

# Phelps Helps



Volume 11, Issue 4

Winter 2002

## President's Message

The Phelps County Historical Society at the Nebraska Prairie Museum is continuing their remodeling. They are now in the process of adding a gift shop and much needed office space in the old meeting room. After this is completed, the old office space to the north of the present library will be made as an expansion to the library.

We will then be adding additional shelf space and be moving the microfilm reader and microfilm to the old office. We are presently lacking space in the Phelps County section so this is where we will first expand. Little did we realize we would expand our collection of materials so quickly.

Holdrege Area Genealogy Club has voted to buy a Microfilm file so that we can consolidate the 342 microfilm we have purchased.

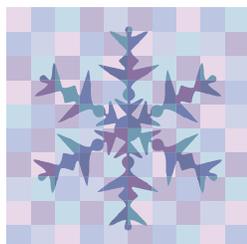
We wish all of you a MERRY CHRISTMAS.

Your President, Sandra Slater

**Meetings held at the Phelps County Historical Museum on the first Monday of the month at 2:00 PM.**

**The public is welcome!**

Visit us on the Web!  
Phelps Helps Web Page via  
<http://www.alltel.net/~ps60313>



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## Membership—Time To Renew!

**Membership dues will be due on January 1, 2003**

Membership dues will be \$10 again this year. We hope you will join us again for the coming year. Remember that you are always welcome to put queries in our newsletter. Quite often we are able to connect individuals searching the same family lines. If you don't keep in contact with us, you could miss out on an important find in your research.



## Our Newsletter has a New Look

As you probably noticed in our last issue that the newsletter has a new layout thanks to our member Patti Simpson, who resides in Hastings, NE. She is also responsible for taking care of our Internet site on her Web page. Thank you so much for all your help.

# Don O. Lingren Library New Additions

## Given by Edna Slater

- Atlas of Kearney County, Nebraska 1937 and 1938
- Minden High School All Class Reunion, 1967, 1972
- Chase County, Nebraska Farm and Ranch Directory, 1966
- Official Plat book and rural Directory of Adams county
- Atlanta Centennial History Book 1883-1983
- The Whippet Yearbook of Minden, Nebraska High school 1931
- Faith United Church of Gibbon, Nebraska, 1975
- The United Methodist Church, Holdrege, Ragan, Wilcox Parish 1976-1977 First Methodist Church, Holdrege, Nebraska 1967-1968 First United Methodist church, Holdrege, Nebraska Centennial Directory 1984
- Phelps County Nebraska Rural Resident Directory 1978
- Holdrege City Directory 1980

## Given by Roger Abrahamson

- Clason's Guide to Nebraska with Map of Auto Routes. (about 1918)

## Given By Don and Bernice Lindgren

- Holdrege City Directories, 1991, 1992, 1994, 1996, 1997, 1998
- Historical history researched by Don Lindgren on many Phelps County places and subjects.

## Given by Ada Hinson

- Holdrege City Directories, 1985, 1989, 2001

## Purchased by Holdrege Area Genealogy Club

- 1964 Atlas of Frontier and Gosper Counties
- Hope Lutheran Church, Smithfield, Nebraska
- 100 Anniversary Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church 1891-1991
- Hope Lutheran Church, Smithfield, and Nebraska 1891-1991
- A leaf From My Family Tree
- A Jolly Swede Name  
Axel Vegert



## Swedish Names — All those Andersons!

Naming from [www.bridgetosweden.com](http://www.bridgetosweden.com)

Thanks to our new members Glenn and Elizabeth Crouse who provided information about the above Swedish web site and the article below. [Elizcrouse@wmconnect.com](mailto:Elizcrouse@wmconnect.com)

### **ALL THOSE ANDERSONS**

It's often difficult, for people from the USA, Canada and Australia, to realize that, in Sweden, a large percentage of the population share just a few common names, most ending with -sson. Names like Andersson, Larsson, Karlsson, Pettersson and Johansson are extremely common, which is why one Andersson is probably not related to another one. By the way, Swedes usually write these names with double "ss".

When "Karl" was enough early on, when people lived in small villages, with little contact outside of the village, only first names were used. If two or three men had the name Karl, the name of the farm was used to specify which one: Karl i Godegården or Karl på Stommen.

