



Swiss Heritage Society Messenger

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Les and Naomi Lehman legacy lives on at Swiss Heritage Village

by JIM LANGHAM

A bequest left to Swiss Heritage Village from the estate of Les and Naomi Lehman will enable needed improvements to be made to the museum, says executive director Gretchen Lehman.

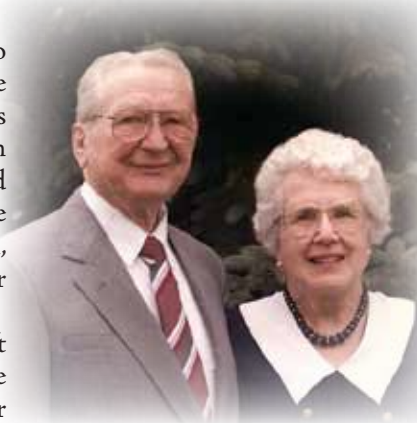
"A bequest was left to Swiss Heritage Village from their estate. We've decided that we are going to use it on much-needed improvements," said Lehman.

"Naomi had a real love for preservation of the community," continued Lehman. "She was involved in so many things in the village and the community."

Ironically, Lehman and her husband, Les, a prominent Berne businessman and civic leader, were two of the original supporters at the time of the founding of the village.

Following his passing, Naomi continued her enthusiastic support of Swiss Heritage Village.

Much of Lehman's life had been



dedicated to writing pageants, books, and other publications dedicated to the community and her beloved First Mennonite Church.

In 1950, she volunteered to write a pageant to celebrate the 50th year of the Berne High School Alumni Association. It proved

to be so popular that an extra night was needed for a second showing at the auditorium.

Her biggest project was a full-fledged book about the history of the Mennonite Church entitled, "The Pilgrimage of a Congregation." For 25 years, she wrote the script for a church radio broadcast that aired on WOWO radio.

"We appreciate Les and Naomi and all that they did for the village and our community," noted Lehman. "We feel very honored to receive this bequest. We are very happy to carry on the work of Swiss Heritage Village in her honor and that of her husband."



Dr. Franz artifacts make way to village museum

By JIM LANGHAM

Artifacts that once belonged to Berne physician, Dr. Ernest Franz, have recently been contributed to the Swiss Heritage Museum by relatives of former pharmacist, Christian Stengal.

According to family members, who wish to remain anonymous, the Franz items, consisting of two medical bags, were passed on to Stengal, former owner of the Stengal and Craig Drug Store in downtown Berne. The business was destroyed by fire in the famed Champion Block Fire.

Other items contributed by the Stengal ancestors include an antique fan, porcelain doll, candle maker, and malt/shake

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Sawmill and original engine back together again

By JIM LANGHAM

Thanks to a conversation between Decatur's Don Schnitz and Berdell Lehman at a local furniture store, the sawmill at Swiss Heritage Village has its engine back again.

Schnitz had possession of the engine at the time, but had planned to fix it up and take it to the gas engine show in Portland. However, when he heard that the museum was looking for the original engine, he decided to give it to Swiss Heritage.

"The engine had been owned by Bing Gallogly. He always wanted to have that engine. Because of the size, he thought that it was neat," said Schnitz. "When he died, I contacted his children to see if I could purchase it."

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Berne Heritage Festival A Success!

Swiss Heritage is pleased to report that this year's Berne Heritage Festival was one of the most successful festivals to date. Considering the current economic climate, festival planners were cautiously optimistic about this year's event. Festival numbers for attendance and revenue exceeded expectations. The festival committee thanks all who were able to be generous with their time and resources.

A record number of people attended the festival. Friday's Education Day hosted over 1,600 students and teachers from 31 schools in 7 different counties.

Possibly the most impressive numbers were the 25 local businesses and 250 volunteers who contributed both resources and time to the festival. Costs for the event were also defrayed by grant money awarded through Arts Place of Portland by the Indiana Arts Commission. Profits made from the festival will be used to help pay for utility bills and the winterization of our historic buildings.

The Swiss Heritage Village is a tangible reminder of what our ancestors valued as they put capital in faith, family and community. These things are good investments in any economy.

Sustaining supporters of the Berne Heritage Festival: Arts Place of Portland, Amos B. Schwartz Construction, Bank of Geneva, Baumgartner & Beitler Attys, Berne Ready Mix, Bixler Insurance Inc., DRG, Earthen Treasures, E.P. Graphics, First Bank of Berne, Graber Insurance Inc., Helena Chemical, Hitzer, Indiana Arts Commission, IMA, Joe H. Construction, Kent A. Lehman MD, Lehman Feed Mill, Limberlost Construction, Moser Motor Sales Inc., Smith Bros. of Berne Inc. Smith Veterinary Hospital P.C., Swiss City Veterinary Clinic, Yager-Kirchhofer Funeral Home, and Zurcher Tire.



