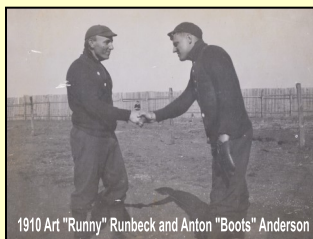


# Vår Historia

## SMOKY VALLEY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



**PUBLISHED  
BI-MONTHLY**



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### PLAY BALL...BASEBALL IN THE SMOKY VALLEY

America's favorite pastime, as baseball has been dubbed since the 1840s, is the one sport that unifies the masses. It served as a relief during the Civil War, both North and South played ball, and all you needed was an open patch of land, a make-shift bat and ball.

The Swedes settling in the Smoky Valley didn't have knowledge of this sport, but they were quick to learn and very competitive. Lindsborg saw it's first organized ball club in 1876 with the Alerts, a team made up of doctors, city officials, and business men. They played local teams like Saline County Bulldozers, Salina Smoky Valley Club, McPherson Nine, Roxbury Resolutes, and Liberty Lone Star Club.

By the 1880s, virtually all towns had at least one club, which they formed clubs, not teams, due to the fact there were no sponsors, no financial backing for gear. The first half of the 1880s showed a massive growth, Lindsborg had four clubs or teams alone. The Dudes, Muffers, Snoozers, and Bethany Academy. Other teams included McPherson Boomers, Assaria Hornets, Marquette Monitors, and Empire Black Legs.

Sweden didn't adopt baseball until early 20th century, but the first Swedish born professional player came in 1885, named Charlie Hallstrom. Char-

lie, aka "Swedish Wonder", was born in Jönköping 1864. His family came to America and he showed how well Swedes can play. He played one season (1885) with the Providence Grays.

There were two types of games with our local clubs, friendly or match. Friendly games allowed short-handed teams to borrow players from the other team, match games often had a purse, typically \$100 to \$150 to the winner, which was a lot of money in the 1880s. It wasn't unusual to have games scheduled for Thanksgiving and New Years Day as there wasn't a "baseball season". No picnic or celebration during the summer could go without a game or two though. Like this 1887 Marquette celebration with a \$100 purse baseball game. During the early 1900s, towns were getting creative with fundraising, and would hold exhibition

A Grand Celebration of the

## FOURTH OF JULY

WILL BE HELD AT  
MARQUETTE, KANSAS,  
**HON. NOBLE L. PRENTIS,**  
The Great Orator, Author, and Journalist, and  
**HON. A. W. SMITH,**  
Speaker of the Kansas House of Representatives will, positively be there and orate on that day.  
**PROF. EDWARD NELANDER, A. M.**  
Principal of Bethany College, will deliver an address in the Swedish language.

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**\$500! IN FIREWORKS \$500!**

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**3 THREE CORNET BANDS 3**  
will Lead the Procession, A fine Company of  
**CALITHUMPIANS!**  
will Positively be in the line of march. A match game of  
**BASE BALL FOR A \$100**  
Purse. Boating, Fishing, Swinging and various other Amusements, too numerous to mention.





## PLAY BALL...BASEBALL IN THE SMOKY VALLEY (CON'T.)

baseball games. Lindsborg adopted "Leans vs Fats" for this purpose. The May 1909 exhibition game was to fund maintenance of the Bethany Athletic Field, and was made up of respected business men. Lemonade, popcorn, and peanuts were on hand for the enthusiastic crowd. E.M.

Weddle served as umpire and the "Fats" won 16-8. More importantly money was raised and the diamond got some upgrades. Lindsborg High School

Leans vs Fats 1909				
Leans			Fats	
		*Captain		
*Dr. Carlson	100 lbs		*M.H. Blaine	400 lbs
John Altenborg	125 lbs		A.W. Erickson	372 lbs
N.J. Thorstenberg	115 lbs		W. Jukes	498 lbs
Herman Lind	105 lbs		E.A. Kellogg	469 lbs
John Gustafson	125 lbs		O.B. Runbeck	401 lbs
J.A. Morine	102 lbs		G. Johnson	400 lbs
Robert Johnson	117 lbs		A.W. Nelson	399 lbs
Alfred Hjerpe	101 lbs		David Young	341 lbs
A.B. Train	113 lbs		C.A. Lundstrom	391 lbs
R.K. Wattson	98 lbs		Frank Fager	600 lbs
John Packer	102 lbs		J.R. Lynch	380 lbs
C.G. Malm	98 1/2		Axel Wallerstedt	490 lbs
Thomas Johnson	167 lbs		C.O. Fredrickson	386 lbs
G.E. Eberhardt	123 lbs		J.O. Stromquist	400 lbs
C.W. Elliott	177 lbs		Eben Carlsson	517 lbs
R.F. Lindberg	99 lbs		Andrew Monson	518 lbs
H.E. White	112 lbs		H.W. Johantgen	499 lbs
G. Gregory	113 lbs			

added baseball around 1899 and played Marquette and Salina HS, and on occasion even Bethany College in those early years. Bethany College baseball was going strong in the early 1900s, but failed to consistently keep the program going over the years. The photo below is the 1910 team. Star players like Art Runbeck, Reginald "Ridge" Runbeck, and Del Lundgren contributed to many enjoyable games through high school, college, and various city teams. "Ridge" later coached at Bethany College and became a Bethany Hall of Famer.