### **PATRONYMIC NAMES**

The patronymic naming system was later adopted. This is how it worked: Anna Andersdotter and Karl Andersson married (Anna kept her name, Andersdotter). They had a son,

*(Swedish Names Continued on page 5)*

# Harlan County, Nebraska

## Information from

From Carol Perkins, 9434 Highwood Hill Rd., Brentwood, TN 37027 "I am sending you a copy of a photograph. Written on the back of the original pictures are these words: "This was taken a long time ago, but I thought maybe you would like on for Remembrance"

I found the original in a box of pictures from the Sjogren farm, from which the Scandinavian Immanuel Church was moved to the Nebraska Prairie Museum grounds near Holdrege, Nebraska.

Could it be Anna Mathilda (Borg) Sjorgren, her mother and Charley Sjorgren? I know the older lady is not Charley's mother Anna (Borg) Sjorgren who died in 1915. Charley Sjorgren (my great Uncle) died in 1919.

Looks like they're sitting on the ledges of steps of maybe a church. Note Bulletin Board-top left corner. Charlie and Anna Sjorgren had no children.

**NOTE:** The Phelps Helps Newsletter highlights Harlan County in this section. With many of our subscribers interested in and from Harlan County, and since Harlan County is a connecting county to Phelps County, the Phelps Helps will publish history information on Harlan County.

### HARLAN COUNTY PRESS

Friday November 14, 1884

### PLEASANT RIDGE

The new schoolhouse is under course of erection. We believe Mr. Foster, of Orleans, is the builder.

We took a trip on Sunday last to the new town of Atlanta, 12 miles north of us. Things are moving up there. A few houses are already built, and one or two stores, while some are just commenced. We hear that the United Brethren intend building a good, substantial church there. Rev. C. Startwood is pastor in charge of the circuit which includes Atlanta and the Ridge. Mr. S. preaches at the Ridge on Tuesday next, 11 o'clock, at S. S. Wright's. We saw Mr. Bert Wood on Tuesday as smiling as a basket of chips and the cause is, as the Irishman said, he's another father. This time it's a little girl. Mother and daughter doing well.

*(Harlan County Continued on page 7)*

# New Members & Their Queries

**QUINN, Jane Dahlstrom**, 32730 Woodland Drive, Evergreen CO 80439

**HORTON, Roberta E.**, 160 Fabian Way, Concord, CA 95418

I am looking for information on Alonzo Bertrand Minor. It seems the railroad officials and land agents had the power to make or break a town by selection of their routes. Towns selected were expected to do their bit for the line. In this case, the town was named Bertrand in his honor and since there was no main street, the main thoroughfare was named Minor Avenue. Alonzo Bertrand Minor was a land agent. I only know he was born in Pennsylvania.



## No Girls Around Here Now or Never, They Say By Bernice Brown (Date Unknown)

When Cliff VanEimeren came from Harlingen, Texas, last year to work for Sunglow dairy and moved his wife and three boys (no girls) into the C. S. Nelson rental property at 816 East Avenue in Holdrege, neighbors became aware of a curious fact about the house. No one could remember WHEN there had been a family with a daughter, one or more, living there.

Neither, it now appears, can anyone else. If ever a family with a girl-child lived in this particular house, no local resident can remember it and some of those questioned remember pretty far back.

This much is certain: there have been two maidens in the house since the C. S. Nelson Senior and Junior, have owned the property and perhaps never have the premises been so graced. Nels Nelson, builder of the house, began the trend by adopting a son Cletus Nelson.

According to Cletus, he lived there only four or five years, sometime in the early 1900's. Cletus reported further that, if memory served him correctly which it may not since he admittedly was interested in things other than houses at that tender age, the property was sold to Gust Akerson who built a residence on the north side.

Since Gust Akerson was the father of Mrs. Walter Johnson of Holdrege, introduction of his name at this point put the entire theory in jeopardy. However, Mrs. Johnson obligingly removed herself

from the scene by stating she had never lived there and to her knowledge her father had never owned the house although he had built the residence adjoining on the north.

