

# The Bernadotte Library turns 100

Nestled in the northeast corner of the Royal Palace of Stockholm is the library wing, now home to the Bernadotte Library, with its collection of around 100,000 books belonging to the Royal Family.

This is no new tradition – Swedish kings and queens have had libraries at the Palace since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The library of the Vasa dynasty was established in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and has since been developed to become the National Library of Sweden.

In the mid-18th century, architect Carl Johan Cronstedt designed the interior of the magnificent hall at the Palace which was to become the Royal Library. The pilasters, capitals and other ornamentation came from an older library, designed by Rococo architect Carl Hårleman, but never finished.

According to the old library law, one copy of every item printed in the Swedish language was to go to the Royal Library. The collections grew much more rapidly than expected, and the beautiful hall soon became a well-used storeroom, full to the brim with books. The staff – among whose number was the young library assistant August Strindberg – worked under difficult conditions.

In 1907, when King Oskar II passed away, the Bernadotte dynasty took over the library premises and the family library created was given the name His Majesty The King's Library. The name was changed to the Bernadotte Library in the early 1950s.

In addition to its vast array of books, the Bernadotte Library is also home to an extensive collection of sheet music. The gems hidden here include the original version of the well-known and loved Student Song composed by Prince Gustaf, known as the singing prince.

The photographic collection of the Bernadotte dynasty also comes under the responsibility of the library. This is the largest private photographic collection in the country.

In addition to portrait photographs, there is also an extensive collection of cultural historic images, including Sweden's oldest X-ray picture, dating back to 1898.

Today, the Bernadotte Library is a research library. Researchers enjoy access to the library's unique collections of sheet music and photographs.

On the initiative of H.M. The King, the library has a lively programme of events including guided tours, talks and a selection of cultural activities.

The library is also used by the Royal Family for scientific gatherings, seminars and other academic events.