



The Kidron Community Historical Society Newsletter

Sonnenberg Village begins to grow

After months of planning and preparation, physical work on the Sonnenberg Village site is set to begin. The first building scheduled to be rebuilt in the Village is being prepared for its new location. With the assistance of Abe Troyer, members of the Tschantz-Schantz family have dismantled the original Tschantz Log House and stored it on the Geiser farm, where it stood for almost 190 years.

Legal activity to allow work to begin has also been taking place. Title to the village site was transferred from the Geiser family to the Kidron Community Historical Society in May. Currently the site of Sonnenberg Village is planted in oats. In July, after the oats have been harvested, a road will be made from Hackett Road to the new site of the Tschantz house and the family will begin rebuilding the house. Abe Troyer will assist with that task as well. Currently, Abe is looking for logs to replace some of the damaged wood which would not survive the move. Otherwise, for being 190 years old, the house is in remarkably good condition.

Further good news is that Sonnenberg Village has received a grant from the Ohio Cultural Facilities Commission in the amount of \$200,000. This grant was secured through the assistance of State Senator Ron Amstutz and State Representative Jim Carmichael. KCHS is required to match the grant before we can begin construction on the Welcome Center and public restrooms, so as always, your financial support for this process

is critical.

The board of directors has hired Domenic Ferrante of Harris/Day Architects in Canton to design the complex and secure "green" (environmentally friendly) certification. Ferrante is working with Alan Frasz, of Dovetail Solar and Wind, and Emmanuel Annunike, of the Ohio Department of Development, to design a wind and solar electric generating system for the village.

Be on the lookout starting in July. Sonnenberg Village will start to bustle with activity.



Members of the Tschantz-Schantz family turned out to dismantle the house.

Sonnenberg Village Hosts First Annual Homecoming

To celebrate the start of work at the Sonnenberg Village site, there will be a celebration on September 13th from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. At noon, the Akron Blackstocking baseball team will challenge the Kidron Nine to a circa-1870 baseball game. At 2 p.m. the Blackstockings will play the Kidron Oldtimers.

During the games, attenders will be able to purchase hot dogs, coneys, chips, fry pies, and drinks from Sonnenberg Mennonite Church's food trailer, and Schloneger's home-made ice cream. Currently, the plan is to have the Tschantz Log House completely rebuilt and ready for dedication.

All events will take place adjacent to the Sonnenberg Village on Hackett Road at the Central Christian School parking field. Admission is free. Bring your entire family and a blanket or lawn chairs for a simple day of celebrating and visiting.

CommuniTree spotlights old and new beauty

KCHS's 2008 annual display, "CommuniTree," is a unique blend of older objects—many of which have never been displayed before—with new items, crafted for the display with the intent to auction them in 2009 to support KCHS.

One of the most impressive things about the display is the variety of objects and types of wood represented. Curator Allyson Leisy created a wood

quiz for visitors to enjoy as they experience the beauty of the different woods.

KCHS supporters may remember receiving a letter several months ago requesting donations to purchase a curly maple secretary that became available. This item is one of the older items making up the display and can be seen up close in all of its glorious detail.

See CommuniTree page 3

Welcome New Annual, Lifetime and Heritage Club Members

Shirley Beyeler–Polk
David and Penny Bixler–
Lakewood
Vilas and Mary Bixler–Dalton
Donna Lindgren–Kearney, Neb.
Sherry D. Pees–Dola
Don and Sue Redman–Wooster

There's still time to
renew your
membership
or join for 2008!

Thank you to our 2008 Members Banquet sponsors!

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Annual banquet celebrates woodworking tradition

The twelfth annual Members Banquet was held on April 29 at the Kidron Mennonite Church Fellowship Building. KCHS president Wayne Liechty welcomed the 238 members and guests. Reverend Bill Detweiler shared meditations on the Creator God, which set the stage for the evening's celebration of craftsmanship.

Following dinner, 54 volunteers were recognized for having worked more than ten hours for KCHS in 2007. Executive director Prudy Steiner noted that volunteers had committed an average of almost 21 hours to KCHS. She applauded them for their "genuine interest in the visitors" they helped.

One area of concern in the volunteer pool is that their average age is 77.5 years. While that is a tribute to the energy and longevity of KCHS volunteers, it also means that the pool shrinks each year as a few must stop coming due to health issues. Prudy was also happy to report that, either biologically or through marriage, she is related to a disconcertingly large number of the volunteers.

Ray Leisy, Sonnenberg Village's

project manager, reported on the progress toward creating the village.

To open the new display, "CommuniTree," curator Allyson Leisy shared some of her reflections on the pieces she had handled. She noted that the trees felled by the 2006 storm "could have become firewood. Instead they became some of the most beautiful things I've ever seen."

