

Vår Historia

SMOKY VALLEY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



**PUBLISHED
BI-MONTHLY**



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A HEALTHIER MCPHERSON COUNTY - THE 1918 FLU

Let's face it, 2020 was a trying year for us all, and 2021 will bear some of the same adversities. That is not to say that we have lost hope, history is just repeating itself and we will persevere.

1918 had its own trials with WWI still raging on after four years, so adding a flu pandemic just added sour icing to the rotten cake. Dubbed as the "Spanish Flu", how it got that name was just as elusive as where it actually started.

How did it acquire the name Spanish Flu? Because Spain remained neutral in the war? Because in 1647 Spaniards brought the first strain of flu to America? We do know this strain didn't start there, in fact, the first case was documented in Haskell County, KS. January 1918. The first notable case though was March 11th when Albert Gitchell, an Army cook at Camp Funston (Ft. Riley) became hospitalized with it. By the end of March more than 1,100 soldiers were infected, 38 dead. That May, 1/4 of Lindsborg's population climbed on a special train to give two performances of the Messiah to the troops at Camp Funston, over 500 musicians either rode the "Messiah Train" or drove.

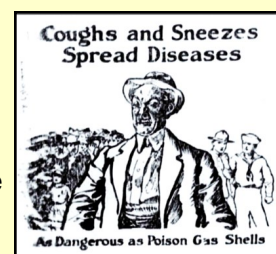
McPherson County was first hit in the fall of 1918. This was considered the 2nd wave nationwide, and far deadlier. Clinton R. Lytle, County

Health Officer, wasted no time placing a group ban on the county. No school, church, or public gatherings until further notice. In looking through the history I noticed that bans during this time lasted anywhere from one to six weeks at a time. Some would be lifted to just be reinstated the very next week.

Some doctors had interesting views on how to control the pandemic. Dr. A.J. Gannon, K.C. Board of Health, believed banning "kissing" would help. He stated "the proportions of the epidemic are due to the promiscuous kissing so common with American people, and should be banned."

In McPherson, Mr. and Mrs. Reinhold went against the first ban of 1918 and held a 20th wedding anniversary party with friends. Mr. Lytle, along with town Marshal Ranstrom, ordered all seven families involved to a four day quarantine to see if any member came down with it. Some expected the consequence and some ignored it when approached.

Bethany College was granted to start a Student Army Training Corps (S.A.T.C.), which went into effect



A HEALTHIER MCPHERSON COUNTY– THE 1918 FLU (con't)

October 1st, 1918. In order to qualify they needed at least 50 to sign up, which wasn't a problem. The addition of new soldiers came just as the pandemic was hitting and Bethany College rented the Almquist property on North 2nd St. to be used as a hospital, mainly for SATC students.

Governor Capper issued a state-wide public gathering ban for the week of Oct. 12th-19th, 1918, in hopes to slow the spread. Red Cross was sent an order to make and send 2,500 face masks to Camp Funston, they had over 200 women working at their Wichita office, all wearing the masks themselves. Instructions were published on how to make your own masks by the Board of Health.

When local or state bans were not in effect, schools placed nurses in schools, checking students' temperature twice a day, though I am not clear if this applied to rural schoolhouses too.

In Lindsborg, the ban was extended through the holidays, postponing all Christmas Church events until after Jan. 1st. Mayor Johnson met with all Ministers of the city to come to this conclusion. Businesses were also on restricted hours during this ban.

However you look at it, Kansas recorded 133,477 cases of influenza and Pneumonia, in just four months!

1919 showed no relief, another ban went into effect at the start of March. McPherson restricted businesses to 20 people or less, and again, no church, lodge, theater, or public gatherings.

**Prepared by the Field Director of
the U. S. Public Health Service
in Collaboration with the
Kansas State Board of Health**

Care of Attendant

Face Masks. Wear constantly in congested homes, always when bending over or doing anything for patient. Masks should be large enough to cover nostrils and mouth comfortably. People wearing glasses will be very much annoyed at first by the masks, but they must be worn.

Directions for making:

1. Six thicknesses of gauze, 6 by 4 inches, with tapes at each corner for tying over head.
2. Square of gauze 18 by 18 inches, folded diagonally, six thicknesses, tied or fastened to hair with wire hairpins.
3. Large cotton handkerchief, folded diagonally, and tied on. In using any form of mask, be careful that it is not allowed to slip and contaminate the neck or neck wear of the wearer before it is re-tied in position.

Masks should be changed whenever moist, or at least every three hours. If the patient has had a severe coughing spell and has infected attendant's mask and face, face should be washed with soap and water, mask removed and fresh one substituted.

Schools stayed open due to having nurses on hand. Like before, all students and teachers had their temperature checked twice a day.

1919 was also a year of soldiers coming home as the war officially ended Nov 11th, 1918. The flu followed some of them home, but for Kansas, 1919 morbidity numbers weren't as high as the last quarter of 1918.

