

Vår Historia



SMOKY VALLEY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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"The Tomte Came To Lindsborg"	1
Continued story	2
LO Jaderborg	2
God Jul	3
Program	3
SVHA Info	4

"The Tomte Comes To Lindsborg" by Max Muller

Max Muller (1920-1984) is best known in Lindsborg as the founder of Broadway RFD, the ongoing summer theater group that continues to entertain visitors and residents still today with their plays in Swensson's Park, but he was also a writer with a sense of humor. This story was written, though possibly never published, about his friend, Hilding Jaderborg and Hilding's Grandfather, Lars. I hope you enjoy it.

In Sweden a Tomte is a magical little man who talks to animals and brings presents to children and he is known to cavort in the joy of living. It is such a marvelous time as Christmas...

Sral was once a farm Tomte, his farm belonged to Lars who migrated to America a long, long time ago. For some time the faithful Tomte stayed on the farm waiting for Lars to come back but he did not. So, he became the only urban Tomte in the great city of Stockholm.

Since his considerable magical powers did not include those of transport over vast oceans or great

distances, he was looking for an opportunity to get to the new land.

Finally his insuperable Tomte patience brought him the opportunity for which he sought. This opportunity came in the form of a large packing crate with heavy lettering on its top and sides: HILDING, SWEDISH CRAFTS LINDSBORG, KANSAS USA. Tomte vision was practically unlimited, he could see right through the wooden sides and into the interior of the box. There were carved figures almost as tall as he. Quickly Tomte magic pried open the lid and Sral got in quickly assuming the posture of the carvings that shared the packing crate.

The plane carried him to New York and then he was transferred to a ten-wheeler that traveled halfway across the United States, and the final leg of his trip to his destination was by a small truck that ultimately deposited the crate at the Swedish Crafts.

As always Hilding himself checked the bill of lading against the contents of the box, "Now where did this

come from? I certainly don't remember ordering such a Tomte." "It doesn't look Swedish, I'll bet it's an oriental copy!" Tomtes are quick thinkers, the fastest in fact, "Made in Sweden" suddenly appeared on the behind of his yellow trousers. "Well as long as he bears that stamp someone will purchase him." But the entrepreneur put him on the very last counter of the store so he would not scare off potential customers. "You know I'm going to have my glasses checked, that "Made in Sweden" stamp on the little elves' behind flashed on and off like a motel sign!"

Sral remained statue still until he heard the sound of the door lock and the footsteps of the shop owner receding along the street. Then Sral lit his lantern and climbed down from his designated spot and walked toward the front door. Endless rows of red Dala horses and straw Yule Bo-kea caused Sral to exclaim "I feel very much at home here!" The Tomte magic unlocked the front door and now he was on the Main street of Lindsborg USA!

How Mysterious the tiny figure looked as he walked down the street, past

The Tomte Comes To Lindsborg con't.

the old Blacksmith, by the Swedish Bank, by the Swedish City Hall, on down to the South Park and the old Swedish pavilion or farm house, a relic of the 1904 world's fair. "It's very similar to Lars' farm in Stockholm!" commented the Tomte.

Sral crossed the bridge over to the ice below the picturesque Old Mill, he grew magic skates and figure skated in front of the delightful backdrop of the old edifice - it was lovely, hauntingly so. Some people in a car crossed over on the bridge and noticed an ambient light moving like a spot light across the frozen river below, little did they perceive that it was a two foot Tomte doing figures on the ice.

Sral walked all over the little village, by the big old white houses built by retiring farmers, pastors, and professors, by the college campus and by the church that greatly resembled Swedish churches. Suddenly the elves' peripatetic reverie of a huge Great Dane chasing a yellow cat up on Elm. Even though the snarling beast towered above him, the Tomte was not intimidated. With his lamp he beckoned for the two traditional enemies to come to him. "There, there calm down" said the elf and the remarkable fact was that they did so and walked along with the diminutive being.

Other creatures joined and it wasn't long before there was a procession of domestic animals and pets joined and even wild creatures around the periphery got into the parade. There was a cat, a dog, a rooster, a duck, a beautiful white rabbit, a large work horse, a lovely cow who looked like Jo from Greek Mythology. There was a possum, a skunk, a coyote, a fox, and a prairie dog. They followed the little man back to the Swedish Crafts. What a sight it was and a policeman in his car noticed it with me eye emerging from a snooze in his patrol car. His first instinct was to call in on his CB, but he decided not to and passed it off, after a triple take and decided it couldn't really be happening.

When the parade arrived at the Swedish Crafts Sral held up his hand and spoke, "Thank you, dear friends, now go back quietly from whence you came." And they did leave singly and quietly, as if in a trance, going back to where they came from. As Sral entered the front door of the shop Hilding entered the back. Sral only had time enough to climb up on the first counter he could find to assume his "statue" appearance. "I swear that Tomte has been moved!" "Oh, there you are, I wish my family wouldn't move the stock

around." He picked up the little man and held him in his hand and looked directly into his be grizzled little countenance. The "Made in Sweden" sign on Sral's yellow trousers went on and off wildly. Hilding looked harder and evermore intently at the elfin face of his captive. The Tomte could hold it no longer, he began to chuckle and to laugh in great paroxysms of resonant laughter, much too loud for a person of his size. It rattled the store and the stock vibrated on the shelves. "My goodness" said Hilding in an awed voice - "You're a real, a real Tomte."

