

# Swiss Heritage Society Messenger

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## Connecting With Roots

### Descendant of Peter Luginbill passes through Berne

By JIM LANGHAM

When Dennis Luginbill of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, passed through Berne following a visit to Georgia relatives this past summer, he was shocked to discover Swiss Heritage Village, complete with the Peter Luginbill house.

Dennis had visited Curtis Luginbill and his daughter, Marilyn (Luginbill) Sanders, who live south of Macon, Georgia. Curtis Luginbill is the great-grandson of Peter Luginbill.

When Dennis returned to Wisconsin, he called Sanders and told her that she needed to take her dad to Berne to see the Luginbill heritage memorabilia. So early in October, she and her father and his wife (Loye) made the trip to Berne.

"He (Dennis) told us about the Luginbill house. He told me

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Curtis Luginbill (great-grandson of Peter Luginbill), daughter Marilyn Luginbill Sanders (left), and wife Loye Luginbill (right) from Macon, Georgia.

### Georgia Holmes returns to visit Swiss Heritage Village

By JIM LANGHAM

When Georgia Holmes recently accompanied her mother to Swiss Heritage Village, she was pleasantly surprised at how attached she was to her childhood past in the Berne area.

Her mother, the former Jane Winteregg, had moved into a smaller home in the Auburn area and had decided to donate some family heirlooms to the Swiss Heritage Museum. Winteregg had married George Charleston of Geneva.

Holmes, who lives in Rome City, was surprised with how many individuals her mother recognized when they visited the museum. Jane was the daughter of Albert and Esther (Bixler) Winteregg who had lived on Main Street in Berne across from the funeral home.

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Jane Winteregg Charleston Baker (center), daughter Georgia Holmes (right) from Rome City and Sue Dziarama (left) from New Jersey spent time at the Village reminiscing about their ancestors.

## Match it and burn it

Doyle Lehman, chairman of the finance committee, makes this challenge — "The Board of Directors of the Swiss Heritage Society would like to challenge you, Swiss Heritage members and community friends, to help us liquidate the remaining mortgage of \$33,500 on the museum building by December 31. We will match dollar for dollar all donations received for this purpose. So, if \$16,700 is contributed by you, our friends and members, the Board will match that amount and we will burn the mortgage."

Lehman noted the board has worked hard for seven years to bring the mortgage down to its current level from the original \$165,000 and we would really like to get this debt behind us. So we are inviting the community to our MATCH IT AND BURN IT (the mortgage that is) campaign. We are planning a celebration party next spring at our annual Haystack Dinner. Your contribution will really be appreciated.



# The 2007 Heritage Festival Experience



## Georgia Holmes — continued from page 1

“She had come to Berne for her 75th class reunion and we decided to stop by the village,” said Holmes. “She was a relative to former Dr. Bixler. We went through a lot of the Bixler things and mom was able to talk about many of the things connected to her family heritage.

“It was amazing how many names she could recall. She knew so many of these people. She had graduated from Berne High School in the class of 1935. She talked about all of these basketball players (the Bob Dro Berne Bears),” added Holmes.

Some of Holmes’ fondest memories center around visits to her grandparents’ house.

“I always went to grandma’s house. She used to play the organ at the Mennonite Church,” Holmes said. “When we got back here, it brought back a lot of memories. I remember picking raspberries there. It seems like there was a barn behind their



*This antique lamp (1880) is one of the many artifacts donated by the Winteregg Family.*

place.”

The thing that Holmes enjoyed the most about her recent trip to the museum were the many tidbits her mother recalled when she saw many of the items on display.

“She told us things we had never heard before,” Holmes explained. “It’s a time I will always cherish.”

## South Adams students “whitewash” cheese house

Well, it wasn't quite the same as Tom Sawyer's famous whitewashing of the fence tale, but students at South Adams High who didn't have to take ISTEP exams recently volunteered to help do work at Swiss Heritage Village.

Eighteen students who had the option to volunteer for community service during the two days of testing responded by painting buildings at Swiss Heritage Village. Students completed the final coat on the cheese house and scraped and primed the Lunginbill House.

Those who were involved included juniors Kyla Potts, Sarah Richert, Mark Farris, Eric Feeney, Travis Lavy, Tobi Moser, Ashton Morgan, Heather Huereca, Daisy Herrera, Whitney Ellinger, Zach Wurster, Justin Williams, Jacie Yoder, and Jesus Tenorio. Also, seniors Andra Moser, Ian Bauman, Ben Dobler and Kristi Lehman assisted.

We thank all of you from the bottom of our hearts.



## Fire-proof cabinet granted

Thanks to the generosity of the Adams County Community Foundation, the village will be able to purchase a four drawer file cabinet for the artifacts record keeping department. The money is being made available through a grant funded by the Foundation. The fire proof cabinet will protect thousand of archival catalog records.

