



Swiss Heritage Society Messenger

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Create a legacy

A walk of legacy will lead the pathway to the covered bridge serving as the new gateway to Swiss Heritage Village's historic tours.

Village officials are offering the opportunity to purchase commemorative paver bricks, inscribed with tributes and memorials to loved ones

and friends. The bricks will be assembled to create the pathway for those walking through the bridge.

"Those going for the historic tours will see the names of those we honor for their achievements, memorials, and special occasions," commented Swiss Heritage Village board member Doyle Lehman.

Brick purchase options include regular size (4 x 6 inches), and large size (8 x 8 inches).



Cost for regular bricks is \$125 for the first brick, \$100 for the second brick, \$75 for the third brick and \$50 for each additional brick.

Cost for large bricks includes \$300 for the first brick, \$200 for the second brick, and \$100 for additional bricks.

Lehman noted that additional bricks can represent several additional family members. "We really encourage people to purchase bricks by the family," said Lehman.

Dedication for inclusion in this year's walkway, which officials hope to have completed by the special days in September, is August 14.

All purchases are fully tax deductible.



"Porkchop" preparing for Swiss Heritage Wiener Dog Race during Swiss Days.

Wiener dog race

A new kind of hot dog will be coming to Swiss Heritage Village during Swiss Days this year — not the kind you eat, but the kind that runs. Forty dachshunds (also referred to as "wiener dogs"), will hit the race tracks for the village's first annual "National Wiener Dog Race."

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Bridge dedication

Sunday afternoon, June 11, Rev. Jerry Flueckiger invited a crowd attending the covered bridge dedication to "cross over the bridge" to a new future at Swiss Heritage Village.

The covered bridge, constructed by contractor Amos Schwartz, along with Joe Schwartz and Jonas Graber, had originally been constructed to represent the village in parades around the area. However, Schwartz and village officials decided that the structure would make an excellent gateway for those touring the historical village.

"It (bridge) traveled all over to various parades," Amos Schwartz told those present. "It's been in Roann, Grabbill, Monroeville, Geneva, and Berne. We recycled several bridges to make this one. That's what makes it a good bridge. It could be here for a hundred years."

Schwartz noted that the arches of the bridge were restored from the Gilford



Amos Schwartz speaks at the dedication ceremony

Covered Bridge near Lawrenceburg and the floor was recycled from a covered bridge in Ohio.

Other speakers at the dedication included Berne Mayor John Minch, Don Kuhn, president of the Swiss Heritage Society, Doyle Lehman, and Jim Jones, president of the Indiana Covered Bridge Society.

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Devoted missionary engraved in village history

By JIM LANGHAM

Although Berne's Merle Inniger spent most of his adult life as a missionary in Pakistan, he and his wife, Gloria, always returned to this area when they came back to the United States.

In 1993, the dedicated couple moved back to Berne after giving 35 years of service to Pakistan. But the Innigers still had plenty of energy to invest in the local community, and they were eager to give back to a town that had provided the Christian heritage for their original call.

That opportunity to give came in 1994 when Swiss Heritage Village's Madelyn Wurster phoned the retired couple to inquire about their interest in giving tours at the village. Within days, they began a tenure of service to the village that continued for the next five years (1994-98).

This past spring, Inniger passed away from cancer at the age of 78. While reflecting on their days with Swiss Heritage Village, Gloria recently commented, "Merle was so proud of his Swiss heritage. It meant a lot to him that his grandfather came to Berne from Switzerland. He was so eager to give back to this community. When the opportunity to work at Swiss Heritage Village came along, he was more than happy to help."

As they had done in their missionary service, Merle and Gloria worked as a team on a daily basis for the village. Gloria recalled that they arrived each morning from May through October to give tours and answer questions about their Swiss heritage. They would often give tours in two segments, one led by Merle and the

other by Gloria.

In the winter, they opted to return to Pakistan as requested. Between 1993 and this past spring, they made 12 overseas trips, most in reference to their missionary work.

Although Merle and Gloria had retired from active missionary service, they always lived out the faith in God they had given their lives for. Gloria noted that Merle would often share God's forgiveness and grace appropriately when opportunities presented themselves during village tours.