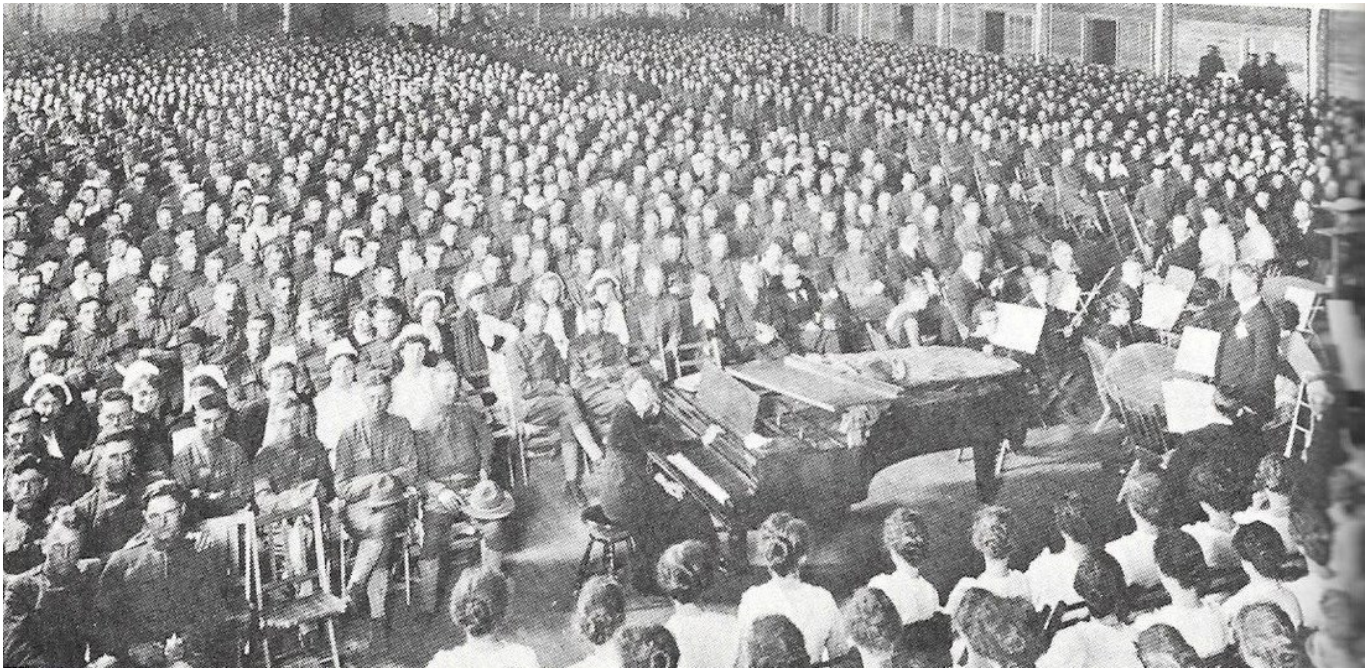
Then came 1920. As reported in the McPherson newspaper, "The old hydra-headed monster of 1918-19 has resumed its ravages in 1920." Another local ban was put in to place in February, and as Dr. Crumbine, Secretary of the State Board of Health stated, unless the infected towns adhere to the ban instructions, it is possible another state-wide ban could go into effect. The flu of 1920 came in hard, almost matching the last few months of 1918. A state-wide call was made out to all volunteer nurses to aid. February alone recorded 49,313 cases throughout the state. Fortunately that was the worst month.

Lindsborg had thirty-two homes in quarantine over Valentines day, well for that entire week actually. It was reported that the public school had more cases than the college, but Bethany College had postponed all sports as a precaution. When the county ban was lifted a week later, it was decided to not include Sunday School in the lift. Public schools had nurses monitoring students, Sunday School classes didn't.

A new slogan was adapted at a meeting held in McPherson's Union Hotel, "A Healthier McPherson County". Red Cross Nurses, School Superintendents, and representatives of the medical profession all gathered at a banquet March 1920 to plan a promotion of public health in the county. It helped, as the amount of cases dropped throughout the year.

The "official" end the Spanish Flu pandemic was February 1921, but caution carried much longer. I found a public gathering ban due to influenza as late as 1933 in Coldwater, KS.

2021, one hundred years from the end of that epidemic, we're still trying to beat Covid-19, but we will persevere!



1918 Messiah at Camp Funston

Due to ongoing gathering restrictions from Covid-19, future programs will be listed on our Facebook page. Announcements will also appear on the Facebook group, Lindsborg Now, the Lindsborg Newspaper, and our website. It is possible that all remaining programs for 2021 will be postponed, but we promise that all programs missed will be presented at some point.

Stay healthy!

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

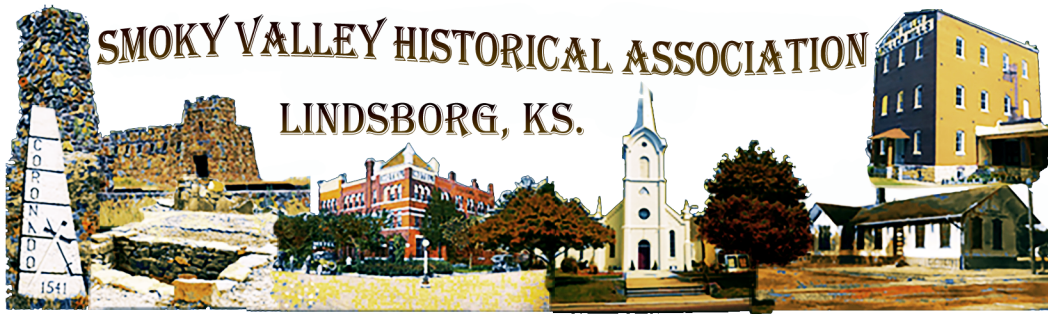


Smoky Valley Historical Association is a non-profit organization and is registered under 501(c)3

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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Interested?

We have one BOD position open.

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:

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 preserva-
tion ongoing and long-lasting.*

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. Loca-
tion is listed on schedule page 3.

Come join us!



Funding

Membership contributions are the
SVHA's major source of on-going fund-
ing. A free-will donation in any amount
will secure your membership in the As-
sociation 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.

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