Next known occupants were Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Miller, parents of a son Claude Miller. Claude is an only child and so, again, no girls. Claude puts the date of his residency as approximately 1900 to 1911. The house belonged to Mrs. J. L. Miller's aunt at that time and after the Millers moved out, the property was rented first to a couple by the name of Harmon and later to Dan Enos. Neither family had children.

C. S. Nelson lived there from the time he was a lad of 8 or 9 until 1956. Clarence was another only child and after his marriage the elder Nelsons moved to another house. Clarence and his wife remodeled the dwelling and in time had two children, yep, boys: Clark and Keith.

Next Occupants were Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Huges while Mr. Huges was employed by Andy' Maytag, hatchery division. The Huges since have moved to Wisconsin by memory of their three boys, Harry, Jim and Cal, lives on in Holdrege for their many fine qualities including considerable athletic, prowess.

Now calling the place home are the three sons of Cliff Van Eimerens: Tom, 15; Jerry, 9; Bobby, 5.

*(No Girls Continued on page 5)*

*(Swedish Names Continued from page 2)*

Magnus, whose last name was Karlsson, the son of Karl. When Anna and Karl had a daughter, Kristina, her last name was Karlsdotter, the daughter of Karl. Certain first names were common, Anders, Karl, Lars, Petter, Johan, which made the corresponding -sson names common also. The names ending with -dotter, used by girls, are hardly in use any more. Often when a woman named -dotter emigrated, she changed her name to one ending with -son. Because there were so many -sson names, people were encouraged, in the 1880's, to change their names. So Swedes invented new names, like Lindblad and Ekström, often made out of words related to nature: trees, lakes, rivers etc. Both those Swedes who emigrated, and those who stayed in Sweden, changed their names. The patronymic system continued until 1901, when a law stipulated that children had to use the same last name as their parents.

scene: "Andersson, step forward!" and 55 men, all named Andersson, walk up to the captain. Therefore soldiers were given new names as they entered the military, often names that invoked an image of the military:

Hjelm (helmet), Svärd (sword), Tapper (courageous) or Sköld (shield). By the way, the soldier's children usually did not take on their father's soldier's name, but used the patronymic name.

#### **NAME CHANGES AT THE TIME OF EMIGRATION**

1. Often these changes were minor: Karlsson was Americanized and became Carlson, and Johansson became Johnson.
2. Names with Swedish letters, often difficult for foreigners to read and write, were changed. This way the letter ä often became a or e; the letters ö and å became o.
3. Sometimes the emigrant adopted an entirely new name. In those cases you might have to do quite a bit of detective work before finding the Swedish name.

#### **SOLDIER NAMES**

When a man entered the military, it became important to have a name that would identify him. Imagine this scene: "Andersson, step forward!" and 55 men, all named Andersson, walk up to the captain. Therefore soldiers were given new names as they entered the military, often names that invoked an image of the military: Hjelm (helmet), Svärd (sword), Tapper (courageous) or Sköld (shield). By the way, the soldier's children usually did not take on their father's soldier's name, but used the patronymic name.

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*(Continued from page 4)*

Mrs. Nelson (Mildred) reports that their remodeling made the place convenient for boys, with wardrobes and other space for boys equipment, which may account for drawing renters with sons; but she denies any discrimination against the fairer sex. Just happened that way.

If any reader (female) lived in the house as a child or knows of a damsel who did, the Holdrege Daily Citizen will be glad to hear from them. But you'd sure be spoiling a good story.

# More on Funk, Nebraska and the Brooking Family

Continued from Last Phelps Helps Issue

Until the turn of the century the growth of the town was rather slow but then began an influx of business so great that in 1908 the town boasted "two general merchandise stores that would be a credit to any other town in the country. WE also have as large lumberyards as can be found in town of eight or ten thousand inhabitants. The harness, hardware, banking, drug livery and feed, millinery, blacksmith, barber, meat, dressmaking, hotel, restaurant, grain, cattle and hog buying and brick business are all represented here. During the year 1908 there were 169 cars of stock and 300 cars of grain shipped from here which gives some idea of the volume of business done."

