



# Swiss Heritage Society Messenger

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Berne, Indiana 46711

## Lehman spent hundreds of hours writing about Berne

By JIM LANGHAM

At age 94, Naomi Lehman spends most of her time these days doing the opposite of what she did most of her life. She loves to “read” through a program from the state of Indiana for the visually impaired. In fact, she has read (through hearing) over 700 books in the past 10 years.



While Lehman, the wife of the late Les Lehman, former president of the First Bank of Berne, has always been an avid reader, much of her life was dedicated to writing pageants, books, and other publications dedicated to the Berne community and her beloved First Mennonite Church.

It all started in 1950 when a committee met to discuss observance of the high school’s alumni celebration of 50 years of Berne High School education. When the idea of a pageant was suggested, Lehman noted that a committee couldn’t write a pageant.

“I said that it takes one person to write a pageant and I would be willing to put something on paper for the next meeting,” observed Lehman. “It turned out to be such a success that we not only gave it for the alumni; the next night we gave it to the whole town in the auditorium.”

When planning began to observe the Berne Centennial in 1952, organizers immediately turned to Lehman for another pageant. After several months, Lehman came up with a work that was given several times during the centennial celebration.

In all, Lehman wrote seven pageants, most of them to be presented at the First Missionary Church. Perhaps one of the

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## Stewarts show Southern Hospitality

The Village is blessed with many volunteers. Pictured are Tom and Loni Stewart originally from Atlanta, Georgia and now residing in Berne. One day after their retirement and 37 years in Atlanta they were visiting relatives in Bluffton and discovered “Berne.” They liked it so well they decided to move here. They purchased a house near Brad & Toni Wurster, Bob & Madelyn’s son and daughter-in-law. Now you know the rest of the story.

We appreciate their southern hospitality and willingness to serve.



## Visitors to the Village

We were delighted to have Dr. Myron S. and Esther K. Augsburg visit Swiss Heritage Village and Museum this past September.

Myron is a prominent leader in the global Anabaptist movement and has served as a pastor, evangelist, university president and is an author of more than twenty books.

Esther, the daughter of missionaries to India, is internationally known and has received many honors through art expression.

Accompanying Dr. & Mrs. Augsburg is Iona Amspaugh, docent.

Swiss Heritage Village personnel are grateful for the valuable information they shared with us including books donated to the Village.

## Log Cabin Repairs

Two logs of the log cabin that supported the porch and handicap ramp began rotting three years ago. Fortunately we were notified of logs available from an old house being torn down on Max Beer's farm.

We are grateful to Amos B. Schwartz and his volunteer "work crew" for replacing the logs and building a new deck and ramp.



## Progress on Saw Mill

The roof over the saw mill was completed this fall. The oak shingles were made from a log donated by Dr. Richard Yoder and cut by George Steiner. We are very grateful for the additional volunteers who helped with the saw mill project: Ernie Steiner, Earl Yoder, Don Kuhn, Jim Steiner, Rick Sprunger, Steve Bauman, Earl H. Sprunger, Fred Lehman, Rick Hindenlang, Gail Kuhn, Jay Sprunger and Terry Guerin.

## Lehman spent hundreds of hours writing about Berne — continued from page 1

most meaningful was one entitled, "They Shall Shine as the Stars," a work honoring all of those who left the church to serve as missionaries or pastors.

"Herman Cook made a big star and placed it in the sanctuary. Every time someone left to serve the Lord, a new light was placed on the star. Eventually the whole star was full of lights," said Lehman.

Lehman's biggest project of all was a full-fledged book entitled, "The Pilgrimage of a Congregation," a historical work documenting the history and growth of the First Mennonite Church.

In addition, Lehman also wrote the

script for a church radio program that aired on WOWO in Fort Wayne for 25 years. Also, she published the church newsletter, "Update," which was made available twice a month for 18 years.

"Besides all of that, I taught Sunday School for 40 years," noted Lehman.

"Not so long ago, my children all talked of what all they did when they were younger. I said to them, 'when did you do all of that?' They said, 'Mom, you were always writing. We did that while you were writing.'"

"My eyes aren't well anymore. I spend most of my time reading and listening about politics," said Lehman. "I read with

my ears with tapes that come from the Indiana Library for the Blind.

"My faith in God keeps me going. I know that when I am no longer here, God has a better place for me," continued Lehman. "I'm proud of my family and all the things that they do. We all worked hard. My father died young and my mother always worked hard; they didn't have social security for children back then. We've all worked hard all of our lives."

Les and Naomi were two of the original supporters of Swiss Heritage Village and Naomi continues her support today.

## Former Berne teachers travel worldwide to establish libraries

By JIM LANGHAM

Former Berne schoolteachers Dr. Eva Kiewitt and Lois Lehman have spent much of their lives establishing libraries, especially for Christian-oriented schools. The educators' most prestigious project was the establishment of the library at Regent University which was founded and led by well-known television evangelist Pat Robertson.

