

LINDSBORG

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For Immediate Release
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Lindsborg CVB

Swensson Park

LINDSBORG, KANSAS - 06/19/2012 -

Swensson Park (known to the locals as the North Park), although not in a central square location of downtown, is used as our village green. This is where we have gathered almost since the beginning of Lindsborg. Originally, the park was the lawn of the Bethany Lutheran Church parsonage, according to the book *Grace, Faith and the Power of Singing* by Karen Humphrey. Carl Swensson, the second pastor of Bethany Lutheran Church and his wife Alma, lived in the parsonage for years. Mrs. Swensson started the Women's Missionary Society on the lawn in 1892 with 50 other women from the Augustana Luther Church Synod, marking the beginning of assemblies in what is now Swensson Park.

After the parsonage was removed in the late 1920s, the land was sold to the city by the church in 1928 for \$17,000 and was designated Swensson Park. A lily pond with a fountain was the idea to fill the empty space left by the removal of the parsonage.

By 1933 design plans for the lily pond and drinking fountain were presented to the park board by Frank Carlson of Carlson and Anderson Lumber Company. After examining the plans, Professor Deere motioned the plan be approved and it was seconded by Ed Johnson. Elmer Peterson was elected to be the caretaker of the park. In the later 1930s, tennis courts, a wading pool and the Band Shell were added. The Band Shell was built in 1936 by the WPA (Works Progress Authority). Carlson wanted to use the indigenous rock of sandstone to create and decorate these features. The wading pool with sand box was located on the northeast side by the current alley entrance. In an amusing side-note, in the minutes of the Park Board meeting, it was decided the fish from the lily pond would winter in the pond of C.G. Flohn and the lilies would go to David Lindquist.

Many things have been added throughout the years. A plaque commemorating the Women's Mission Society started in 1892, was built in 1940. A time capsule was buried in the park to immortalize the 125th celebration of Lindsborg in November 23, 1994 and will be opened in 2069. The most notable change is Viking Valley, a playground very much in keeping with our Swedish heritage with a Viking ship and Swedish castle. Murals of tomtes, Dala horses, contemporary Lindsborg living and Scandinavian dancers adorn the fences around the playground. Swensson Park is host to annual events such as Kansas' long running outdoor theatre productions known as Broadway RFD and the Smoky Valley Classic Car Show.



For event and travel information, call or stop by the Convention and Visitors Bureau located at 104 E. Lincoln, Lindsborg, Kansas 67456. Ph: (785) 227-TOUR (8687) or Toll free: (888) 227-2227.
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