It was about 1908 that L. T. Brooking built a large and modern general merchandise store which he rented to Fred and Abon Brown. Mrs. Brooking says, "It had the best fixtures and business in the county."

The town suffered a major setback in the summer of 1912 when many of its business establishments burned including a two-story hotel; a setback from which it never fully recovered. Then in 1915 the Brown Store burned. After that the Brown's moved to Holdrege and started the Golden Rule Store.

L. T. Brooking, the town's first citizen, is undoubtedly the town's most famous citizen. Famous for many years as business man and then after his retirement in 1905 until his death about five years ago as a writer and philosopher. For almost thirty years his column "Small Town Stuff" was a constant inspiration to many thousands of Nebraskans'. It was printed regularly in over a dozen newspapers, including the Holdrege Daily Citizen. Mrs. Brooking, not unduly proud of her family, basks in the sunshine of their accomplishments. Her son W. T. Brooking is manager of a large milling company at Dodge City, Kansas. Another son, Edward Earl, farms northeast of town. The Brookings. Eldest son, Albert M., now deceased, was in the grain business but is remembered most by all Nebraska as the founder of the "House of Yesterday" at Hastings, Nebraska.

The story of A. M.'s interest in museum dates from his birth. His mother called him by his nickname. "Bert" was born with a capacity for collecting junk, a characteristic understandable only by boys. It was when he was about eight years old that his interest in collections began to amount to more than a pocketful of junk.

"It was while we were living in Macomb, Illinois and L. T. was running the grocery store. One morning Bert was going to school when he saw two Negro boys fighting. He watched them so long that he was late for school and as a result was sent to the superintendent's office. While Bert waited for the superintendent he became entranced by a collection of Indian arrowheads in a showcase there. From that time on he had to watch him 'cause he would trade anything in sight for an arrowhead or some other relic.

The 'House of Yesterday' was born in our kitchen in the old frame house right here in Funk. His friends would bring him all kinds of stuff and even in later years people would send him items from all over the country. At one time I had seven live snakes to put up with, one of them, a bull snake over six feet long. The end came when that bull snake got loose in the house. It was over a week before we found it, or rather, I found it, in the dress drawer. Chloroform took care of mister snake. Another time a friend sent him a large rattlesnake but you can be sure it never got in the house. I made him keep it in the barn and when winter came it froze to death. Another sent him a pair of baby eagles and I wouldn't have them in the house either and he sent them to the zoo in Washington, D. C. It went on like that for years and years. "Bert moved to Hastings in 1919 and operated a grain company in Inland. His museum went with him."

*(More Funk Continued on page 7)*

*(Harlan County Continued from page 3)*

Earl Vincent is in the vicinity doing a little visiting from Custer County. He likes it well where he has settled, but says the ground is pretty rough.

By an error in printing or in writing it appears in last week's issue, that Mr. Hiram Brown walked 100 miles in 4 1/2 hours. Your correspondent thinks Mr. Brown pretty sharp, but we do not credit him with possessing the seven-league boots nursery of lore. We apologize if our error. Please state 4 1/2 days.

Ed Wanderer

#### **OTHER NEWS FROM ORLEANS, NEBRASKA**

James McGleachin is putting up an office building adjoining his store on the south. 20x22, on a brick foundation. It is said Mr. Andrew Richmond will use it as a Loan and Land office. It will be much more convenient than his present office in the courthouse.

C. A. Bennett has laid out an addition of three blocks joining the town site on the south. Mr. T. J. Maloy surveyed

them into lots, and they are for sale.

#### **A DISASTEROUS FIRE AT ALMA NEBRASKA**

On Thursday evening about sundown, a fire broke out at Frank Shaffer's Livery stable at Alma, and before it could be gotten under control, burned several business houses.

The livery barn and agricultural warehouse with its contents were burned and a valuable stallion and two other horses were burned in the stable. Next to go was the Valley Bank and Kirkpatrick's Barber Shop, Bradford and Burr's new building burned next; then the building occupied by Henry Wilcox, Real Estate and Loan Agent, and the Young Salamander Drug Store, W. A. VerBryck, Prop.; next to this the Isbell building occupied as a temperance billiard hall was hurriedly devoured by the flames. Geo. Heitzman's restaurant and jewelry store burned next. Then came the meat market of J. Zerbe as well as his dwelling. Here the fire was arrested by Mussellman's brick store, a providential barrier for the other stores on the block. The loss is estimated at about \$25,000, with but little insurance.

