

flag of Sweden. The ships suspended from the ceiling, models of the FOGEL GRIP and KALMAR NYCKEL on which the first group of Swedes came to this country in 1638, and the candelabra were given by Carl Milles in honor of the work of Dr. John Craig Roak. The ANGEL GABRIEL is a wooden carving such as is commonly found in churches in Sweden. This one, a replica of an ancient one, is the gift of Mr. Rudolph T. Johnson of Dunedin, Florida, at the suggestion of Dr. Esther Chilstrom Meixner.

Outside, in the old graveyard, may be seen the memorial to John Hanson (1715-1783), first President of the United States elected in Congress under the Amended Articles of Confederation (1781-82), a 7-sided black granite monolith from Sweden, surmounted by a bronze bust of Hanson and 7 bronze low-relief plaques, the work of painter and sculptor, Carl Lindborg of Newtown Square, Pa. The plaques, memorializing John Hanson and 6 others of Swedish descent who contributed to America, are: (1) The Great Seal of the United States, adopted June 20, 1782, during Hanson's administration; (2) Johan Printz (1592-1663) — Governor of New Sweden 1643-53, first governor in what is now Pennsylvania; (3) Johan Risingh (1617-1672) — last governor of New Sweden; (4) John Dahlgren (1809-1870) — U.S. Admiral, designer of the Dahlgren heavy guns; (5) John Nystrom (1824-1885) — engineer, inventor,

author, pre-eminent in the U.S. shipbuilding field; (6) John Ericsson (1803-1889) — inventor, engineer, scientist; (7) John Morton (1725-1777) — a Signer of the Declaration of Independence. The memorial was given and unveiled by the Philadelphia Swedish Colonial Society on October 7, 1967.

Being a National Shrine does not mean that we receive funding from the government for the maintenance of this building or for the work of the congregation. Any help you might give is appreciated.

Go in peace.

Welcome to GLORIA DEI. We hope you will enjoy your visit.



**A HISTORY OF
GLORIA DEI
(OLD SWEDES') CHURCH**
Delaware Ave. & Christian Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

This is the oldest church building in Pennsylvania and one of the oldest in the nation. This handsome structure, of Flemish bond, black-header brick, was started in 1698 and dedicated in 1700.

Gloria Dei Church is a product of a group of Swedish colonists who first landed at the present Wilmington, Delaware, then called Christina, establishing, in 1638, NEW SWEDEN — which extended on both sides of the Delaware River from its mouth to the falls at Trenton. A subsequent governor, Johan Printz, chose Tinicum Island near present Essington, Pa. as his capital in 1643, and there founded the first church congregation in what is now Pennsylvania. A small church of logs with bell tower separate was built this same year and used until 1645 when it was destroyed by fire. A larger log church and bell tower were then built at Tinicum and dedicated on September 4, 1646.

The early Swedish settlements spread north along the Delaware River from Tinicum to Wicaco (present South Philadelphia) where, about 1677, a block house belonging to Sven Svensson was converted into a log church just south of the present brick Gloria Dei. The latter building was constructed in two stages: the basic rectangular structure and a tower — between 1698 and 1700. The cornerstone was laid in 1698; the building was dedicated on June 2, 1700. A closer look at

the side walls explains the transept-like wings: the roof was too heavy for the walls and these additions were made to support them, the work being completed in 1705.

Gloria Dei still has and uses several items from the log church at Tinicum. The bell, although it was recast in 1806 (the tongue is original); the Baptismal Font; the golden sprays on the front of the lectern and of the pulpit; and the Cherubim with the open Bible located just below the organ. The Biblical quotations on the Bible, in old Swedish, have been mispainted over the years but we can still distinguish that the one on the left is from Isaiah 9:2: "The people that walked in darkness have seen (in Swedish "shall see") a great light — "; and on the right from Luke 2:14: "Glory to God in the highest — ".

Buried under the floor of the church (there is no cellar under most of the building) are several of the Swedish missionaries, including Andrew Rudman, the Pastor at the time of the construction. The last of these missionaries was Pastor Nils Collin, who served here from 1784 to 1831. Collin was a man of the age, well educated, interested in science, an inventor, a friend of Jefferson and Franklin, a prominent member of the American Philosophical Society. His informative diary has been translated from the Swedish with a commentary by Dr. Amandus Johnson. Dr. Collin lost his wife in the Yellow Fever

epidemic of 1797. During this and other epidemics, by the way, 20 or 30 people per day were being buried from this church.

It was during Collin's time that the congregation petitioned Sweden for the right to elect their own pastor. In 1789, GLORIA DEI and the other Swedish missions in the United States were granted this right. Then, in 1845, GLORIA DEI became a part of the Diocese of Pennsylvania of the Episcopal Church, which it still is. Why is not entirely clear, although for many, many years the Swedish congregations and the English people and clergy interchanged. Collin had several assistants who were Church of England and even quite early in the life of the congregation many of the members were of English extraction.

In the middle of the 19th century, some major renovations were made. The side balconies were added to provide more seating space; the floor was raised some eighteen inches; and the pulpit was moved from the north wall to the present location. The organ was new in 1902; it is a Hook-Hastings with a 'tracker' action, i.e., the connection between the key and the pipe is mechanical, not electrical.

The flags at the front of the church are the American flag, the flag that Benjamin Franklin designed for a group called the Associators well before the Revolutionary War, the Episcopal Church's flag, and the