

# The Museum Messenger

Summer 2023 [www.oldmillmuseum.org](http://www.oldmillmuseum.org) 785-227-3595

## Restoring Local Lindsborg History

*With funding secured, major work underway or coming soon at the Old Mill Museum*

Preservation of the historic buildings at the Lindsborg Old Mill & Swedish Heritage Museum doesn't happen by accident; it is only as the result of constant efforts and a principled choice to save our heritage.

Thanks to nearly a year of successful grant applications totaling more than a half-million dollars, important preservation work is now underway or will be before the end of 2023.

First on the list of work was the porch of the 1904 Swedish Pavilion, with work by Kaufman Built started thanks to a \$20,000 grant from the Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation. The bulk of the work was completed before Midsummer's Festival on June 17, and remaining portions - including new steps and reinforced pillars - to be finished before the summer is out.

Also at the Pavilion, and starting in July, KenJax Painting has been repainting the entire building anew thanks to funding from the McPherson County Community Foundation's David J. Nutt Fund, to the tune of more than \$162,000. The grant from the Nutt fund will also go to restoring the Pavilion windows to its historic "top pivot" style.

Kristi Northcutt, Lindsborg City Administrator, said she recently gained

a greater appreciation for what's involved in historical restoration.

"I know that there are a lot of steps to getting work done on an historic building," Northcutt said. "The Swedish Pavilion project is living proof of the Old Mill staff's perseverance through those steps and their dedication to its preservation."

A volunteer group of the Museum Handy Crew has also been meeting every Tuesday morning, taking care of regular maintenance and small but necessary projects. They have also taken on a major piece of work in repairing and replacing the white picket fence around the Pavilion. The posts in particular had rotted at the base and needed immediate attention.

Coming soon at the Old Mill, the museum has received quotes for an approximately \$100,000 project to repair crumbling masonry work and missing bricks on the mill's exterior. This important project is made possible thanks to a Heritage Trust Fund grant through the Kansas Historical Society. Watch for updates soon.

With a \$250,000 SPRINT grant from the Kansas Department of Commerce, the museum will also soon be working on projects addressing safety, security, and accessibility.



Lindsborg Old Mill  
& Swedish Heritage Museum

## Coming Events

- **October 13 - 14:** Svensk Hyllningsfest
- **October 21:** Virtual Swedish Genealogy Workshop
- **December 9:** Heritage Christmas

Check for updates and details at [www.oldmillmuseum.org/events](http://www.oldmillmuseum.org/events).

### Opportunities to Volunteer

Volunteering for the museum is a great way to share the gift of your time on important projects and ongoing needs - including front-deck coverage, groundskeeping, image scanning, website maintenance, and even our weekly "Museum Handy Crew" group that meets up every Tuesday morning to help with critical maintenance and restoration. To learn more, contact the museum at 785-227-3595 or [info@oldmillmuseum.org](mailto:info@oldmillmuseum.org).

## Inside...

**Page 2:** Museum's Perfect Record on Grant Applications; Millfest Media

**Page 3:** Online Museum Gift Shop Svensk Hyllningsfest Plans

**Page 4:** Innovative New Ways to Experience the Museum



KenJax Painting is restoring the Swedish Pavilion's peeling paint across the entire building.



Workers with Kaufman Built reconstructed the crumbling Pavilion porch in time for Midsummer.



Volunteers with the Museum Handy Crew are repairing the Pavilion's historic re-creation fence.

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# Perfect Grant Application Record Brings in \$500,000+

There's an idiom that comes out of baseball - "**Batting a Thousand**" - that refers to doing a thing perfectly, nearly impossibly, well. (A 1.000 batting average means getting a hit whenever one steps up to the plate.)

When it comes to grant applications across the last year, the museum has been **batting a thousand**, successfully going 11 for 11 since August 2022 and bringing in more than half a million in grant funding.

Lenora Lynam, museum Executive Director, said it's a streak unlike any she's ever seen.

"It's simply unprecedented," she said. "No matter how good you are, most non-profits have a miss every now and then, but so far we keep knocking them out of the park."

Lynam said the success rate is partially a reflection of how much is needed to preserve 15 acres of attractions and 10 historic buildings, but also is a testament to the work of Caroline de Filippis, Community Development Director, who has been in

charge of grant applications and administration since last year. Even though de Filippis has recently moved to Kansas City, she will continue to oversee grants for the museum, working remotely.

"When you have someone on staff with a perfect record like this," Lynam said, "You'd be foolish not to keep them on your team."

At the end of April, the McPherson County Community Foundation announced it was awarding \$162,810 from the David J. Nutt Fund to the museum. The grant is funding the current work of painting every part of the Swedish Pavilion's exterior and will ultimately fund the restoration of the building's windows as well.

Even more impressively, the Kansas Department of Commerce selected the museum to receive **\$250,000** from the State Park Revitalization and Investment in Notable Tourism (SPRINT) program - one of just 18 recipients out of 228 applications. Fewer than one out of 12 applicants were selected.