*(More Funk Continued from page 6)*

Funk was one of the smallest school districts in the county serving only two and a half sections. It employs two teachers who teach only the eight grades. The Fire Department boasts of a \$7500 pumper bought only three years ago to serve the town and a large rural area of approximately 120 square miles.

Many of Funk's establishments have been going for many years but most of the businessmen are comparative newcomers. Take for instance, the telephone exchange, which is owned largely by farmer and serves 260 subscribers. It has served this community for over 30 years while the present operators, Mr. and Mrs. John O. Daul, have been here just seven years.

The Farmers Co-op Company is another old concern. Before its reorganization about ten years ago it was known as the Funk Grain Company. It has 127 stockholders. The company has been managed for the past three years by Roscoe Brown.

Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Plucknett have been around since November 2, 1946. They run a Mobilgas station and a lunchroom and motel. For Seven years the Lundquist brothers, Everett and Clifford, have operated a garage and the M. & M agency. The Fun Co-op Oil Company has over 200 members and serves a large area. Its manager, Bernon Horn, has been with the company over fourteen years.

Visit Lyle's Repair Shop and you're apt to find Lyle Martinson's feet sticking out from under someone's car. Never his own car; he's too busy for that. Lyle's a local boy. He was born just five miles northeast of town. He served his hitch in the army during the last war in the European Theater and now he's settled happily with his wife Aneta, his two children and his garage.

*(More Funk Continued on page 10)*

# The Holdrege Citizen

July 22, 1909

Bad Runaway, George Dahlstrom Gets Leg Broken when Barking Dogs Scare Team

## ACCIDENT ON 4TH AVENUE

The second tragic happening to occur Tuesday morning was witnessed on Fourth avenue near Hancock Street, when George Dahlstrom received a broken leg as the result of being thrown from a wagon in a runaway. Dahlstrom is about 21 years old and a son of J. M. Dahlstrom living north of the Orphan's Home.

The young man was driving into town in an empty wagon. A dog was running under the wagon and when it was threatened by another canine, which ran into the street, rushed foreword under the feet of the horses. This was too much for the powerful spirited animals and they started to kicking with the result that the tongue of the wagon was shattered. The stub end of the tongue dropped to the ground and as the team started forward the wagon was thrown in the air and

Dahlstrom was hurled many feet into space. When he landed, it was beneath a portion of the vehicle, which struck with enough force to break the bone in his right leg between the knee and the hip.

Help came immediately and the unfortunate man was extricated and taken to Dr. Palmer's office and later to the Midwest hospital, where he is receiving the best care.

The big team pulled the doubletree loose from the wagon when the tongue ran into the ground and proceeded towards town along Fourth Avenue. They barely missed Colliding with a rig occupied by two women and several children. They became separated when one ran one side of the telephone pole and the other on the other side, and one ran down the alley behind L. Brown's store, while the other was captured just north of the store.



# Struck by Lightning

July 18, 1902

During the thundershower Sunday evening, the barn of E. D. Einsel's place in West Holdrege was struck by lightning and burned down. His driving mare and a colt were in the barn at the time it was struck but were gotten out uninjured. The totting mare is supposed to have been inside the barn at the time of the crash but by the time the barn was reached she was on the outside leaning against the bar but greatly overcome by the shock. With the assistance of the neighbors she was taken to a place of safety but died in a few minutes. The mare was out of the best bred mares in this part of the state and a conservative estimate of her value is three hundred dollars. Mr. Einsel's two buggies, harness, robes, feed, etc. all perished in the flames. The barn was insured for about three-fourths its

value and the buggies, etc. for perhaps the trifle more. The insurance at this writing has not been adjusted on the horse but the loss will probably be greater there than on the rest of the property destroyed. Those who witnesses the bolt strike to the barn say it looked like an immense ball of fire dropping upon the barn and the hay was immediately seen through the aperture made by the bolt but the flames quickly spread in every direction.



