. She states "I have traveled twice to Sweden with my family. I have a special interest in Swedish folk dresses and Swedish traditions. I am excited and honored to be the new President of the Texas Swedish Pioneer Association. ". Liz is pictured here in a traditional Swedish dress. You may contact Liz at lcadwall@sbcglobal.net .



In 1917 the Texas Swedish Pioneers Association held its first celebration in honor of the 50th anniversary of the arrival of 100 Swedes who came to Texas in 1867. The first Swede to arrive in Texas was S. M. Swenson who came to Texas in 1838. He was joined by his uncle Sir Svante Palm who played an important role in early Austin history. Palm's famous library was donated to the University of Texas which increased the size of the university library by more than 60%.

The purpose of the TSPA is to preserve and perpetuate the rich Swedish heritage and to honor the memory of Texas Swedish Pioneers. Some 10,000 Swedes settled in Travis, Williamson, and Bastrop counties during the period 1870 to 1910 where they built homes, churches, businesses and farms. Some 20 churches in the Austin area trace their origins to the Texas Swedish pioneers. Swedish place names today dot the Austin area landscape, such as, Govalle, Palm, Berkman, Linder, and Widen public schools, facilities such as, Bergstrom Airport, Palmer Auditorium, and the Falk baseball field, roads: Anderson Lane, Rundberg Lane and Berkman Drive; commercial ventures too many to mention, but include the Nelson store in Round Rock, the Seaholm Power plant; and communities; Palm Valley, New Sweden, and Lund to mention a few.

The TSPA through the years has been active in the preserving of Texas Swedish landmarks such as the Swedish Log Cabin and blacksmith shop at the Zilker Garden Center. In 1965 the association arraigned for the log cabin, which had been located at Govalle and then moved to Round Rock, to be moved back to Austin.

In the early 1990s members of the TSPA participated in the monumental translation project that translated from Swedish into English the 1200 page book known as Swedes in Texas In Words and Pictures published in 1918.

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