

The Countdown Has Started

Bryggan/The Bridge has been in publication in both Swedish and English without a break for 40 years. This little anniversary hasn't been paid much attention. Instead, power, energy and involvement have gone to the source of the publication: The Emigrant Register/Kinship Center. This first migration history institution in Sweden stands on the threshold of a thrilling challenge and soon will take a great stride in its development. The countdown has started. The new year 2009 begins with a relocation from the present quarters in the former teacher training school across the street from the hospital in Karlstad to newly renovated and restored facilities in a historical and centrally placed building: the Governor's Residence, right in the middle of Karlstad.

A few months later, around the shift from March to April, the official and ceremonial dedication will take place, and a new era will begin for the Emigrant Register/Kinship Center. From having been an archive that primarily gathered data and assisted genealogical researchers and secondarily worked with the material, the institution will develop in a livelier and more open manner, which means that space will allow exhibits, public lectures and programs of various kinds.

All this puts great pressure on the organization to adapt to a new way of working, and naturally prepara-

tions have been underway during the autumn. This also means that the Emigrant Register, in similarity to native heritage associations and other non-profit organizations, will see an increased need for volunteer efforts from its members and others interested in the endeavors. If those of you reading this want to be a part of it, please contact the Emigrant Register! Participation in the outward operation is enriching and provides many interesting contacts both within Sweden and with enthusiastic descendants of the Swedish emigrants.

Parallel with the change of work, the regular operations continue, partly in the registration of new material and research, and partly with the development of cooperative work surrounding the construction of new, information-rich databases.

The latest in a number of projects is www.emiweb.se a database presented in detail in the previous issue of Bryggan/The Bridge. Emiweb was launched this fall, and new users are added continually. Eventually new databases will be included that will be searchable through Emiweb. This source will open new doors on emigration history research. Puzzle pieces difficult to find before will now be accessible and will help add nuances to the whole picture. Please help spread awareness of Emiweb and other sources available at the Emigrant Register!

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Annika Lindqvist's visit to her maternal grandfather's father's old house in New York was loaded with emotion.

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