Representatives of the McPherson County Community Foundation, museum staff members, and museum board members accepted a Nutt grant in April.

While the specific projects that will be funded are still being finalized, the focus is going to be on improving museum safety, security, and accessibility. Currently the list includes such items as upgrades to the Old Mill's baseboard heating, removal of damaged or dying trees that pose a safety risk, an upgraded museum security system; building repairs; and improved ADA access. These represent only a portion of what this substantial grant is making possible and other aspects of this large project are still being finalized.

In another important grant for preserving local and area history, the Smoky Valley

Community Foundation provided a more than \$1,400 grant to the museum for the purchase of a top-quality scanner. This will be used to start a community picture-preservation project.

Finally, the Dean Coughenour Trust made a generous lead gift of \$10,000 to kickstart the current campaign of adding \$1 million to the endowment.

De Filippis noted that these grants have transformed the look of the museum and the visitor experience.

"Everything is looking more renewed and beautiful every day," she said. "This is a great time to see what the museum looks like today."

## 125th Celebration at Millfest Garner's Prominent Media Attention

The 125th anniversary celebration of the Old Mill at May's Millfest got some exciting and prominent media coverage! Links to all the coverage pieces are available at [www.oldmillmuseum.org/news/#MillfestCoverage](http://www.oldmillmuseum.org/news/#MillfestCoverage).

Ad Astra Radio featured Millfest in a 10-minute preview interview, while morning feature "Where's Shane?" from KWCH featured the event on May 2.

A reporter from NPR station KMUW in Wichita also featured Millfest for the program "Hidden Kansas."

Less directly related to Millfest, but still highlighting the museum, Seth of the "Wandermore" travel blog made sure that the museum was a featured part of his visit to Lindsborg on his quest to visit every incorporated city in Kansas!



Museum volunteer and Lindsborg woodcarver John Presley demonstrated the flat-plane carving style to KWCH TV reporter Shane Konicki in the Old Mill as part of a feature on Millfest that aired on May 2.

# New Online Museum Gift Shop Brings Memories to Doorsteps

Museum gift shops offer more than trinkets. They also support local creators, provide resources to those interested in history, and offer a way to carry memories home in physical form.

Lindsborg Old Mill & Swedish Heritage Museum has been expanding its gift shop options across the last year with dozens of new items. And now you can support the museum through the gift shop, wherever you are! An online version of the store is now available online at [www.oldmillmuseum.org/gift-shop/](http://www.oldmillmuseum.org/gift-shop/)

One of the items staff members are most excited about is a double-layered wooden ornament, fulfilling the most-requested gift shop item from a survey last year. The ornament - created by Lindsborg-based LBK Laser Designs - was released in July during the town's "Christmas in July" event, along with two new holiday cards, featuring

commissioned artwork of the Old Mill or the Swedish Pavilion in a snowscape.

The online gift shop also has many limited-edition and handcrafted items that can't be found anywhere else. One of the most unique items came from the Old Mill itself after several planks of the mill's scale house had to be removed and replaced for safety reasons. Not wanting to simply discard wood with so much history, an area artist turned them into hand-turned ballpoint pens, letter openers, and wine corks. All feature a unique banded pattern because of the wood's creosote weatherproofing.

Supporters of the mill can own a little piece of mill history with authentic and historical overstock items - including unused flour and mix bags from the 1940s or 1950s as well as Swedish postcards from the turn of the last century!

The gift shop is also now the



central location for Swedish Genealogy Workshop registration and single-session purchases from the archives of past workshop topics. After these virtual workshops, participants can use the bookshop to purchase reference works and workbooks related to genealogy as part of a selection of more than 70 museum-related books.

Finally, you can have a variety of foods and snacks delivered to your door: chocolate-covered sunflower seeds, wheat snacks, flours, mixes, and much more.

## Museum Hosts New Hyllningsfest Games, Attractions

On every odd-numbered year in Lindsborg, it's been a decades-long tradition to celebrate Svensk Hyllningsfest in the fall. For 2023, the museum is planning to have a more prominent presence and role for the festival.

Hyllningsfest will be held on October 13 and 14, and the museum is planning to host activities geared toward teenagers, young adults, and college students.

On that Friday and Saturday, planned from 1 to 5 p.m., the museum's Heritage Square and other lawn areas will be host to "Viking Yard Games." These include the popular Swedish lawn game of Kubb, cornhole, "spike ball," a giant Jenga set, pickleball, and possibly more.

There will also be convenient concessions available, and on Saturday a special World War II retrospective dancing revue will be held in the Swedish Pavilion at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. Come join us for the fun!

## Become a Member

Visit [www.oldmillmuseum.org/members](http://www.oldmillmuseum.org/members) to fill out the electronic form and read about member benefits or complete the information below and send to: Lindsborg Old Mill & Swedish Heritage Museum, 120 E. Mill St., Lindsborg, KS 67456.