"I remember one person in particular who unburdened himself on Merle about something that bothered him from his past," recalled Gloria. "Merle said, 'if God has forgiven you, we won't do any less.'"

Following his graduation from Berne French High School in 1945, Inniger enlisted in the Navy. When he returned, he worked for a brief time at Dunbar Furniture Company. However, he felt God's call on his life and in 1950, he set out for Moody Bible Institute in Chicago.

While he was studying there, he met Gloria and they were married in 1953. After graduation, they accepted a call to missionary service in Pakistan.

"He began his acquaintance with people from Muslim countries while he was at Moody," explained Gloria. "His original



desire was to go to India, but they asked him if he would be willing to go to Pakistan instead and he said that he would."

In addition to their 35 years of serving Christ in Pakistan, the Innigers also worked with the International Christian Fellowship following their merger with the Sudan Interior Mission. Merle served as a general director in that organization from 1983-89.

For many years, Merle underwent treatment for various kinds of cancer. Finally, this past spring, the illness became the vehicle for his ultimate call to be with the Lord he had served over a lifetime.

"Everyone was so good to us during Merle's illness," said Gloria. "The Lord led us to hospice and they were very kind."

"He loved this community and he loved retirement here," added Gloria. "This community has meant so much to both of us and we were glad to do all that we could to give back what we could."

Wiener dog race

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The event, which will be held on Saturday at 10 a.m., will feature "Porkchop," the dachshund dog owned by organizer Don Coon, and plenty of other "hot dogs" weathering the July heat for a crack at the finish line.

Bring your dachshunds to unleash their energy and be part of this great event.



A haystack dinner, complete with music by the Limberlost Blue Grass Band, was enjoyed by 152 individuals on Sunday, June 11th.

Artifacts cataloguing

By JIM LANGHAM

Anyone interested in specific artifacts on display at Swiss Heritage Village can read interesting details about that item, thanks to the behind-the-scenes hard work of our village artifact cataloguing crew.

Among those working diligently in a small corner close to the Swiss Heritage Museum are Judy Milligan, Ruby Bearss, Madelyn Wurster, Judy Yoder, Eleanor Nussbaum and Helen Whitenack.

Any item donated to the society is carefully recorded and catalogued with an assigned number. Information filed about the artifact include the donor's name and special stories or details about the significance of that item.

"When we get an artifact, we have the donor sign a deed of gift," explained Wurster. "Then we begin cataloguing it into the library. It is assigned an accession number and is documented according to specific instructions designated by a book of museum procedures.

"One thing that makes all of this more of a challenge is the fact that we don't have just one museum," continued Wurster. "Each building in the village is its own museum and items are documented as such."

Wurster cited the example that if someone on tour would see a certain chair and ask about it, there should be a number on the chair that indicates which file has information about it.

"They should be able to come in and see who donated the chair and they should be able to read about it," Wurster said.

Many of those working in the catalog library volunteer their time and talent one day a week year

around. They become completely familiar with the cataloguing process, which is done mainly on a computer. Museum officials noted that since 1985, literally thousands of artifacts have been donated and documented.

Donated items include everything from furniture to farm machinery, clothing, pictures, and various antique household items.

Milligan said that it's easy to get bogged down when items come in, simply because of interest in that artifact's history.

"I enjoy reminiscing and thinking about the past," noted Milligan. "I really get bogged down when yearbooks and Bibles come in."

Milligan said that her interest in history has been heightened since her daughter,



Shown above are Judy Milligan, Judy Yoder, Ruby Bearss, & Madelyn Wurster cataloguing a picture painted by the late Gerda Mazelin. In the painted picture from the right is Gladys Chrisman, Eva Lehman, and the third person is unknown. If you know who this lady is, please let us know.

Barbara Milligan, first taught history at Jay County, and has since taken a professional historian position on Cape Cod.

"I came here to help because I enjoy history and I enjoy computer work, especially as it pertains to this area," observed Yoder. "These items are all so interesting. I enjoy reading the history of them."

