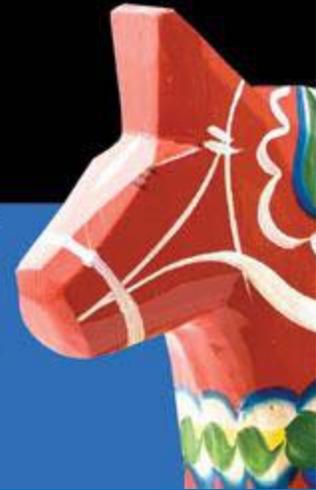


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SPOTLIGHT ARTICLE
10/27/2010

For Immediate Release
Contact: Carla Wilson
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Lindsborg CVB

Dr. Carl Swensson *Founder of Bethany College*

LINDSBORG, KANSAS - 10/27/2010 -

"I deeply regret to learn the sad news you have telegraphed me. Pray express my sympathy to President Swensson's bereaved family."--President Theodore Roosevelt

Dr. Carl Swensson, founder of Bethany College and an immensely popular orator, author and writer, died February 16, 1904. He was a member of the Kansas Legislature 1889-1890 having been elected to the Kansas House of Representatives and in the same year President of the Kansas Teachers' Association. Swensson was also a member of the State Historical Society, a member of the American Academy of Political and Social Science at the World's Columbian Exhibition in 1893 and a delegate to the Republican Convention in 1896. He was decorated with the order of the "Knights of the North Star" by King Oscar of Sweden in 1901, on the twentieth anniversary of Bethany College. He was a member of the Building Committee for Sweden's Building at the St. Louis Exposition in 1904. Swensson was also friends with our 26th President, Theodore Roosevelt.

Carl Aaron Swensson was born in Chandler's Valley, Pennsylvania to Swedish immigrant parents in 1857. His father was a minister in the Swedish Lutheran Church and the president of the Augustana Synod of the Swedish Lutheran churches in America. Swensson attended parochial school, graduated college from Augustana at Rock Island, Illinois in 1877 and was ordained as a minister in 1879. He received his Ph.d. from the Uppsala University in Sweden and a Doctorate of Divinity from Thiel College, Greenville, Pennsylvania. He married Alma Christine Lind on February 15, 1880.



Reverend Dr. Olof Olsson, founder of the Lindsborg Swedish Lutheran Church, called on Swensson to take over the church when he left to chair a theological position in Augustana College. In 1879, Swensson was only 22 years old when he arrived to become the second pastor of the Swedish-American community. Shortly after, Bethany College was founded in 1881. The college grew rapidly. A five-story Old Main building was constructed, even while many of its advocates lived sparsely in dugouts.

Bethany College is a college of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It has a Scandinavian heritage that continues in importance on campus as evidenced by the Swedish flags flying next to the United State flag. The mission of Bethany College is to educate, develop and challenge individuals to reach for truth and excellence as they lead lives of faith, learning and service.

One famous tradition at Bethany is Handel's *Messiah* performed each year on Palm and Easter Sunday. A strong choral program was important to the Swensson family who first organized the 60 voice chorus to perform the *Messiah* in 1882. It is the longest continual running North American performance of the *Messiah*, now in its 130th year.

Dr. Swensson left a legacy on Lindsborg unsurpassed by any other individual. A marble statue commemorating Dr. Swensson welcomes all students and visitors as they enter the front gates of Bethany College.

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Contact the Lindsborg Convention and Visitors Bureau for more information regarding Dr. Carl Swensson.

Ph: (785) 227-TOUR (8687) or Toll free: (888) 227-2227. E: cvbdir@lindsborgcity.org.

W: visitlindsborg.com. When in Lindsborg, please stop by at 104 E. Lincoln for all travel information. See you in the 'Borg!

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