

Vår Historia

SMOKY VALLEY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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BRIDGE OVER THE SMOKY

Despite not being able to drive across what is known as the "Old Mill Bridge" anymore, it is still a favorite to walk or ride bicycle across, and the Christmas lights still shine bright every year.

The topic of adding a bridge across the Smoky Hill River started shortly after the town of Lindsborg settled, but didn't come about until 1877. Many times people would get stranded on one side or the other, mainly after a hard rain when the Smoky would rise too high for the horses and wagon to safely cross.

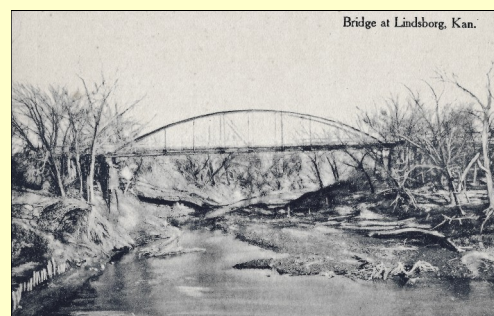
Upon the formation of McPherson County March 1st, 1870, town-

ships were soon laid out along with taxation. 18 3/4 miles were charged for state, schools, and county expenses. One of those expenses was bridges. By 1873 McPherson had expanded enough to start a newspaper, then use that to petition for county seat with the help of King City to the south and Salina to the north. Salina knew in order to draw business north the Smoky would need a bridge, so after four years of developing the county, Salina pledged \$1,000 toward one. May 23rd, 1877 saw the passing of the bridge proposition in the Smoky Hill township. The vote was 100-15.

The iron alone cost \$5,000 for this new bridge, it was delivered to Salina that October, and with no railroad to Lindsborg yet, had to be wagoned south. The iron work was completed December of 1877, with approaches and floor completed soon after. It had a 120' span, 260' approaches, and was positioned 35' above the water. It was quoted in the Salina paper "This is the only iron bridge in McPherson county, and is one of the best of the kind west of Topeka." Later this would be officially called the Mill Street bridge, but locals just called it "the wagon bridge". Salina would also complain about the bad road between them



May 1903 Flood

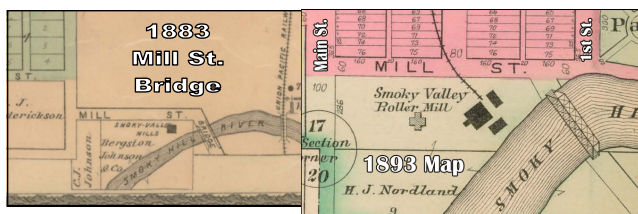


BRIDGE OVER THE SMOKY (CONT.)

and Lindsborg, stating that the bridge won't do any good if people have a difficult time getting to Salina to do business. Of course it would be quite a while before the paved roads connected the towns.

The great flood of 1903 did substantial damage to the bridge, while literally making Lindsborg an island, as all directions around the town were under water. Fortunately downtown was spared. Another inconvenience from this damage was the mail service, or RFD (*rural free delivery*). In November the bridge was closed for three weeks for repairs and the closest crossing was five miles away, for this reason less trips were made to deliver, mainly east of town.

When talks of replacing the Mill St. bridge came up it was decided to completely redesign the location, aligning a bridge with First St., that connects to the college, this path would become the main road through Lindsborg until the highway system developed. A contract was awarded to Missouri Valley Bridge Co. Aug. 12th, 1914 for \$11,910.00 to construct the iron and concrete bridge now called the "Old Mill Bridge". It was completed early January 1915. Even after 81 HWY was built in the mid '30s, the First St. Bridge remained a favorite for sight-seeing and camping. In 1985 it received a new deck and paint, but sadly it was deemed unsafe for vehicles in 2014. 🐸🐸



50 YEARS OF SERVICE IN '54



For me trying to imagine that not one, but three professors could have taught at one school for over fifty years each, and at the same time, is somewhat mind blowing. It clearly makes a statement about Bethany College too. Pictured from left-to-right are Oscar Thorsen, Dr. Emil O. Deere, and Thure Jäderborg Sr. Three names that are parallel with art, history, and music in Lindsborg. Writing a biography on each would require much more space than offered, so here is a brief introduction.

