

Vår Historia

SMOKY VALLEY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

D. JOHNSON - PIONEER STORE OWNER



**PUBLISHED
BI-MONTHLY**

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Through old post cards and photographs of downtown Lindsborg, the name "D. Johnson" is frequently seen on banners hanging over Main St. So who was he, and how did he have "the oldest store in Lindsborg"?

Daniel Johnson, born 1843 in Kronobergs län (county), Sweden, immigrated to America in 1868. He spent a short time in Chicago before moving to Marquette, Michigan, where he was a carpenter for the Cleveland Mining Co and lived with thirteen other Swedish immigrants. One of those roommates was Carl Lindberg who had moved to Kansas and kept writing letters to Daniel.

During the Christmas season of 1871 Daniel made the move to the Lindberg homestead just outside Lindsborg. He was quickly employed with the Santa Fe Railroad as a bridge builder. The next year, Daniel partnered with Carl R. Carlson and his trading company that was established by the First Swedish Agricultural Company and located in the Ark. The Ark sit where the Sundstrom building is now, though Sundstrom was a competitor.

Daniel was a member of the Bethany Church, as most all Swedes were in 1872, but a conflict arose with Paster Olof Olson and in 1874 many left the church. Both D. Johnson and C. Carlson became founding members of the Swedish Mission

Church, with a life-long devotion.

August 15th, 1875, Daniel married Anna Christina Nelson of Lindsborg. In 1876 business growth led to constructing a new, two-story building on the southwest corner of Main and Lincoln St., see photo to the left. This is also the final location, making many changes over the years.

The first of eight children was born in 1876, that being Robert Paul. Robert would ultimately take over the business years later. Three children died early in life, but the remaining five all attended Bethany College. Abel William became a doctor, practicing in San Francisco, George Daniel, or G. Daniel as he went by, continued his education after Bethany at K.U. before joining the firm. Lillie Edith married Julius Brand and raised a family in Salina, and the youngest (born 1891), Evelyn Ethel, taught music for two years in Wyoming before marrying Professor Theodore Anderson, and moving to Minnesota. While at Bethany College, Evelyn studied art under Birger Sandzen.



D. Johnson family c1900

D. JOHNSON— PIONEER STORE OWNER {CON'T}

Carlson and Johnson continued to grow, and in 1883 the store was replaced with a large two-story brick "block". It was also the first store block to add large plate glass windows, making it not only the oldest store in McPherson County, but also the most state-of-the-art.

Both D. Johnson and C. Carlson invested in land, both in and around town. Spring of 1887 Daniel and Carl decided to build new

homes, no expenses spared. They chose adjoining lots on west Lincoln St. and by late summer were putting the finishing touches on. During this time, they also purchased 160 acres just outside of town, where all livestock could be kept for expansions with a meat market in the back of the department store.

Carlson, who was ten years senior to Johnson, decided to retire in 1892 due to health issues. D. Johnson Department Store was born.

Established 1871

D. Johnson Dept. Store

Lindsborg, Kansas

Oldest and largest
Department Store in the City

Best Goods
at Lowest Price

Our Departments consist of Dry Goods, Notions, Ladies' and Gent's Furnishing Goods, Ladies' and Childrens' Cloaks and Suits, Men's and Boys' Clothing and Shoes.

Carpets and Trunks. Groceries and Queensware.
Fresh and Cured Meats etc.

In 1897, Daniel did a major re-design on the store, adding a skylight in the roof and a staircase leading to a re-designed ladies department.

The skylight was placed to where light could go through the opening for the staircase which spilled into the main floor.

The biggest jester Daniel made as his department store continued to grow was giving some of it away. In 1909 Daniel wanted to acknowledge some of his most long-standing employees, including two sons, in a partnership. Once again, the business changed, this time a corporation with D. Johnson, R.P. Johnson, G.D. Johnson, Alf. P. Lundquist, John A. Kiel, and

R.F. Lindberg as partners. The name became "D. Johnson Co." Department Store.

Two years later, April 13, 1911 to be precise, Daniel unexpected passed away. A couple of days prior, Daniel had been in McPherson testifying as a witness in a trial, he felt chest pain and was diagnosed with pleurisy and was dismissed from the case. He went home in which the pain passed and all was thought to be well. After dinner on the 13th, Dan went to lie down and suddenly died as he entered the bedroom. This shocked not only the family, but the entire community. The department store closed for the entire week after, and Mayor C.F. Rosine requested that all Lindsborg businesses close for the afternoon on the day of Johnson's funeral, which all did out of respect.

It was beautifully written in the 1918 "A Standard History of Kansas and Kansans": "Business achievement far above the ordinary and the influences of a character founded on the bedrock of integrity, were the fruits of the long and active years spent by the late Daniel Johnson at Lindsborg. At the time of his death Mr. Johnson had been for thirty-nine years a merchant at Lindsborg and was the oldest businessman of the city." He also served on city council and the Board of Education for many years.

