

Vår Historia

SMOKY VALLEY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



**PUBLISHED
BI-MONTHLY**



CONTENTS.

R L Milstrom	1
R L Milstrom	2
C A Swensson	3
2020 Programs	3
Donations	3
SVHA Info	4

RAGNAR LIND MILSTROM

Those that know the name above also know that it is a fictional name. The initials also belong to Richard Lee Miller, the artist. Richard is one of those people that folklores are made of, stories of his eccentric behavior will last many generations.

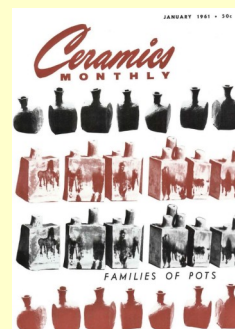
This feature is about Richard the artist, since the house I live in was built under his vision and my mailbox was painted with kurbit designs by him.

Miller, an Ohio native, graduated Ohio University in 1956. During school he became the 1,000th initiated member of the Ohio Gamma Chapter of Phi Delta Theta, a colony of the Tau Kappa Epsilon fraternity. Miller later added "TKE" to many pottery pieces he designed in its honor. From there he attended Wichita State University where he earned a Masters of Fine Arts by 1960.

Miller entered teaching by getting hired at Northwest State College in Maryville, MO., along with his wife, Mary Anne, they also opened his first studio "Ye Ole Con-



Richard Miller 1960



temporary Pott Shoppe" at 119 W. 6th St. Maryville. Miller practiced different methods of pottery, wheel, molds, and one style that came to

the attention of Ceramics Monthly, slab-built. This style reflects historic methods of mass production. He wrote articles for various magazines of the art, the cover pictured shows some of his work from that time period.

During his time at WSU he discovered Lindsborg and that pulled him back to Kansas, even though he had also been offered a teaching job in Tennessee. Summer 1961 Richard and Mary Anne packed up the shop and found a chicken hatchery on south Lindsborg St. to convert over to a ceramics plant, by November it was open for business. Mary Anne was a teacher and taught Lindsborg elementary, while Richard taught and was director of civilian arts and crafts at Shilling Air Force Base in Salina. Prior to college Richard served two years in the US Army, also another eight years inactive while building his career.

RAGNAR LIND MILLSTROM—AKA RICHARD LEE MILLER

The early 1960s were good to Richard, his work had been exhibited at the Cleveland Museum of Art; the Butler Institute of America Art in Youngstown, both in Ohio; the Springfield Art Museum in Missouri; and the Wichita Art Museum. He also had a house built in the lot next to his studio, Ye Ole Contemporary Pott Shoppe in Lindsborg.

Tragedy struck November 1965 when sparks from his kiln chimney caught the tarpaper roof of his shop on fire, ultimately burning the business completely down. The damage was estimated at \$25,000 with no insurance to recover. Fortunately the new house was untouched, but too much was invested in the pottery business and the house and property had to be sold.



Richard and family moved to Ohio where he pursued other ventures, but that magnetic pull of Lindsborg drew him back once again.

In 1973 Richard opened up YOCOP Pottery at 122 N. Main, better known as the Blacksmith Shop. Here he would build and expand his business until his retirement in



1996. Miller was way more than a ceramicist, his mastery in wood work, carving and painting allowed that expansion to manifest. The name derived from his initials, or pseudonym, was Richard's way to become a "Swede" in his ventures. His Dala Horses were made from solid hardwood and he kurbit painted anything from shipping boxes to mail boxes.

One special Dala horse was made for Internationally-known tennis star Bjorn Borg of Sweden. Richard wasn't sure where he intended on hanging it, as Borg had houses in Florida, New York, Monaco, and Sweden. Richard also had his nine foot Dala horse that sometimes traveled around with him.

If his pottery and Dala Horse factory wasn't enough, Richard also made Scandinavian toys and educational devices, which he marketed nationwide.

Through his travels, Richard became a behind the scenes booster for Lindsborg, carrying his ceramics and wood products coast to coast while promoting "Little Sweden, USA". Another thing he did in his travels was write stories and poetry, maybe a reprieve from his days contributing to Ceramics and Art publications.