Select your membership level:

Individual (\$40)  Family (\$60)  Business (\$125)

**Give a gift membership!**

Recipient name: \_\_\_\_\_

Recipient Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Ways to pay for your membership or donation (select one):  Cash (in-person)  Check  Card (fill in box)  Paypal  Venmo

Your full name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Street address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred way to receive newsletter:  Email  Mail  I do not wish to receive.

## Make a Larger Donation

Visit [www.oldmillmuseum.org/donations](http://www.oldmillmuseum.org/donations) to read details about the benefits of larger donation levels and to give online, or fill out the information below and mail to the museum.

One-time donations at *Friend* level or above also come with a corresponding annual museum membership, as listed at left.

Donation Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Donation Levels

**Friend** (\$40-\$199) • **Supporter** (\$200-\$499)

**Benefactor** (\$500-\$4,999) • **Sustainer** (\$5,000-\$19,999)

**Ambassador** (\$20,000+)

*Planned Giving Assistance available. ( ) Check for staff to contact.)*

Card #: \_\_\_\_\_

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Lindsborg Old Mill &  
Swedish Heritage Museum  
120 E. Mill St.  
P.O. Box 94  
Lindsborg, KS 67456

## Everything From New Tech To Old-Fashioned Toys Drive Engaging Ways to Visit Museum

Smoky Valley Roller Mill has a unique distinction - the only mill of its kind in the Midwest that still runs!

The only problem is that visitors only get to experience the Old Mill in action just one day every year on the first Saturday in May for Millfest.

Thanks now to modern technology, people can experience this 125-year-old treasure in motion any time!

With a borrowed 360-degree camera, museum staff took immersive, surrounding photography and video during Millfest, then assembled all the footage together into a virtual tour. It's available now for free at [www.oldmillmuseum.org/virtual-tour](http://www.oldmillmuseum.org/virtual-tour).

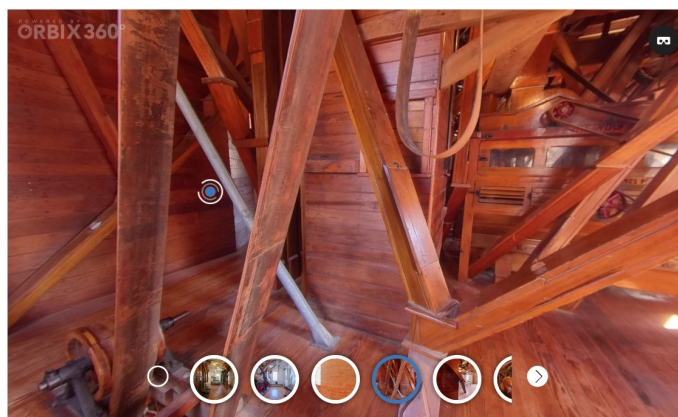
With accessibility to the basement and upper floors of the Old Mill limited because of stairs in the historical structure, the virtual tour also opens up the full experience of the museum to more people.

That's just the start of many new ways to experience the museum that have been recently added or are currently under development and coming soon.

One of those is a "retro" audio tour, available now at [www.oldmillmuseum.org/audio-tour](http://www.oldmillmuseum.org/audio-tour) or by scanning the QR code there to download the free izi.travel app. The audio is a remastered version of audio recovered from tour tapes used in the mill from four decades ago in the 1980s. Available tours are set to be expanded before the end of the year with an additional tour stop in the Swedish Pavilion with new audio and an updated modern tour script of the mill and museum that also incorporates archival audio.

Also under development are "augmented reality" posters within the museum attractions. By using a mobile app called "Blippar," visitors will be able to access multimedia extras - such as

### 1898 SMOKY VALLEY ROLLER MILLS



This interface of the new 360-degree Old Mill tour allows seeing this rare treasure in immersive virtual reality. It also opens more options to experience the museum for those with limited accessibility.

video, audio, and image galleries - that will seem to appear in midair at each exhibit location.

For younger museum visitors, the museum now offers a kids' activity area with old-fashioned games and museum-themed coloring pages. Kids can also complete a special museum scavenger hunt - featuring a cartoon character of "Wheatley the Wheatstalk" - for a special prize at the end!

For the whole family, the museum has also added a new benefit as part of museum admission and museum membership - the opportunity to play the classic Swedish lawn game of Kubb!

There are two sets available for checkout from the gift shop, and preset stake locations for a play field are measured out on the lawn of the main museum building. Details are at [www.oldmillmuseum.org/kubb](http://www.oldmillmuseum.org/kubb).

Finally, museum staff, board of directors members, and volunteers are currently working on refreshing the museum's permanent exhibits - particularly in the Swedish Pavilion and the museum's "back gallery." Temporary exhibitions and guest speakers - which are listed at [www.oldmillmuseum.org/](http://www.oldmillmuseum.org/) events - give great reasons for a return visit!

See you here soon!