The most famous local baseball player was Del Lundgren, born 1899 in Lindsborg. Like the Runbeck brothers, Del was a star player in every sport offered through Lindsborg High School and Bethany College. Lundgren and the Runbeck brothers played in the same Lindsborg clubs 1919-'22, when

Lundgren turned pro with the Salina Millers. The Pittsburg Pirates picked him up in 1924, then he was drafted by the Boston Red Socks 1925.

Through bad coaching decisions and the "Curse of the Bambino" Lundgren only played three seasons before being traded back down to the minors. In his entire professional career, Del played 56 major-league games and 202 minor-league games.



Bethany College joined the inter-collegiate league in 1908 but struggled to keep baseball going. Competing with track, football spring training, and WWI left baseball "in the dust". It wouldn't be until 1948 when baseball was officially added to Bethany's spring program.

Spring 1919 Lindsborg citizens were called to help get Bethany Athletic Field back in shape for summer baseball, calling for teams, wagons, trucks and a good supply of men. The same method used in building the first road up Coronado Heights. Lindsborg businesses pulled together and formed the Lindsborg Baseball Association that fall, selling season passes to fund equipment for the next year. Many teams switched to Sunday games, which Lindsborg had a city ordinance preventing this kind of Sunday activity. Scheduling the season was a problem, and the association was forced to offer \$1.00 refund to every season pass holder.

The next spring a petition was signed to permit Sunday baseball, there were many signatures, including some opposition. The city council reported they would stand with the majority, but the association found land 1/2 mile east of the college, just outside city limits. So the new Association Baseball Field was built allowing games any day of the week.

July 1966 the Lindsborg diamond got lit up. American Legion/Lindsborg Grain team played Hutchinson Cessna for the first "lighted" game, to a loss of 7-6. \$14,000 in bonds added night baseball, but changed the sport forever.

Today, baseball is played by all ages, boys and girls. From T-Ball to the majors, baseball will always be "America's Favorite Pastime".



\$210.00 SUBSCRIBED FOR SUMMER BASE BALL BY BUSINESS MEN

# The Lindsborg News.

S. Hist. Soc.

and THE LINDSBORG RECORD

Vol. 40. No. 28.

LINDSBORG, McPHERSON COUNTY, KANSAS, FRIDAY, APRIL 18, 1919.

The Lindsborg News, Established 1881.  
The Lindsborg Record, Established 1896.  
Consolidated, March 1, 1912.

1905 Bethany



1908 Lindsborg Leaders

## Upcoming SVHA Program

May 11th, 2021

The Opera Houses of McPherson County

Janet Monson

Location:

Robert and Cathy Ahlstedt "Cracker Box"

222 S. Coronado Ave. (Burma Rd)

Lindsborg, KS.

All programs

start at:

7:30 pm

*Parking is limited, carpooling is suggested.**All programs are tentative, please call or follow our Facebook page for updates.**Refreshments will not be served at this time.*

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



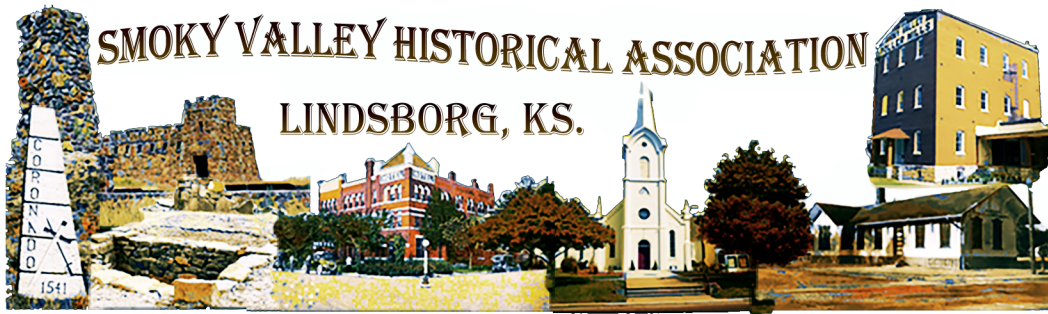
Smoky Valley Historical Association is a non-profit organization and is registered under 501(c)3

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

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Tim Stewart - *President, Newsletter*  
 Robert Ahlstedt - *Vice-President*  
 Julie-Ann Neywick - *Secretary*  
 Lenora Lynam - *Treasurer*  
 Elly Ostlind - *Program Chair*  
 Leland Nelson  
 Jim Malm  
 Christine Rocco  
 Vince Rocco  
 Chester G. Peterson - *Emeritus*



### Meetings

We have bi-monthly meetings from September thru May and held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. There are five meetings per academic year (Sept.-May). Program starts at 7:30 p.m. with topics of local historical interest. Location is listed on schedule page 3.

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.

### **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](mailto:info@lindsborghistory.org)

or mail to:

**SMOKY VALLEY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION**  
 PO BOX 255  
 LINDSBORG, KS 67456

**WWW.SMOKYVALLEYHISTORY.ORG**



TACK SÅ MYCKET!



SMOKY VALLEY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION  
 LINDSBORG, KANSAS 67456

*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.*