"My husband and I have collected antiques for over 20 years and we get to where we feel so connected to so many things," said Wurster. "People would be surprised if they would come out here and see how connected we all are to many of these items.

"We're so grateful for all of the items that people donate to the museum. I can't think of a better place to take it. It's a great place to invest in the heritage and future of this community," added Wurster.

Memories of my mother

By JIM LANGHAM

The passing of my godly mother, Elnora Langham, on April 27, reminded me once again of what a special gift it is to have a faith passed down through generations of prayer and service.

My mother and her mother (Magdalena Hirschy Cook) used to tell me how my great-grandmother, Lena Hirschy, prayed for generations yet to come during the final year of a terminal illness.

At age 88, they said, she laid in bed and prayed hour after hour for generations after her, in the native German tongue, of course. In fact, legend has it that she would sit on the front porch of her log house in

Wabash Township and read the German Bible at 11 p.m. by the fire of forests being cleared by Swiss ancestors that had come into the area.

Many who are reading this have the same heritage. Those who came over from Switzerland, we are told, were mindful of the fact that God answers prayer long after they are uttered by our lips.

This past Memorial Day, as I decorated the graves of loved ones in the MRE Cemetery and other surrounding graveyards, I couldn't help but wonder how many answers to their prayers we're realizing today in our lives, and in the lives of our

children. Even though they have passed on, their prayers are still very much alive and with us.

As I sat by the bedside of my mother, I read promises to her from the Bible that I had heard her recite in sunshine and rain throughout her life. I thought of her Christian heritage, and that of my dad, Harold Langham (Breezy).

Something I was taught early was the value of Deuteronomy 7:9, "Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; He is the faithful God, keeping His covenant of love to 1,000 generations of those who love and keep His commands."

Bridge dedication — continued from page 1



The ribbon is cut by Gretchen Lehman.

Rev. Mark Berg, Trinity United Methodist Church gave the invocation and Rev. Kris McPherson, First Missionary Church, gave the dedication prayer.

The ceremony closed with a ribbon cutting featuring the Swiss Heritage Board members and the singing of the hymn, "For the Beauty of the Earth."

"Amos Schwartz is known far and wide for his talents in covered bridge restoration," said Minch. "His expertise has brought us to this occasion today. This structure that Amos has produced adds another dimension to the village.

"With all that's been done at the village, Swiss Heritage Village has made a positive statement about where it stands in its pride of Berne's Swiss heritage," added Minch.

Garlic mustard - Enemy of the woods

One of the truly "behind the scene" jobs of Swiss Heritage volunteers is that of trying to keep up with the invasion of garlic mustard along the trails of our forest area.

Many of our volunteers who have rolled up their sleeves to try to dispense of this plant would agree that it is probably more of a menace than the original enemy invasions during the settling of our Midwest woodlands.

For the past several years, the Boy Scouts have devoted a Saturday in May to help us pull these weeds by the trailer load — a big help in controlling this weed, but it is questionable if we are winning the battle.



As our workers have learned, garlic mustard has no natural enemies once it is established, and it flourishes in the forest understory or along forest edges. Each plant can produce up to 2,000 seeds per year that remain "alive" in the soil up to five years. One of the concerns to our Swiss Heritage family is the fact that it tends to squeeze out other more beneficial plants or trees that we welcome to our wooded area.

Anyone wanting some good exercise through non-glamorous community service is always welcome to join our volunteers in the fight against this invasion. Pulling these plants out can work muscles very few machines can top in any health spa.

Prrr-fect mascot



What is family life without pets, especially when it comes to barns and country habitats?

As in any family setting, Swiss Heritage Village family volunteers regularly check in on our growing crop of barn cats. Most, which are still waiting to be named, have already established their habitat of preference in our barn.

And while we may not know all of their names, they have learned to recognize village farmer Berdell Lehman, and other volunteers, especially when they make their grand entrance into the barn with goodies in their hands.

So far, the cats have been quite visitor-friendly. If they're not in the mood for social activity, they find a corner and hide while the tours pass by. But they can usually be heard or seen, sometimes peering from between rafters, and often begging for food from those invading their otherwise quiet barn life.

