



Lindsborg Museum Celebrates At Annual Millfest on May 4

April 25, 2024

There's one day of the year when history roars back to life for Millfest at the Lindsborg Old Mill and Swedish Heritage Museum. On Saturday, May 4, the main event is when four stories of machinery in the 126-year-old Smoky Valley Roller Mills again spin into action like they have since the late 1800s.

The best part is, with guided tours available throughout the day, visitors can get an up-close experience of this moment out of history.

Lenora Lynam, the museum Executive Director, said that since the Old Mill is the only working mill using 19th century roller mill technology in the Midwest, the opportunity to see what's both a giant machine and work of art working as it has for more than a century is a rare experience.

"It's a tour that engages all the senses," she said. "You can feel the floors rumble under your feet; hear the rattle and whir of machines, gears, and belts; see beautifully restored wood and metal equipment; and even maybe smell and taste a bit of the residue of grain dust in the air. If you haven't gone to Millfest, you owe it to yourself to come."

Tours run 9 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. and cost \$10 per person during Millfest, but all other museum attractions will be available by-donation. For safety reasons, tours are restricted to those 13 years old or older, but when the mill shuts down again at 4:45 p.m. it will open up to families with children ages 12 and younger to take a free mill tour.

Millfest doesn't end there!

New this year, Millfest will offer axe throwing from Oak & Iron Lanes from noon to 3 p.m. in front of Heritage Square. For just a \$5 wristband per person (available for purchase in the museum gift shop) festival-goers will get to enjoy taking multiple trips through the line to take a shot at a old-fashioned skill that – let's face it – who hasn't wanted to try?

Music entertainment will be available on the museum front porch starting at 11 a.m. and running through 3 p.m. Local group the Front Porch Pickers will take the porch stage at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., while Lindsborg-favorite folk rock band Old Man Lingonberry performs classic covers at noon. This year in a new special treat, the music lineup will have "Bethany Goes to Broadway" at 1 p.m. and 3

p.m., featuring show tune selections performed by Bethany College students who are coming back to Lindsborg just for Millfest!

Guests can enjoy other museum activities throughout the day included in the “by-donation” admission. Starting at 10 a.m., guests can decorate their own Dala Horse – a traditional Swedish symbol and the most notable symbol of Lindsborg – as long as supplies last. Traditional stick-and-hoop races and Kubb – a popular Swedish lawn game – will be on the common area lawn of Heritage Square.

When guests want to participate themselves in the celebration, they can join Lindsborg *Folksdanslag* at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. on the Heritage Square green maypole (or, if the day is toasty – wherever on the square there’s some quality shade.) Join the group in traditional Swedish dance, or just sit back to watch and enjoy.

A quilt show from the McPherson Quilt Guild will be among the day’s more than a dozen free demonstrations, as well as vendors with handmade items for sale. Watch real blacksmithing in action, see how rope was traditionally made, talk with representatives of The Land Institute about perennial grains and agriculture, purchase a wide variety of original artwork, and more!

When it’s time for lunch, guests can purchase burgers, street tacos and sandwiches from Paradise Eats; or gumbo, tamales, eggrolls, and Asian fusion from Kim’s Express Foods or pick up a quick bite with WheatSnax, unique candies, and flavored honey sticks from the museum gift shop.

Also, just off the gift shop, guests can bid on some exciting silent auction items to help support the museum’s mission – everything from artwork to a Myra Bag backpack, to a pair of tickets to one of three shows at Salina’s Stiefel Theatre! Bidding will run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Finally, Millfest will also be opening weekend for a new temporary mini-exhibition in the main gallery of the museum. “Skeleton-Of-Dog... Selected Geology & Natural History Artifacts from the Bethany College Collection Archives” is showing now in the main gallery of the museum. These museum holds artifacts from the former Bethany College Museum, but these rare geological and natural history treasures haven’t been seen publicly in decades. Thanks to the efforts of dozens of area volunteers, the museum is able to present the best selection from this fascinating collection.

Adam Pracht, the museum Marketing and Communications Director, said that last year was actually his first time attending Millfest.

“There’s so much to do and see, but the Old Mill running is my favorite,” he said. “Three moments in particular: When it first revved up to speed in the morning, standing outside hearing the antique machines rumble inside, and the very end of the day after the mills are off again, but still slightly warm. There’s a promise there; that history will be here for us to visit again next year.”

Significant sponsorship for Millfest has been provided by:

- CHS Refinery – McPherson, Kansas
- CKA Consulting – Topeka, Kansas
- Dröm Sött Inn – Lindsborg, Kansas

- *Ehmke Seed – Healy, Kansas*
- *Farmers State Bank – Lindsborg, Kansas*
- *Kansas Wheat – Manhattan, Kansas*

Millfest 2024

9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Saturday, May 4

Lindsborg Old Mill & Swedish Heritage Museum

120 E. Mill St., Lindsborg

\$10 / person tours of the Old Mill in operation (ages 13+).

\$5 / person (wristband): Unlimited axe throwing Noon – 3 p.m.

Admission by donation to all other museum attractions.

Food available for purchase on museum grounds from Paradise Eats (burgers, street tacos, and sandwiches) and Kim's Express Foods (gumbo, tamales, eggrolls and Asian fusion).

Confirmed arts and crafts vendors and demonstrators:

- Art Prints by Acacia Pracht
- Basketweaving by Janie Tubbs
- Blacksmithing by Josh Womelsdorf
- Chainmail Jewelry & Decorative Objects by The Metalbender (Amethyst Sankey)
- Drawings by Pam Peticio
- Goat Milk Soap & Lotion by Wind River Farms (Angela Price)
- Greenwood Spoon & Bowl Carving by Jerry & Ruperta Hammerton
- Information Table from K-State Department of Grain Science & Industry
- The Land Institute
- Origami Models and Jewelry by Eian Pracht
- Photography by Steve Pierce
- Plasma-Cut Decorative Saws by Mike & Bonnie Becker
- Quilt Show by McPherson Quilt Guild
- Ropemaking by Dean Gripe
- Weaving by Carol Goering

The Lindsborg Old Mill & Swedish Heritage Museum celebrates and preserves the pioneering spirit of the Smoky Valley by educating, entertaining, and building community across generations so that history comes to life. With special emphasis on the period from 1870 to 1910, the museum includes

two buildings on the National Registry of Historical Places and extensive archives and artifact collections. The museum seeks to honor the rich story of Lindsborg and its people.

Learn more about the museum at www.oldmillmuseum.org.