It was hard for Hilding to realize that he was holding a laughing, centuries old man in his hand, and so he spoke almost inaudibly, "What is your name, Tomte?" "Sral" answered the little man, "may I turn off my "Made in Sweden" sign? It requires an awful lot of energy." "Of course, of course, obviously it tells the truth, you were born in Sweden." "You were my great grandfather's Tomte, he spoke of you often although he never actually saw you, he swore you were on his farm Tomte. Now I would like to make you Lindsborg's official Tomte. Of course I can't sell you, so you will have to stay in the secret compartment I had prepared in case you ever came, although I never really

expected you to. Sral shouted "I love the new land!"

So it is that many see an ambient light, usually followed by animals wondering around the streets of Lindsborg very late at night.

THE END

Lars Olaf Jaderborg (1829-1916) came to America in 1855 but didn't make his way to Kansas (Territory) until 1858. While in Ft. Riley he heard there was another Swede near Swenson Creek, about 4 miles from Enterprise, so on Christmas Eve he made the journey to visit this new person. Swenson had just recently came to Kansas, but had built a small log cabin and let Lars stay through Christmas. The next spring Lars bought land near there, which is how the Jaderborgs came to this part of the country.





God Jul – Merry Christmas

“God Jul allesammans” – Merry Xmas all
[Good-Yule aleh-sum-ans]

SVHA 2016 - 2017 Program Schedule

Once again the Program Chair, Elly Ostlind, has put together a spectacular and informative schedule this upcoming cycle. Please join us 7:30 pm on the following dates at:

Bethany Home Activity Room, 321 N. Chestnut, Lindsborg. Refreshments will be served after the presentations.

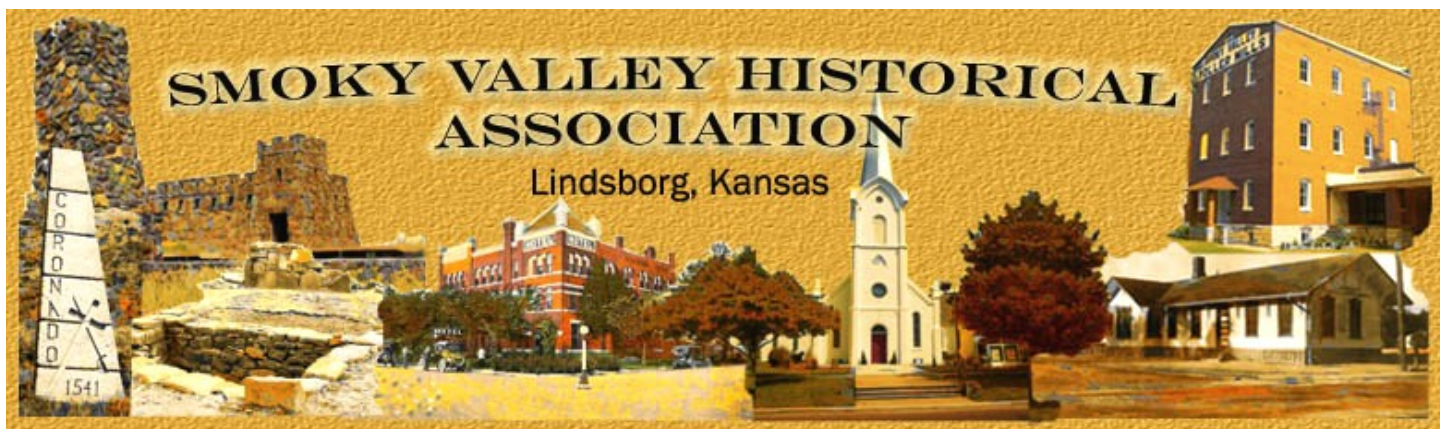
Sep. 16— **Great Presentation!** **Coronado Heights: Myth, Oral Tradition, and a personal connection**
Presented by Tim Weston, SHPO Archeologist, Kansas Historical Society

Nov. 16— **Great Presentation!** **Women Writers on the Santa Fe Trail**
Presented by Leo Oliva, Historian, Kansas Humanities Council

Jan. 10th, 2017—**Kansas Prairie Trail Scenic Byway**
Presented by Sue Schlegel, Coordinator

March 14th, 2017—**Journeys of the Soil**
Presented by Jim Richardson, Photographer, National Geographic

May 9th, 2017—**McPherson History**
Presented by Jinny Hall, Head, Adult Services
Steve Read, Head Librarian, McPherson Public Library



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Meetings

We have bi-monthly meetings (excluding July) held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at Bethany Home in the Activities Room. Program starts at 7:30 p.m. with topics of local historical interest. 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.

Contact Us

You can e-mail us
at: info@lindsborghistory.org

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 and its vicinity; and to promote the study of history of our settlement and its cultural growth by lectures and other available means.

mailing address:

Smoky Valley Historical
Association, Inc.
PO Box 255
Lindsborg, KS 67456



Check our Facebook page for the most up-to-date information concerning the Smoky Valley Historical Association, including our public meetings schedule.

God Jul – Merry Christmas

"God Jul allesammans" – Merry Xmas all
[Good-Yule aleh-sum-ans]

CORONADO HEIGHTS PARK

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