



Swiss Heritage Society Messenger

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Berne, Indiana 46711

Habegger donation cuts chase for saw mill completion

By JIM LANGHAM

Thanks to a generous donation of \$15,000 from Habegger's Ace Hardware and Building Supply in Berne, the Ervin Werling Sawmill, an anticipated new history opportunity at the village, could be cutting out lumber in the near future.

The sawmill, the newest member of the Swiss Heritage family of restored buildings, has been owned by Ervin Werling, who lives in Tocsin. The structure was owned by Werling's father.

The sawmill will be located on land that has been cleared in the southeast corner of the woods at Swiss Heritage Village.

The Habeggers noted that Ace Hardware wanted to make a donation to the village, and the completion of the saw-



The Habegger's — Charlie, Alan, Brian and Mike

mill is a current need. The businessman likes the idea that the need was lumber oriented, especially since his family's business heritage also involves lumber.

"It didn't have to be that way but it's kind of neat that it worked out that way," said Habegger.

Originally, Charlie had been a salesman and Sam was working for Indiana Construction in Berne. Sam started Habegger Construction which evolved into Swiss Manufacturing Corporation. Charlie's job as a salesman was to sell pre-

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Memories of... Ruth Neuenschwander

By JIM LANGHAM

The old adage, "busy hands are happy hands," was certainly true of Ruth Neuenschwander, one of the founders of the Swiss Heritage Society. It was also true of her caring heart and giving spirit to educational, religious, and social service in and around Adams County for over six decades.

Neuenschwander, who married Sherman Neuenschwander (also deceased) on March 6, 1947, spent much of her career teaching school in many of the

buildings of Adams County. She retired from South Adams Schools in 1987, after 31 years of teaching.

Ruth (Grandlienard) Neuenschwander was born on February 26, 1922 in Wells County to Charles and Marguerite (Hinchman) Grandlienard.

As one of the founders of Swiss Heritage Society, she served as secretary and twice served as president. She served on the board of the society from 1985 to 1992. During that time, she authored a

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Students make a splash during rainy day at the village

Once again, students from all over Adams County converged on the village to learn about insects, animals, farm animals, plants, and other aspects of our environment at the annual "Splash Day."

"Splash," which stands for "Soil, Plants, People, Air, Animals, and H2O (water)," is an effort to educate local students about important issues related to the environment around us. It is sponsored by the Adams County Soil and Water District.

This year, students from the northern part of the county visited the village on Tuesday (April 10) while students from Adams Central and South Adams spent a

rainy Wednesday (April 11) sloshing through the village in their educational encounter.

In addition to the educational seminars, the students were also fed lunch.

"We really enjoy having the kids every year," said Gretchen Lehman, executive director of Swiss Heritage Village and Museum. "A lot of them don't have the opportunity to see what country life is like these days. This gives them a little exposure to the outdoor life and a chance to learn about the environment around them."



Dwight Pierce, Forrester, explains how to determine the age of a tree during Splash Day



*Thank
you!*

*Matthew Smith,
local South Adams
student, volunteers
to take care of the
blue bird and
martin houses at
the village.*

How can your group get involved?

Adopt-A-Building concept program

We would welcome any club, group, church group, scouts, or 4-H group that would be interested in adopting a building for care. This would involve maintaining and keeping up the building, either directly, or by hire or donation. Some of the responsibilities would include keeping up with the windows, painting, roof, and small repairs of that structure. Contact Gretchen at the Swiss Heritage Society if you are interested.

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manufactured buildings. Between them, they decided that they could go to the job site and pre-manufacture walls and building components.

Unfortunately, like many of the businesses on the north side of Berne, the Habeggers took a hit from the Palm Sunday tornado of 1965, but they rebuilt and expanded their business. Around that time, they became known as Habegger Builders Supply Company.

In 1976, the business joined the Ace family. Last year, the company celebrated its 50th year in business.

"Now, with the second generation (Alan, Brian, and Mike), instead of contracting homes, we are material suppliers," said Mike. "The last house constructed by

our company was built 15 years ago."

Products these days include windows and doors, siding, gutter and exterior finish products, engineered building products, interior finishes, cabinets, doors, drywall, miscellaneous building supplies, decking and railing systems, hardware products, and insulation products.

