

AMERICAN SWEDISH HISTORICAL MUSEUM

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-- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE --

New Exhibition *Colony to Community: The Story of New Sweden* Delves into the Local Legacy of the Early Swedish Settlement

Colony to Community: The Story of New Sweden describes the journey of Swedes and Finns who came to the Delaware Valley in 1638 to establish the New Sweden Colony, an outpost to give Sweden a foothold in the growing fur and tobacco trades. **The exhibition opens at the American Swedish Historical Museum in South Philadelphia on Sunday, June 7, 2009 with a reception from 2-4 p.m. The opening features an introduction by Carrie Hogan, Curator at 2:30 and light refreshments will be served.**



From landfall in Wilmington, Delaware in 1638 and cultivating peaceful trade relationships with the Lenape and Susquehannock Indians, to suffering relentless pressure from the Dutch and eventual abandonment by the Homeland, this exhibit explores the countless obstacles that New Sweden colonists endured. Although this small colony ultimately fell to the Dutch in 1655, Swedes and Finns continued to visit and settle in the area. Settlers old and new looked to Sweden to sustain their cultural traditions, especially their religion. In 1697, the first of a succession of Church of Sweden ministers arrived. They kept coming from Sweden until the last pastor from the Swedish

Mission, Nils Collin, arrived in 1770. Swedish artists Gustavus Hesselius (1682-1755) and Adolph-Ulrich Wertmüller (1751-1811) also came to live and work in the Delaware Valley. Hesselius painted the portraits of Lenape Chiefs Lapowinsa and Tishcohan. He was widely considered the leading painter of the Middle Colonies. In 1794 Wertmüller, a court painter in Sweden, painted General George Washington's portrait. These artists, with their Old World artistic techniques and sensibilities, helped establish a fine arts tradition in the New World.

Through rare collection objects, historic documents and images, this traveling exhibition explores the origins of the New Sweden Colony, the cultural endurance of the settlement that made it possible for Swedes and Finns to continue to immigrate to the area in the 18th and 19th centuries and how we preserve the past by commemorating New Sweden's legacy today.

Colony to Community: The Story of New Sweden will be on view at the American Swedish Historical Museum through November 22, 2009. *Colony to Community: The Story of New Sweden* is organized by the American Swedish Historical Museum, Philadelphia, by Carrie Hogan, Curator, in conjunction with the Delaware Historical Society and the New Jersey State Museum.

The American Swedish Historical Museum is located in scenic Franklin Delano Roosevelt Park at 1900 Pattison Avenue in South Philadelphia near the Sports Complex. Free parking is available. ASHM is accessible from Interstates 95 or 76, Broad Street Subway or bus #17. ASHM is open Tuesday to Friday 10 am to 4 pm; Weekends 12 noon to 4 pm. Admission is \$6 for Adults, \$5 for Seniors, Students and Children 12-18, Children under 12 are admitted free of charge. More information is available at www.americanswedish.org

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