Joe Irvin of Smithville shared insights from a lifetime cultivating knowledge of local artifacts, including Sonnenberg furniture. He highlighted the moldings, decorations, woods,

joints and hardware that often characterize furniture made by the Sonnenberg settlers.

Joseph Mast generously acted as auctioneer for the auction which followed. More than \$2000 was raised to help fund KCHS programs.

After the auction, members were invited to the Heritage Center for the grand opening of the new display.



KCHS members explored Communitree after the banquet.



Display curator Allyson Leisy talks with visitors at the Heritage Center.

Recently Acquired

KCHS is blessed with faithful donors of time, money and artifacts. We want you to know about the treasures people give us and recognize these donors for their gifts. We will continue listing new items in the future.

Kathy Gerber–Sonnenberg basket
Matt Hewitt–Montana "Kidron" license plate
Arleen Amstutz–two Walter Hofstetter paintings
Lucille Steiner–autograph book, cheese tray
Corrine Krehbiel–1920's girls dress
Don Fulk–oil painting by Don Fulk
Melva Gerber–"Amstutz Poultry & Egg" calendar
Roelif Badertscher–Silver Hill School stamp
Aylana Worthen–Laura Yoder painting
Agnes Steiner–Lehman Genealogy Book
Lehman's–two Cat's Meow, pen, mugs, ball cap
Warren Moser–Moscow School painting

Please look at items you plan to discard and consider offering them to KCHS. We are unable to take everything we're offered, but you never know if you have a treasure to add to our collection!

CommuniTree continued

A handpainted wardrobe owned by Bruce and Jill Detweiler Breckbill is another of the magnificent older pieces in the display. It stands next to a table of old woodworking tools displayed around aged chimney cupboards donated by Merle and Eunice (Beyeler) Brenneman.

Newer items are just as interesting. Two brightly painted children's toys perch cheerfully on top of a cherry table made by Ray Leisy. One toy, a lawn mower by Jon Fielitz, contains several brightly-colored balls that tumble around. The other is a Jacob's ladder by Mike Lehman. (See photo on page 4.) Another toy on display is a convertible chair/rocking horse by Vernon Steiner.

One of the trees felled by the storm that started this project was a majestic



Chimney cupboards were a typical feature of early Sonnenberg area homes.

walnut owned by Wayne Liechty. Five pieces in the display were produced from this tree. Erich Kratzer created four matching end tables. Ray Nussbaum paired the wood with wavy glass from the lean-to on his farm to create a cabinet with hidden hinges.

The pictures and descriptions admittedly don't do these works of art justice. Make plans to come see them in person. Perhaps while looking at the new items, you'll spot something you want to take home from next year's auction!



Ray Nussbaum's walnut cabinet with antique wavy glass and Erich Kratzer's walnut stands will be auctioned in 2009 along with other newly-created items from the display.

Thanks to our April, May and June Volunteers

Ada Amstutz
Esther Falb
Anna Gehman
John Gehman
Amos Geiser
Roger Geiser
Glenford Gerber
Leora Gerber
Melva Gerber
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Carolyn Haas
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Walter Steiner
Cindy Strubbe
Sandi Suttle
Carol Yoder

Interested in volunteering?

Call the Heritage Center
at 330-857-9111
to get started!

Kidron Community Historical Society
P.O. Box 234
Kidron, Ohio 44636

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July 2008



Board Members

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 Secretary Gloria Kaufmann
 Membership Chairperson Leora Gerber
 Board Members Glenn Gerber, Fritz Sprunger, J. Augspurger
 Director Prudy Steiner
Bit o' Vit Editor Kris Nussbaum

Membership Fees

Individual Annual Member \$15
 Husband and Wife Annual Member \$25
 Organization Annual Member \$35
 Individual Life Member \$250
 Heritage Club Member \$1000 or more

**Annual memberships are due every January.
 Thank You!**

The Kidron Community Historical Society of Kidron, Ohio, founded in 1977, operates under the nonprofit charter granted by the State of Ohio. Your tax deductible gifts will help secure the future of the Historical Society and give you a part in preserving the heritage of this unique community. A reminder will be sent when annual memberships become due each January.

Name _____
 Address _____

 Type of Membership _____
 General Donation _____

Send your check to: Kidron Community Historical Society • Box 234 • Kidron, OH 44636 • Phone 330-857-9111



Mike Lehman's "Jacob's Ladder" and Jon Fielitz's "Lawn Mower" toys will be part of the 2009 auction of newly constructed CommuniTree items.

**Kidron-Sonnenberg
 Heritage Center**

13153 Emerson Road • Kidron, Ohio

HOURS

JUNE–SEPTEMBER

Thursday, Friday and Saturday

11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

APRIL–MAY, OCTOBER–DECEMBER

Thursday and Saturday

11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

CLOSED JANUARY, FEBRUARY and MARCH

Call 330-857-9111

for group tours or special arrangements