Adams County Community Foundation grant awarded to village

The Adams County Community Foundation, located in downtown Decatur, recently awarded Swiss Heritage Village grant money to repair the roof and ceiling of the “Yager” schoolhouse. Amstutz Construction was contracted to make the needed repairs and volunteers will be used to paint the interior of the schoolhouse.

Our treasured one-room schoolhouse is now 128 years old. Opened in 1881 and closed in 1940, this schoolhouse formerly served students for 59 years. Thanks to our community’s ongoing commitment to historical preservation, “class” is still conducted for students of all ages at the village.

The ACC Foundation has supported the village in the past by contributing money to help make repairs to the Luginbill House. Contributions from the Adams County Community Foundation and our volunteers enable the village to maintain our treasured buildings before repairs become too cost-prohibitive. If you are interested in helping with the painting of the schoolhouse or with other projects at the village, please contact our office. Help is always needed and appreciated!

Dr. Franz artifacts

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machine from the Stengal and Craig Pharmacy.

“These are very treasured items and we are so thankful to get them,” said Swiss Heritage Village executive director, Gretchen Lehman. “These are people that you read about in history; to actually have items in our possession that they touched and used is wonderful. We’re so grateful to these family members for thinking of us.”

The Adams County History Book of 1979 lists Dr. Ernest Franz as a practicing physician in Berne in 1917, along with Drs. Amos Reusser, R.S. Wilson, Catherine Kuntz, Charles H. Schenck, and C.L. Simpson.

Many of these, according to the history, had started their practice with horse and buggy.

“Not only did they have the roads to contend with, but great was the danger of contracting disease and infection from their own patients,” noted the history book.

The donors noted that the Franz medical bags had been moved from location to location as their families had moved. Recently, family members decided to donate the items to the museum.

“This is how a museum becomes a really good museum,” said Lehman. “One thing builds on another and the collection becomes more meaningful, not to mention all of the stories behind the items. This is going to be a great addition to the physicians’ portion of our display.”

Silver anniversary coin

This coming year will mark the 25th anniversary of the Swiss Heritage Village and Museum. To celebrate this event, a limited number of silver commemorative coins will be available for the public to purchase. Minted by Silvertowne, these one ounce (.999 fine) silver coins will be available in time for Christmas.

This silver anniversary year is a golden time to show support for the ongoing work of the Swiss Heritage Village. As a way to raise funds, the Swiss Heritage Society is interested in creating a coin collection series. Beginning with the 25th anniversary

coin, each subsequent coin will feature an historic building found on our campus. Coins represent a wonderful opportunity to invest in the heritage of our community.

The cost for each coin is \$43.50, plus an additional \$5 for shipping and handling if purchasers choose to have their coin delivered. The museum will be open on December 12 & 19, from 9-12pm for pick up of prepaid coins. This is the only time that the coins will be at the village. Please remember that a portion of the coin cost is tax deductible. Secure your coin and early serial number by ordering today.

25TH ANNIVERSARY COIN

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Commemorative Silver Coin - \$43.50 each • Postage & Handling - \$5.00 per mailing

Coins ____ @ \$43.50 each = _____ + Postage _____ = Total _____

Please make check payable to Swiss Heritage Society and mail in the enclosed envelope.

Lengerich applies leadership skills at village

Clayton Lengerich, a junior at Adams Central High School, recently represented Indiana at the Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership Conference and World Leadership Conference in Washington, D.C. We commend Clayton for volunteering throughout the year at Swiss Heritage and for organizing other students from Adams Central to help with our festival. We truly appreciate all of our volunteers.

Special advice from those who have passed on

The last several months have been spent in cleaning things out of my parents' house. During that time, there has been a special communication that only connecting souls can understand.

My grandmother, especially, had the knack of leaving notes of explanation with items that had been saved. Special doilies, blankets, socks, and even quilt blocks, all had notes pinned to them.



"This handkerchief belonged to my great grandmother."

"These quilt blocks are for a future relative."

"This doily was once in my grandmother's living room."

"I started crocheting this scarf, but ran out of material."

On and on, the little notes accompanied the intentions of heritage relatives who have been with the Lord for many years now.

Some time ago I spoke with an individual who had a similar experience when his mother passed away.

As he and his family started gathering family heirlooms and heart-felt items, they found Bible verses, lots of them.

It seems that his mother had attached Bible verses to many places where she could read them, on her blinds, inside of pillow cases, inside of closet doors, and on precious family memorabilia.

Search by search produced Bible verses that had been placed strategically, apparently to give strength during certain times in her life.

"I was so overtaken I didn't know what to say. Even though she was gone, I was suddenly more acquainted with my mother than I had ever been," my friend said. "Now, I have saved every one of those verses and I read them often."

I, too, have a special 3x5 card with a special note on it from my mother. It was given when I left home to attend Fort Wayne Bible College.

When I opened my suitcase that afternoon in my new room, the card was laying on top of my clothes. It stated, "Be not discouraged, neither be afraid, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9)

My mom has been gone for several years now, but her well-placed words of that day continue to lead me as I travel on along life's path.