Daniel's son, Robert, carried the torch for D. Johnson Co. after that, and in 1924 closed the store and sold the building to the Train Bros. Robert and his family moved to Kansas City and continued in the retail trade.

Carlson and Johnson started with \$800 in stock in a 16' X 30' room. By 1915 D. Johnson Co had over \$75,000 in stock, in a 17,825 square foot building, with an elevator! Even with strong retail competition in Lindsborg, D. Johnson Co remained the largest and most respected until it closed.

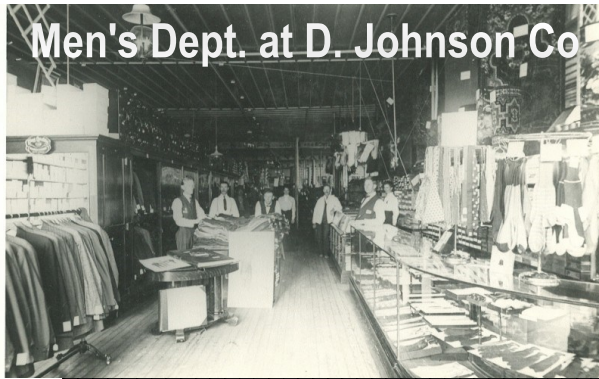


Christmas Shopping Is

Now in Full Swing at

The Old d Reliable Store on the Corner

D. JOHNSON CO.



Upcoming SVHA Programs

Jan. 9th, 2024

History of Muse—the Stories Behind the Sculptures

Susan Whitfield



March 12th, 2024

Karl Thomson—Lindsborg's Dane

Steve Borell



May 14th, 2024

Camp Phillips—It's History and Impact

Dr. Merle "Boo" Hodges



All programs
start at:
7:30 pm

Location:

Messiah Lutheran Church—Fellowship Hall
402 N. 1st Street—Lindsborg, KS.

Please cut along the dotted line

Smoky Valley Historical Association
P.O. Box 255
Lindsborg, KS. 67456

☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ Other \$ _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Memberships are renewed in the first quarter of each year

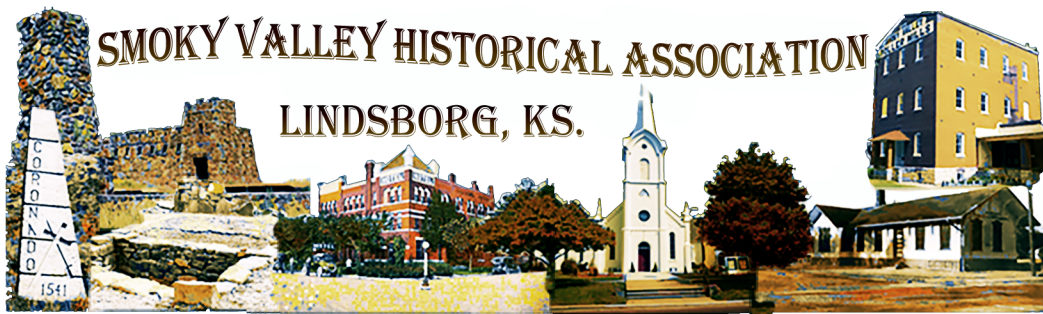


Smoky Valley Historical Association is a non-profit organization and is registered under 501(c)3

All Membership Donations, Bequests, Trusts, and Legacy Donations are tax deductible.

Please mail to P.O. Box listed above.

Thank You!



SMOKY VALLEY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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Smoky Valley Historical Mission

The purpose of this association shall be to collect, arrange and preserve historical data, books, pamphlets and manuscripts pertaining to the early history and settlement of our community in general and the City of Lindsborg in particular; to preserve and beautify places of historical interest in our city, its vicinity, and properties entrusted to the association; and to promote the study of history of our settlement and its cultural growth by lectures and other available means.

Contact info:

email us at:

info@lindsborghistory.org

or mail to:

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 LINDSBORG, KS 67456

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TACK SÅ MYCKET!



SMOKY VALLEY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
 LINDSBORG, KANSAS 67456

Bumper Stickers
Available at Old Mill!

Meetings/Programs

Smoky Valley Historical Association hosts bi-monthly meetings on the odd months, held on the second Tuesday. Programs start at 7:30 pm with topics of local historical interest. Location is listed on page three along with schedule.

Come join us!



Funding

Membership contributions are the SVHA's major source of on-going funding. A free-will donation in any amount will secure your membership in the Association for the year. Memberships are renewed in the first quarter of each year.

Grants, such as those awarded by the Kansas Humanities Council, are also available from time-to-time to further the mission of the SVHA.

Check our Facebook page for the most up to date information concerning the Smoky Valley Historical Association.



Thank you for your contributions, and supporting the historical preservation of Lindsborg and the Smoky Valley of Central Kansas.

Our pioneers left their legacy long after they were gone, so can you. Managing estates, bequests, and gifts through retirement plans can help keep our preservation ongoing and long-lasting.

All donations are tax exempt, we are a 501-(c)3 organization