"The Cline Lumberyard in Bluffton came up for sale and we purchased that. We are currently renovating it," said Mike. "We're turning that into an Ace lumberyard. It's an honor to carry on the family heritage these days."

"We appreciate this community and its support over the years," said Brian. "We try to listen to everyone's input and ideas in deciding how we can best serve the area

through our business. We're here for this community."



Kent V. Sprunger, project engineer, overseeing the pouring of the saw mill foundation

Elvis, Patsy Cline, and Sock Hop Memories

This summer Swiss Heritage will feature a new event, a concert of classic rock and oldies from the 50's and 60's. The event, which will take place on Saturday, July 14 at 7 p.m. at the barn, will feature the group *When Rock Met Country*, including Elvis and Patsy Cline impersonators. *When Rock Met Country* is not a typical band. They provide a live interactive show using only the vocalists and professional music tracks. You will be treated to a performance that is both classy and entertaining. The cost is \$5 for non-members and free for those with a membership card.



Last year's wiener dog race champion, Oscar, with his owners Craig & Lora Sprunger

Foundation progression



The photos above show the progress being made in the Sawmill foundation. At left is the groundwork completed and ready for the pouring of concrete. At right the poured concrete is being trowled to perfection.

Revving up the wiener dogs

One of the highlights of this year's Swiss Days events at the village (July 27 and 28) will be the second annual wiener dog race on Saturday morning at 10 a.m. This year's racing dachshund will include a puppy race (one year and under), powder puff race, and open race. Last year's winner was Oscar and His Masters, owned by Craig and Lora Sprunger. Other Swiss Days events will include an antique engine and tractor show, car show, and bake-off on Friday. Categories include yeast rolls, quick breads, and cookies.

Memories of Ruth Neuenschwander — continued from page 1

book, "A Short History: The Beginnings and Early Years of Swiss Heritage."

"She was a real pillar around here. She gave so much energy to the work here," commented Gretchen Lehman, executive director of Swiss Heritage Village and Museum. "She loved giving tours, especially of the cheese house and school house. Even after she had to drive her little cart around, she could be found going from building to building explaining the Swiss heritage that meant so much to her."

"She was also willing to do whatever was needed, regardless of how big or small it was," continued Lehman. "She was a great lady and we'll miss her. We wouldn't be what we are today without her diligent hard work and resourcefulness."

"She's one of those people you really

miss when you think of asking them a question or checking with them on something. The thing about Ruth is that she was such a family person, with wonderful children and a dedicated husband. We all appreciate her work and example to all of us," noted Lehman.

One of Neuenschwander's most energetic projects in recent years was that of making hand-knit sweaters for the Mennonite Church's Michiana Relief sale. During the past twenty years, Neuenschwander donated more than 200 of her carefully designed sweaters.

On Sundays, Neuenschwander carried her bent for teaching to the Sunday school classroom at the First Mennonite Church where she taught for many years. She also served on a number of committees at the church and was a member of the Women

in Mission, an organization she presided over for two years.

One of her most cherished projects was that of conducting student tours to France, a project that grew out of her French teaching abilities. She was the organizer of the Wabash Cloverleaf 4-H Club and was its leader for 25 years. In addition, she was a trustee of the Adams County Historical Museum, precinct committeeperson in Wabash Township, and was on the Wabash Township Advisory Board.

Editor's note: I had Ruth for an English teacher in Geneva and always enjoyed her class. I had the privilege of visiting her on several occasions at Swiss Village and enjoyed the chats about Adams County History and reflective memories of people from our past. Personally, I deeply admired her and am grateful to have crossed paths with her. She has been a real building block of Adams County history and education. (Jim Langham)

Come to the barn for a haystack dinner



Once again our annual haystack dinner will be served from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. June 10 in the barn. The Limberlost String Band will set the atmosphere for a hee haw good time featuring a haystack meal, strawberry sturm, and a possible visit from one of the barn cats. The meal will be served on a donation basis.



We need your Swiss Heritage membership in 2007!

Swiss Heritage Society members have worked hard and volunteered thousands of hours to utilize some of the area's most historic structures in putting together a heritage village, fine nature center and woods, and museum. The society depends upon your membership to meet its operating costs, and also your participation in other ways such as volunteering, serving on standing committees, helping with the

festival, or learning to be a tour guide. Whatever your time availability or interest, we have a place for you and we will appreciate your time and ideas.