Christmas Eve Services Planned



Once again, the traditional Swiss Heritage Village Christmas Eve services will be held at the Baumgartner Church at 6 and 9 p.m. There will be plenty of Christmas music and atmosphere fitting to help us all celebrate the birth of the Christ child in our hearts.

Sawmill and original engine back together again

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"That was nothing to them," continued Schnitz. "They had other engines, many of them very unique. At first they didn't understand that I wanted this because of the engine itself."

Schnitz said that he felt fortunate that the engine had come under the ownership of Gallogly. He knew that he (Gallogly) would take good care of it.

Schnitz, who is affiliated with racing, said that he had actually heard of the engine through Mike Baker from Decatur, who had helped Bing fire it up originally.

"He told me that Swiss Heritage Village had the saw mill. That was confirmed when I talked to Berdell," added Schnitz.

Swiss Heritage Village executive director Gretchen Lehman said that she was thrilled that Schnitz and his wife, Sheila, had thought of the village.

"I'm thrilled at the way in which they see us collect and preserve our artifacts," said Lehman. "Because of their generosity and vision, this gift will be used to 'show and tell' the importance of the old sawmill.

Gretchen's Reflections

The 2009 season is coming to an end and plans for next year are already in the making.

We are ending the season on a successful note with visitors from 42 different states and 8 foreign countries. We had 806 walk-in guests who signed the guest book, 3 chamber bus tours, 6 senior tours, 8 spring student tours, plus Swiss Days and festival guests of 4,000. Our docents have effectively shared the story of the village with the many visitors.

The community has financially supported our programming through the purchase of bricks and active memberships.

Our dedicated gift shop volunteers are those who welcome our guests with Swiss hospitality and give them information about where and what to do in our community. We say thanks to all those people who give the priceless gift of time. It would be impossible to fund all the volunteers who are involved at Swiss Heritage.

Our spring "work frolic" was attended by twenty-two South Adams track and cross country students and coaches. There was a group of parents and students representing the First Mennonite Church who came as a community service project. The day was spent in preparing the village for the opening season. Boy Scouts helped prepare the trails in the woods with new chips. Lunch was served to all those hungry appetites.

We had three high school students who helped in the gift shop and welcomed

our visitors. They were Katey Goodwin from South Adams and Cari Bluhm and Clayton Lengerich from Adams Central.

We had two concerts in the barn and two beautiful weddings and receptions on the grounds.

Swiss Days was successful as we sold over 2,720 dumplings — this being the most since the Sesquicentennial.

Thanks to a bequest from Les & Naomi Lehman, we are planning to install a heat and air conditioning system in our museum this winter. To keep our cost at a minimum, we would like to have a group of people with carpentry skills to volunteer with the installation, drywalling and painting work in the museum. If you would like to be a part of this team, call Ernie Steiner.

There is also the need for artistic/creative volunteers to help up-date the museum exhibits. If you are interested in athletics and religious displays or planning new exhibits, contact Gretchen Lehman.

I want to thank you for your continued support over the years and to let you know that we deeply appreciate the confidence you have placed in Swiss Heritage personnel. Because of your belief in our mission, we have been able to continue our programming with a sense of pride and accomplishment.

"Nobody can do everything, but everyone can do something."



Volunteers serve up a delicious meal at the Soup and Sandwich Supper.

Berne historic homes tour a success

Swiss Heritage thanks Berne Historic Homes for hosting the Historic Homes Walk. Held in conjunction with the Berne Heritage Festival, over three hundred people toured the homes of Mayor John and Jane Minch, Randy and Dianne Beer, Steve Hult, and the Peace Lutheran Church. The tour showcased the craftsmanship found in this area and the restoration work of the home owners. The walk raised over \$500 with all proceeds going toward the maintenance and preservation work of the Swiss Heritage Village and Museum. The Swiss Heritage Society thanks the home owners, volunteers, and all who attended the walk for their continued support of our community's rich history.



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...remember us in your will!*

To:

Dated Material – Do not delay!

Christmas gift... bricks still being sold



More memories continue to be laid out along the path leading from the village entrance through the covered bridge. Occasionally, visitors stop by to meander through the reminders of those who have invested time in the past, and to view the memorial bricks of their ancestors.

“Many individuals are very touched when they actually see the brick honoring or memorializing their wishes,” stated Gretchen Lehman, Swiss Heritage Village executive director. “They are often amazed at how much viewing the bricks in their settings touches their hearts.”

Lehman noted that it is still possible to purchase bricks before the Christmas holidays.

“What better gift can you give than a living memorial that will be viewed for generations to come at the entrance to Swiss Heritage Village?” asked Lehman.

“It often gets to me when I pass through the covered bridge and read the names in the pathway around me,” she said.

Large bricks sell for \$300 and can contain five lines with 15 characters each. Small bricks are \$125 and can have three lines with 15 characters.

“If you purchase a second, third, or fourth brick, the cost diminishes,” advised Lehman.