Johan Oscar Thorsen (1881-1968) is best known as Professor of piano at Bethany College. Professor Thorsen was born at Jarpas, Sweden, and started his musical journey at the Cathedral School of Organ. He came to the USA and Lindsborg in 1900 and gained a BA degree by

1902. Travels to Chicago and Germany toned his talent and from 1908 to 1955 taught his gift in Lindsborg. The Musical Courier 1920 quoted that he "exhibited the qualities of a mature musician—technical mastery, depth of sentiment, broad conception, and nobility of style." Thorsen wasn't just a musical master, he also was an artist, and avid art collector.

Dr. Emil Deere holds a special interest with this historical association, as he was a co-founder of the Lindsborg Historical Society in 1919, along with developing Coronado Heights. But before that, he was a product of being picked by Dr. Carl Swensson to attend Bethany Academy, as Swensson would travel to the farms and towns,

50 YEARS OF SERVICE IN '54 (CON'T.)

looking for students that he thought needed prep for college. Jäderborg was also one of those students.

Emil Deere spent an astounding 67 years at Bethany Academy/College, from 1899 to his death in 1966. That is a record likely never to be broken. Deere accepted a faculty position in 1903. He was first in many categories as well, first dean for the College of Arts and

Sciences, for example. E.O. Deere's resume alone is too grand to fit on these pages, so to keep it simple, Dr. Deere was largely responsible for the county hospital, the naming of Coronado Heights with William Hagstrom, the founding of the historical society and only living member to see it transform to the Smoky Valley Historical Association in 1963 where he was given the first honor-

ary life membership. The ultimate honor though came in 1958 with the dedication of Deere Hall, a dormitory housing 72 men. E.O. Deere, as a student, helped write and translate the famous Bethany cheer "Rockar, Stockar", it first appeared in the Dec. 1902 Mes-sanger, and apparently came about from several students dissatisfaction of the old Rah, Rah yells. So many accomplishments here.

Third on this outstanding list is Thure Olaf Jäderborg, born in Enterprise, KS 1877. The only Kansas born of the three, his father was the pioneer Swede, L.O. Jäderborg. Thure also attended Bethany Academy, starting 1892, and by 1895 was enrolled in Bethany College. After a degree in organ in 1899, and while earning one in voice, Thure started his teaching career in 1901. The voice de-

gree would come the next year, 1902. For several decades, no Mes-siah was without the deep bass voice Thure provided, and as he shared the stage with Thorsen and an all-star cast so many times with musical performances. Unfortunately, Thure passed away just two months after the 50th dinner in his honor. We salute you all!

SVHA 2018 Program Schedule

Once again our Program Chair, Elly Ostlind, has put together a spectacular and informative schedule this academic cycle, here is the final program. New programs start September.

- **May 8, 2018**—"The Orphan Train" presented by Shaley George, Curator of the National Orphan Train Complex, Concordia KS.

Programs will be held 7:30 pm at:

Bethany Home Activity Room, 321 N. Chestnut, Lindsborg.

Refreshments will be served after the presentations. Hope you can join us!

Please cut along the dotted line

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

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Name: _____ Date: _____

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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.

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Thank You!



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Interested?

We have two BOD positions open. Email to 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, 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 Us

You can e-mail us at:

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or mail to:

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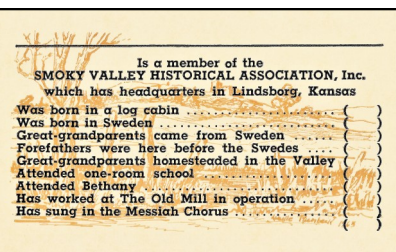
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SMOKY VALLEY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
LINDSBORG, KANSAS 67456

Meetings

We have bi-monthly meetings from September thru May and held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at Bethany Home. All meetings are in the Activities Room. There are five meetings per academic year (Sept.-May). 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.

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.