School bell rings for students

When the school bell rings at Swiss Heritage Village, things happen, especially when it involves an energetic group of children from an area school.

Such was the case earlier this spring when an active group of elementary students from Southern Wells Schools visited the village.

In 20-minute increments, students heard pioneer tales from Iona Amspaugh (school), Phil Montgomery and Lanetta Christener (Luginbill house), and Bonnie Flueckiger (cabin in the woods).

When they weren't listening to stories of earlier times, the children invested their energy playing such games as jump the Wabash River, make a rope relay, back to back relay, and stilts.

When it was time to shift sites, the school bell would ring and groups would rotate to the other areas.

"It's amazing how much the kids get out of this, even when they might seem to be distracted by something else," said Gretchen Lehman, Swiss Heritage Village executive director.

"The kids aren't the only ones who have fun on these days. The volunteers seem to enjoy it, too," added Lehman.

Students responded whole-heartedly when Bonnie Flueckiger told them about the chinking in earlier log cabins in the area. When she told them how chinking was made with a manure base and other items, several students replied, "oooo."

But when she said that pioneers often used to mix the substance together with their feet, one girl exclaimed, "Oh no, I would rather do it with my hands. I can't imagine that stuff between my feet!"

At the Luginbill House, Lanetta Christener got the students involved in several old-fashioned home projects



Iona Amspaugh teaches in the schoolhouse.

such as cleaning with old soap with a wash board and pans. Christener gave the students plenty of opportunities to express their energy with various hands on teaching techniques.

At the school, students were learning some of the earlier punishments such as putting their nose in a circle on the blackboard, wearing a dunce cap, or sitting in a corner.

"You've been one minute late for the past five days in a row," she lamented to one spellbound student. "That means you're going to have to stay a half hour after school."

"What do I tell my dad?" replied the student.

"The truth," said Amspaugh sternly.

"We have lots of school children go through here in a year's time," said Lehman. "It's a great hands on experience for them, a great chance for them to learn history in a setting that allows them to literally step back in time."

Sherry Studebaker, who was present the day of the tour, was doing what she

enjoys the most, weaving carpets on a huge barn loom.

"I love talking to the kids. They're so much fun and they're very interested," said Studebaker. "Kids still get really fascinated by such things if we're willing to take the time to show them. They have all kinds of good questions."

Upcoming Events

July ?? — Watch for an old-fashioned hymn sing, which will be held at the village Baumgartner Church. (date to be announced)

July 28 and 29 — Swiss Days in the village

Sept. 8 and 9 — Swiss Heritage Festival

Sept. 26 — Thresher's Dinner

Oct. 24 — Soup and Sandwich Supper

Nov. 4 — Holiday Bazaar

Dec. 24 — Christmas Eve Service

Sawmill update

Things are grooving for movement of the Ervin Werling Sawmill to its new home at Swiss Heritage Village.

Swiss Heritage Society Board member Fred Lehman had said earlier that it is the hope of village officials to have the sawmill in operation for the Heritage Festival.

Lehman praised the likes of George Steiner, Ted Moser and Don Kuhn for the work they've put into pushing the project toward completion. The sawmill currently sits on two wagons in our barn.

"Swiss Heritage Village is about people. It's unbelievable how many volunteers are working hard behind the scenes to see that things get done around here," said Lehman.

"It's like we're one big family always working on family projects," added Lehman. "That's what families do, they

work together. The willingness of people to serve the village reminds us of the family heritage brought to this area by our ancestors."

The sawmill has been owned by Ervin Werling, who lives near Tocsin. The structure was originally owned by Werling's father.

"That sawmill was my dad's life," Werling said. "Even when he was older, he would still sit down there and watch it in operation. It was our family life."



Don Kuhn and George Steiner have the sawmill loaded onto a wagon.

By the time you read this, trees will have been cut from the southeast corner of the woods to make room for the sawmill. As money continues to come in, we will make plans to also dismantle the building that housed the sawmill and move it. An additional \$7,500 is needed to complete that project.



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