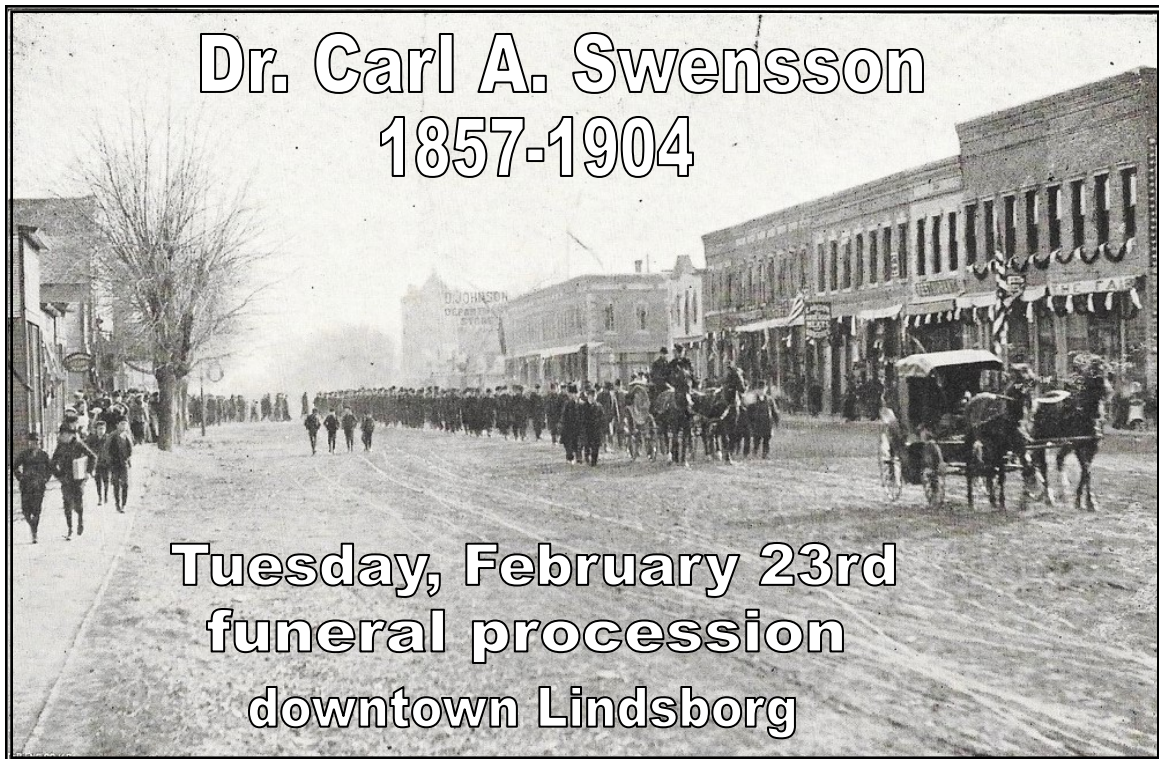
Richard Miller passed away at the age of 84 on a mild and sunny Wednesday April 4th, 2018. It was the kind of day he would normally have put in a long-distance run before age crept up on him.

Come shop at:-

YOCOP Krukmakeri, och Dala Häst Fabrik.

1974 Post-card depicting R.L. Miller Dala Horse





SVHA PROGRAMS FOR EARLY 2020

March 10th, 2020 "Who is A.R.? Presenting the Slöjd Craft and other crafts at Bethany College". *Presented by Dr. Marlasue Esping Holmquist.*

May 12th, 2020 "History and Stories of the Smoky Valley Roller Mill"
Presented by Lorna Nelson, Director.

All Tuesday programs start at 7:30 pm
Bethany Home Activity Center—321 N. Chestnut St.
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

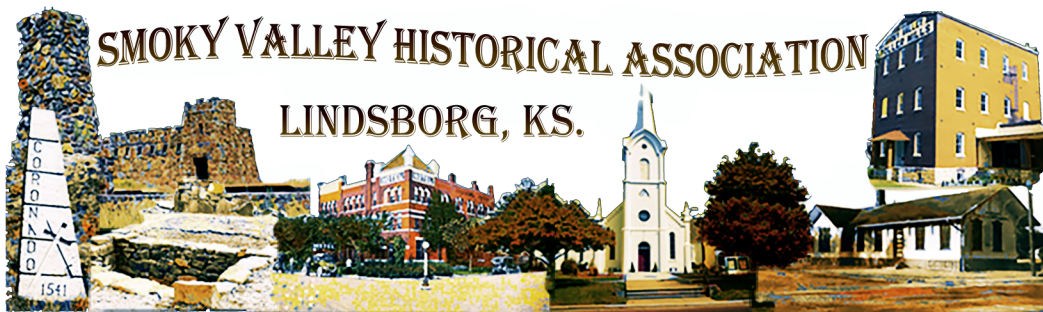


Smoky Valley Historical Association is a non-profit organization and is registered under 501(c)3

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

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
 Matt Stula
 Chester G. Peterson - *Emeritus*
 Duane Fredrickson - *Emeritus*

Interested?

We have one BOD position open.

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.

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 valley 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:

e-mail us at:

info@lindsborghistory.org

or mail to:

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.



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.

Is a member of the SMOKY VALLEY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, Inc. which has headquarters in Lindsborg, Kansas	
Was born in a log cabin	()
Was born in Sweden	()
Great-grandparents came from Sweden	()
Forefathers were here before the Swedes	()
Great-grandparents homesteaded in the Valley	()
Attended one-room school	()
Attended Bethany	()
Has worked at The Old Mill in operation	()
Has sung in the Messiah Chorus	()

TACK SÅ MYCKET!



SMOKY VALLEY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
LINDSBORG, KANSAS 67456