This will ensure the safe keeping of good records," said Ruby Bearss, chairperson. "We have needed it for quite some time."

We offer a big "thank you" to the board and grant committee of the Foundation for recognizing the need and for providing the generous funding.

## What a deal!



Don Kuhn, president of Swiss Heritage Society, makes this generous offer, "Any Match It and Burn It" contribution of \$1,000 will entitle the donor to three large 8 x 8 engraved legacy bricks that will be added to the Heritage walkway leading to the covered bridge. A \$300 contribution will entitle you to one free legacy brick."

Be sure to take advantage of this offer and complete your desired engraving information on the enclosed card.

## Descendant of Peter Luginbill passes through Berne — continued from page 1

that I needed to take dad to Berne. When Sanders and Luginbill visited the house of his ancestors, Loye played the old organ," noted Sanders.

"I was amazed at the way they had to live back then," continued Sanders. "When dad saw how I was amazed by the old way of living, he told me that he had lived that way, too."

Sanders said that Peter Luginbill's son, Christian, had married Anna Barbara (Lehman) and moved to a Mennonite settlement in Hickory County, Missouri. They eventually moved to a Mennonite settlement in Moundridge, Kansas, where

Curtis's father, Benjamin Franklin Luginbill, was born. Curtis was born there on Dec. 30, 1921.

"I worked for the federal government and had been working in Texas when I took a job in Georgia," Sanders said. "It was getting harder for dad the past few years so he and his wife consented to move here (Eastman, Georgia)."

Sanders' mother (Curtis's first wife) had been Ruth (Showalter) but she passed away and he married Loye.

"Dad and Mom had spent some time together in school. They moved to

Witchita. My sister (Mona) and I went to school there. Mona died with cancer three years ago," continued Sanders.

"My cousin plans to come back and spend some more time. It was all so interesting. There's all of that rich history that you can touch. To touch the same Bible that they touched, there's no way to describe how it feels," noted Sanders.

"It's like walking into their world. You stand there and you say, 'it's right here. I'm connected to them.' There's no way to describe what it does for you," added Sanders.

# Wooly worms and winter

By JIM LANGHAM

Have you noticed how much differently they are making wooly worms these days?

I'm sure that many of us were raised on the old adage that wooly worms were fair predictors of winter. At our house, it was a family tradition to check out the little crawling creature in late autumn to see what its coat had to say.

You know how it goes. A light colored coat meant that we didn't have to cut as much wood and a heavy coat meant that an old fashioned winter was on the way. If the coat was varied, that part of the coat that was thick was going to be the roughest part of winter.

Here's the problem that I've discovered with modern wooly worms. They're not all alike. The other day I checked one that had a light coat. Fifteen feet away, there was one that had a coat as thick as a heavy winter parka. Then, to confuse things, I found one that was mixed heavy and light.

There was only one conclusion to the matter, as far as I was concerned. Wooly worms have caught on to the high tech world and so they are predicting for different parts of the world. So the new trick is to figure out which region each different worm is representing!

Of much more solid stock is the truth proclaimed in Ecclesiastes 3:1 concerning the seasons. "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven."

Seasons may vary in consistency, but one thing is certain, they're going to happen. God told Noah following the flood that summer and winter and seedtime and harvest would not cease as long as the earth stands.

And so it is with the seasons of life. Many of us who are really closer to winter than we would like to think would sooner

get stuck on autumn. That makes it seem, at least, like we've got a little life left in us.

Of course, the thing we admire about autumn is the beautiful colors — a characteristic that is pretty close to the autumn of life. Hopefully, that period becomes the time where we mix the colors of all that we've learned over a lifetime and turn that blend into a little wisdom.

Even when the chill seems to stiffen the body a bit and bring a few aches and pains, remember the colors of wisdom and don't be afraid to share it with the springtime folks. We may not be like the wooly worms, but we've got a little spice to add yet.



## Ramblings from Gretchen

By GRETCHEN LEHMAN, Executive Director

WOW! Another season has gone by and we are closed as of November 1st. But the memories are vivid of the visitors who have re-discovered their roots and brought their children and grandchildren to visit. It is a peaceful place with 26 acres of nature all around and a reminder of God's handiwork and creation.

This is a time for reflecting on the past season's rewards and challenges.

The group of volunteers who assisted in the gift shop, catalogue artifacts, museum exhibits and those who keep the buildings and grounds maintained are priceless. There are countless others of you who assisted during Swiss Days, Heritage Festival, Soup & Sandwich Supper and the Holiday Bazaar. To you we say "thanks."

The walk in guests and bus tours who visit the Village enjoy the Swiss hospitality of our trained docents and leave with a refreshed excitement about history and our ancestors of the past. However, how do you encourage, and promote a greater awareness of our Swiss Heritage and its role in community development? Who is responsible to tell "our story" to our children and grandchildren? We need to remember the ancient proverb, "To forget one's ancestors and their teachings is to be a brook without a source, a tree without a root."