Once they "retired," they became members of the Christian Library Association and traveled worldwide establishing libraries at mission schools in various countries.

Four years ago, they "retired again" and moved back to Swiss Village where they are still very active in home and community involvements.

Lehman, the daughter of Werner and Florence Lehman of Berne, met Kiewitt during her first stint of teaching at Berne High School in the early 1950's.

"I met her staring across the study hall at her," quipped Lehman. "We became close friends when we were involved in close activities together."

Kiewitt was originally raised in the Seymour area. Lehman had been a 1942 graduate of Berne High School.

While teaching at Berne, the close

friends decided they would like to move to California and teach there.

"Eva wanted to see the world when she was younger. I wanted to go to California," observed Lehman. "Mr. Webb (school superintendent at the time) said that if we got a job in California, he would let us go.

"As it turned out, we got a job in Paradise, California," continued Lehman. "Mr. Webb used to say that the girls went to Paradise."

Following their time in California, Lehman accepted the opportunity to teach at a mission in Sierra Leone, Africa. Kiewitt taught in East Gary and then traveled to a school in Ulm, Germany where she was in charge of the library.

When the women returned to America, Lehman came back to Berne High School while Kiewitt eventually landed a position in the library at the University of Indiana in Bloomington.

Lehman eventually moved to Bloomington to join Kiewitt at IU. It was there that Lehman, through a mutual friend, was invited to travel to Virginia Beach and establish the Regent Library. Shortly after, Kiewitt was also employed to assist with that project.

These days, the lifelong friends love to



reflect on their enjoyment of library work.

"We enjoyed it so much because we enjoy all subjects," noted Kiewitt. "We enjoyed establishing libraries where students could learn. That library at Virginia Beach was quite a project."

"It was a wonderful way of keeping in contact with people," added Lehman. "We were with people from all over the school instead of just one class. It was a wonderful way of expanding our own knowledge and friendships."

In their retirement years, Eva and Lois have been willing to use their knowledge and experience in helping the Swiss Heritage Society with cataloguing and editing in the artifacts department.

## Textile Artifacts donated to Swiss Heritage

Mrs. Elizabeth Sprunger Gurley from Ann Arbor, Michigan, and relatives came to Swiss Heritage Village to make a donation of treasured items that were passed down from her parents, Mr. & Mrs. Robert (Rhoda Liechty) Sprunger. Other textiles donated were: black prayer bonnet, aprons, bloomers, petticoat, blouses, skirts, woolen shaw, quilts and pictures.

Pictured is Elizabeth Gurley with a child's white woolen coat made by Mrs. Rhoda Sprunger (*inset photo*) in 1912 and worn by all seven children including Elizabeth.



# Blackford County lady memorializes family in Swiss Heritage Bricks

By JIM LANGHAM

Every time that Bonnie Haney drives into Berne, her heart is tendered by the Swiss atmosphere and memories of her family's Swiss heritage. Recently, she purchased five memorial bricks in honor of family members with Swiss ancestry.

Haney, a resident of Blackford County, traces her Adams County roots to shortly after the Civil War when Stephen Hoffman, a widower, moved here with his children from Pennsylvania. Originally, Haney said, the Hoffmans had moved to Pennsylvania from Switzerland in the 1740's.

Over the next century, Hoffman's great grandfather and grandmother, Paul and Eliza (Wolfe) Hoffman, grandparents, Eli and Emma Hoffman and Albert and Augusta Walter, and parents, Kenneth and Mary Hoffman, raised their families on Adams County soil.

Eventually, her grandparents moved to Blackford County when her father was a boy.

"That's why I'm in Blackford County now," said Haney. "I've lived here most of my life. But I love coming to Adams County and Berne. I feel real good about being in that area. I always knew that my father and his family had lived in that area."

Haney said that she was drawn to Berne through the research of several family members. She enjoys doing her own research in the Heritage Room of the Berne Public Library. It was during one of her trips to the area that she learned of the Swiss Heritage Village and Museum.

"I saw the museum advertised and so I decided to visit it. That's when I saw a pamphlet advertising the purchase of bricks in memory of relatives," noted Haney.

"I decided that I wanted to dedicate bricks to my family members. I have met so many wonderful people in visiting the Berne area. I am thrilled to have my family memorialized with them. I look forward to continuing to visit the Berne area," added Haney.



The five memorial bricks purchased by Bonnie Haney in memory of her ancestors.