# Search for Heirs to Phelps County Estate

## Holdrege Progress April 15, 1915

I. B. Hatfield, Formerly of Loomis Has Wife and Child unknown to His other Relatives

The brothers and sisters who had always believed that Isaac Benton Hatfield, deceased of Creston, Iowa, and formerly living near Loomis, was a bachelor, were surprised when the administrator of his estate made his report to the court of Creston last Friday, and disclosed that Hatfield had once married and there was a child born to them.

The administrator reported, however, that he had been unable to locate Mrs. Hatfield or the child and the court set aside a sum of money to pay expense of pursuing the search for them. Hatfield, during his long residence in Iowa, lived

entirely alone. He had resided in Loomis near which place there is a 220-acre farm to be divided among the heirs along with several thousand dollars in cash in bank and property in Iowa. About all that is known of Mrs. Hatfield is that her maiden name is Ida Howard.

Mr. Hatfield homesteaded a mile west of Loomis in 1878. He lived on the place until about twelve years ago, when he removed to Iowa. He had made a yearly visit to this community to look after his property ever since his removal. He was very well known to the people of the vicinity of Loomis, and during his residence here lived alone. That he had a wife and child was unknown to any of his acquaintances here.

# Great Blizzard of 1880

## Furnished Thrilling Experiences Both for Parents and Children From Bertrand Newspaper, Date Unknown

An early incident of pioneer history will show the present generations under which schools were started in that period, and will also show the great contrast with the educational facilities now existing.

The first few families north of Bertrand (this was before there was a Bertrand, Nebraska) felt they should have a school for their children so one was started. The only building available was a dugout five miles north of Bertrand. This dugout was on the land directly across the road west of Paul Lavene farm. Three families---those of H. O. Morine, Frank Bower, and another named Nylander--furnished the children for this humble beginning.

One morning Mr. Morine started to take his children to school and on the way stopped for the Nylander Children. He was using a sled, as it was in the winter and snow was on the ground. While he was stopped on the Nylander home, a younger child of this family, about three years old, who had often wanted to

go along to school with the other children, went unobserved to the sled and crawled in under the blankets. For some reason his presence was not discovered until they were on their way or until they had arrived at the schoolhouse. A storm was beginning that morning and by the time the time the party reached there, it was rapidly developing into a blizzard.

Mr. Morline saw that he could not make it home, and his only alternative was to remain there for the day. But there was no shelter of any kind for the team. As they were only ponies it was decided to take them into the schoolroom. Remember this was only a dugout. There were two or three steps to the descent, and the ponies probably did not object seriously to going to school when such a storm was rating outside. So the school room became a stable as well as the ponies, regular pupils, the little stowaway, together with the teacher and Mr. Morine, occupied the shelter until the following day.

*(More Funk Continued from page 7)*

Another newcomer is John Stevens who owns the grocery store and is the postmaster. Stevens was born and raised near Beatrice but moved his family to Funk about two years ago. Perhaps the most versatile man in town is Charles Eckwall and he's only been around five years; chairman of the town board, custodian of the depot and also the gas house, express agent, mail messenger and to top it off, milk man.

Thus for 63 yeas this busy little town has remained a constant inspiration to many others in that in spite of fire, depression and shifting population it continues to fight, not merely for existence, but for state-wide recognition as well. But behind this commendable fortitude lies something far deeper tan the power of man. It is the power of God.

**FRIDHEM CHRUCH**

One way that power has operated is through Fridhem Church. More than eight years before the founding of Funk the Fridhem congregation was organized in the home of A. P, Fulk, in Oneida Township, Kearney County, about one half mile south of the present Salem M. E. Church with Rev. Elias Peterson Presiding. For several months the new group met in homes but soon their number was too great for that and a sod church was built. This was used until November of 1891 when the congregation moved into their new church building. The original location of the church was a few miles northeast of Funk but in 1910 after deliberating and debating the wisdom of such an action for over 21 years the church building and parsonage were moved into the town of Funk. Its 72 year history is filled with exploits of fame both in the realm of physical and the spiritual. Taking second place to none the church has led the community in making of history and preparation for the future.

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