The fall and winter months are a time to reflect on some of the changes for the upcoming year and there are thoughts of restructuring the programming of the Heritage Festival and of planning more concerts in the barn. If we would have a crystal ball and could predict the weather conditions, it would be less stressful.

This season Jane Velasco was hired to be my executive assistant as the work load has increased and become more demanding. She has been much appreciated and lent her organizational and people skills to the job.

Swiss Heritage is always in need of volunteers and if you are interested in contributing your skills and time, please call us. The world is hugged by the faithful arms of volunteers.

May God bless you and your family!



Gretchen's Pets

## Swiss Heritage will miss Christeners' service

By JIM LANGHAM

Swiss Heritage Village recently lost hours of dedicated service and input when Berne residents Clair and Lanetta Christener decided to retire from their many years of involvement.

"We decided that it was time to hand over the reigns to somebody else," said Clair Christener, who along with his wife, had put over 17 years of service to the village. "We're '80-plus' and it's getting a little harder. It's time for some younger, fresh blood to come in and help."

"There's no way to describe how much we all appreciate the dedicated service of Clair and Lanetta," said Swiss Heritage Village executive director Gretchen Lehman. "We miss seeing them out there. They were always around somewhere helping out. They put hundreds and hundreds of hours of dedicated service to the village."

Lanetta said that she enjoyed giving tours and listening to the comments of people that visited the village. She noted that her dedicated service was given in appreciation for her grandfather, John X. Moser, who migrated to the local area from Switzerland.

"There were so many John Mosers that he decided to put an 'X' in the middle of his name," quipped Lanetta. "I loved telling people about our Swiss ancestry. I enjoyed hearing their stories. Many times

they added things I had never heard before. We made a lot of friends working out there."

Clair's grandparents, Chris and Anna Marie Christener, also arrived in the local area from a Swiss immigration.

Clair's initial connection with the village occurred when he consented to serve on the board. After three years, he decided that he wanted to step back to more "hands on" type of work.

"I told them that three years on the board was long enough. I volunteered to take care of the mowing. She (Lanetta) worked in the garden and flowers and gave tours. We always tried to help with whatever came along. We enjoyed it," Clair said.

Following graduation from Berne High School in 1948, Lanetta worked at the Palmer House and the City Lunch. She also worked at the Service Store. She eventually attended beauty college in Fort Wayne where learned a trade that she still practices in her home.

Clair, a 1945 graduate of Monroe High School, has spent 60 years working for



Clair and Lanetta Christener,  
Volunteers Extraordinaire!

Moser Motor Sales.

"I'm still working there. I go to auctions and pick up cars and do a little maintenance work for them," noted Clair.

It was the location of his work at Moser's that led him to Lanetta.

"There was this cute little waitress that

worked at City Lunch that caught my attention," said Clair in the comfort of their living room. "In fact, she's sitting right in this room. We've been married for 56 years."

Lanetta loves to point out family pictures involving son, Kendric, and his wife, Carolyn, and grandchildren Ashley, Andrea, and Katie, and son, Sheldon, and his wife, Judy, and children Jeff, Jessica, and Allison.

When the Christeners haven't been involved in community and family commitments, they have served as custodians at the Cross Community Church.

"We really enjoyed our time at Swiss Heritage Village," observed Clair. "We miss everyone. We will always be ambassadors for the village. It's a wonderful place."



## Neuenschwander soars to "Eagle Award" at village

South Adams senior Jim Neuenschwander spent portions of this summer identifying 15 different trees and making signage for them in the village's woods. Neuenschwander completed the project in order to meet requirements for his Eagle Scout badge.

In addition, Berne Scout Troop Number 67, under the direction of scout leader Bill Munger, assisted in cleaning out the pond and in removing trash from the woods.

When asked what he (Neuenschwander) learned from the project, he replied, "patience." He has been a member of the local scouting program for the past seven years.

Neuenschwander is the son of Chuck and the late Kay Neuenschwander. His Eagle Scout award ceremony will be held at a future date, yet to be determined. Following graduation, he plans to enlist in the military.

### Sights, Sounds & Smells of our Heritage Festival

## Wish List

- 34 ft. Oak Log  
(Need to repair Log Cabin)
- Lanterns
- Dunbar Furniture pieces  
(Need for exhibit and preservation)
- Old wood chairs



Working the sawmill



The beginning of molasses cookies

## Upcoming...

- Christmas Eve service at the Baumgartner Church at 6 and 9 p.m. at Swiss Heritage Village
- Annual Swiss Heritage Meeting on January 15 at 7 p.m. at Swiss Village



Reliving the battles of the Civil War



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*Keep your heritage alive through seeds of estate planning...  
 ...remember us in your will!*

To:

Dated Material – Do not delay!