

LINDSBORG

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For Immediate Release
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Lindsborg *Folkdanslag*



LINDSBORG, KANSAS -03/22/2011- In 1941, as the U.S. entering the Second World War became imminent, and the declaration was only a few months away, a group of Lindsborg adults began practicing Swedish folk dances. These folk dances were performed publicly for the first time in Lindsborg at the original Svensk Hyllningsfest. They called themselves the "Swedish Folk Games" as dancing was still frowned upon from some of the elders in town. Fritz Carlson, Charles Weddle and Arvid Berggren taught the group *shottis* and the waltz from what they learned from their parents as boys. Music was provided by Evelyn Gunnerson Gibler on piano and for a while, a group of farmers called the Crazy Rich Cowboys. As the United States entered the War, Svensk Hyllningsfest and the dancing was put aside for the duration of the conflict. After the War, Svensk

Hyllningsfest was revived in 1948 and the dancing began again. The group first practiced in Riverside Park during the summer and moved indoors to Soderstrom Elementary as it got colder. They had 8-10 couples. Rosalie Carlson played the accordion and Thelma Sundberg, the guitar.

The adult dancers disbanded in the 1960s as the High School started a folk dance group. The adults became the teachers of folk dancing and musicians for the High School dancers. However, by 1971 the adults wanted back in on the fun, started dancing again and called themselves the Adult Swedish Folk Dancers. Jack Turner established the third incarnation of the dancers and Patty Karstadt, a music teacher who taught the local children folk dances, organized it, "It was a lot of work, but I really enjoyed the dancing," Karstadt says.

A special aspect is the group has always had live musicians, even at rehearsals. Initially it was the Hambo Band, now currently Ann Olson, Charlotte Anderson and Nick Carlson provide the music.

In 1989 the group changed its name to *Folkdanslag* and presently practice every Monday evening at Soderstrom Elementary School gymnasium from 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The members are varied and the ages span several decades. The practices are open to everyone who would like to learn to dance, watch or have a lively time. "I feel that the *Folkdanslag* is perceived as a group getting together for fun and enjoyment without a lot of pressure of rules or committee meetings and getting together to share our Scandinavian heritage," says Duane Fredrickson, one of the *Folkdanslag* leaders. There have been many laughs over the years with men's trousers splitting from the exuberant dancing or when, during the Ox Dansen, the men actually hit one another by mistake.

These representatives of Lindsborg have travelled both nationally and internationally promoting the community and honored heritage while having grand time of it. They perform in folk dress costume at many festivals, both American and Swedish, such as the Kansas Sampler Festival and the Scandinavian Festival in Estes Park, Colorado, as well as celebrations and events, both local and abroad. Other special appearances include the recent movie filmed in Lindsborg *Au Pair, Kansas* and performing a Swedish Folk Dance Mass with Lutheran Minister Per Harling. Members dance the *polska*, waltz, *schottis*, *hambo*, polka, *majurka* and *engelska*, all the while encouraging audience, both adult and child, participation. Always a crowd favorite, the *Folkdanslag* are often available to provide performances on short notice. They are also a vital part of keeping Lindsborg's legacy alive.

Call Duane Fredrickson for schedule changes, upcoming events or to to book a dance performance at (785) 227-3678.



Contact the Convention and Visitors Bureau for more information regarding events in Lindsborg.

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.

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