As a member, you will receive the society's newsletter, event information, and free admission to our village.

Swiss Heritage Society has appreciated your good will and financial support in

the past, and we'll surely appreciate your monetary gift and involvement now. We've come a long way, but if our goal is to preserve area heritage and pass it on to future generations, we need your continued financial support.

Don't miss getting your 2007 season pass now. A membership card is enclosed for your convenience.

April snow makes faith grow — By JIM LANGHAM

Earlier in April, a close friend was keeping track of the number of days in succession that we received snow. You can imagine what happened—day one, day two, day three, day four, day five, day six, and on it dragged.

Finally, when we thought that we finally had winter behind us, it threw a curve at us on April 14 with more snow fall than we had experienced between all of the other days combined. Officials from the National Weather Service told us that it was the most snow to fall that late in the season since April of 1982.

Because of certain circumstances in my life, I can recall all of the snow of '82, and a heavy snow near the middle of the month in particular. During that time, I was visiting with dear friends of our family, Albert and Rosemary Amstutz, who lived northeast of Berne.

In the way that only she could give wisdom from her many years of facing Indiana seasons, Rosemary said, "spring's not that far away. The grass is still green under the snow."

And so it was, as the chill of that long winter faded, spring indeed came to our Hoosier countryside as promised to Noah by God when He assured him that, "as long as the earth stands, summer and winter, seedtime and harvest will not cease."

So it is with life. There are times when we're looking for hope; we think we deserve hope, but just then, another one of life's snowstorms come our way. It would be easy to get discouraged if we didn't realize that God's hope of eternal life, abundant life, is always green beneath the storm.

I like the hope promised to us in words written to the lover in Song of Songs, chapter two, verses 11-13.

"See! The winter is past; the rains are over and gone. Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing has come, the cooing of doves is heard in our land. The fig tree forms its early fruit; the blossoming vines spread their fragrance. Arise, come, my darling; my beautiful one, come with me."



The walkway that leads to the covered bridge (see photo above) will be extended leading into the village (see photo below).



The demand exceeds the space!

More pathways to the past

Swiss Heritage is constructing an extended walkway this summer, due to the large amount of interest in purchasing commemorative paver bricks. A heritage walkway will reach from the covered bridge into the village and will give opportunity for those who wish to purchase memorial and honorary bricks for the continued walk of legacy.

“We’ve had such enthusiasm for this that we decided to create a walkway going on from the bridge into the village,” said board member Fred Lehman. “It is exciting to see how many people are interested in honoring or remembering their loved ones in this project.”

“Everyone needs to take a look at the bricks that are already here,” continued Lehman. “There are a lot of special memories out there.”

Brick Purchase Options:

Regular Size (4 X 8)

1st brick.....	\$125
2nd brick.....	\$100
3rd brick.....	\$75
ea. additional.....	\$50

Up to 3 Lines, 15 Characters (Please Print Information)

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Large Size (8 X 8)

1st brick.....	\$300
2nd brick.....	\$200
Ea. Additional.....	\$100

Up to 5 lines, 15 Characters (Please Print Information)

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

2007 Calendar

- Open every Saturday in May
- Beginning June 2, open Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- June 10 Haystack dinner in the barn from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- July 14 Concert in the barn featuring, "When Rock Met Country"
- July 27 and 28 Swiss Days
- Sept. 8 Berne Heritage Festival
- Oct. 23 Soup and Sandwich Supper at South Adams High School
- Nov. 3 Holiday Bazaar
- Dec. 24 Christmas Eve service at the Baumgartner Church, 6 and 9 p.m.

Work Day Frolic volunteers

The village was pleased to welcome volunteers who recently scraped and painted the church. You can see the wonderful results as they progressed from scraping in the top photo at right to completion of the job in the bottom. What a difference a few people can make!



Scraping the church above are (l-r) Rod Lehman, Ernie Steiner, Corey Riesen and Josh Penell



Presenting their hard work are Josh Penell, Ernie Steiner, Todd Wise and Rick Hindenlang



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...remember us in your will!*

To:

Dated Material – Do not delay!