## Remember, Recognize, Honor

*An occasion*

*An achievement*

*A loved one or ones...*

*With a commemorative paver brick(s) on the walkway to the historical covered bridge that leads to our*

*Swiss Heritage Village.*

**\*All proceeds will go toward the restoration and operation of the village\***

### 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 - - - - -



## Soup & Sandwich Supper

The annual Soup & Sandwich Supper was held on October 28, at the South Adams High School. Many people of the community came to support the Society. Thanks goes to the Palmer House for donating the vegetable soup, to women of the community for baking and donating pies, and to the South Adams cooks, Carol Hoffman and Sandy Mertz for their help. Also, we want to give a note of thanks to the other volunteers who helped serve. Thank you all!

## So blue and green match after all

Some of the fondest memories from childhood are centered around my father after he purchased an Argus C-3 35-millimeter camera. To make things even better, I was given a Brownie Starflash camera for my birthday that year; in my estimation, we made the perfect team of capturing the blended colors of nature on film.

Dad always liked matching colors in various natural settings. We took a day trip to Brown County to capture the circus-like beauty of nature's quilt spread over the southern Indiana hillsides. That was the year that we learned to capture winter scenes, Christmas settings, and the many colors of spring flowers as they emerged once again on the earth.

Perhaps some of the most profound life lessons came the next summer when our family vacationed at one of my parents' favorite spots, Rocky Mountain National Park near Denver.

At that time, there was a 'myth' that green and blue weren't matching colors in clothing or design. But my dad hotly disputed that.

"Look," he would say, as we lined up a photo of a beautiful spruce tree against

the backdrop of a deep blue western sky.

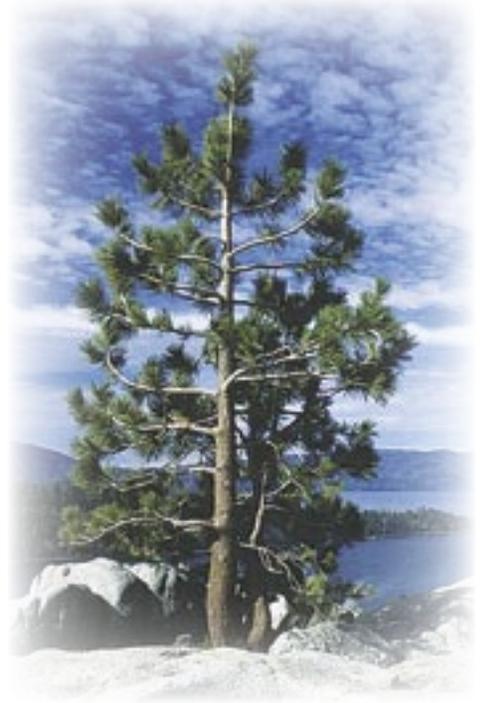
"Look at that green against the deep blue sky. Have you ever seen anything more beautiful? Don't tell me that blue and green don't go together. If they go together in God's eyes, they certainly go together in my eyes," he said.

During that time, I began to realize that color was a real gift that was very personalized. Whether it was different colored leaves, flowers, natural scenes, or people, matching color was one of God's favorite activities. He did it in gardens, He did it at fall, and He loved creating different colored people so that the human race would be a beautiful blend of his total creation.

Recently, I read a devotional based on I Peter 4:10, "As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

The author emphasized what I had read several places before; the word, 'manifold' in this text, actually means, 'many colored.' God's grace is many colored, geared to be adapted to the need of the hour.

If life is 'blue,' His grace is blue; if it is,



'green,' His grace is green. In other words if we need grace for illness, it is colored just for that; if the need is wisdom for a needed confrontation, His grace will be colored for that moment.

It is the season of autumn drives and taking pictures of beautiful trees. Each time we see a colored tree these days, it wouldn't be a bad idea to remember His 'many-colored grace.'



## Winter is Coming...

October 31 marks the end of our tour season, but it is a busy time of cleaning up the garden, removing the summer flowers, fall plowing the truck patch, and winterizing the buildings.

Please remember us in your year-end giving. Our winter utility bills amount to several thousands of dollars and your generosity is our only support thru the winter. We are very appreciative and grateful to all our members and friends for remembering us financially.

If you haven't already done so, you might want to purchase a legacy brick to be placed in our walkway.

*A very special Thank You  
to all the volunteers who helped  
clean up the Village this past fall.  
Your help is very much appreciated!*



# Calendar

**Wed., Dec. 24** — Two Candle Lite Christmas Eve Services will be held at 6 & 9 p.m. at the Baumgartner Church at Swiss Heritage Village. Dr. David Biberstein will be the featured speaker.

**Tues., January 13** — 7 p.m. — Annual Meeting of Swiss Heritage members and friends will be held at the Swiss Village Auditorium.

# Wants & Needs

- Large electric roasters
- Folding tables and chairs
- Card tables
- File Cabinet
- Oil Lanterns
- New Computers
- Berne Community grocery receipts
- Volunteers

# Heritage Festival Fun in Photos



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**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

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

To:

Dated Material – Do not delay!