



The Kidron Community Historical Society Newsletter

Good Fences make great subjects

Who knew that fences could stimulate discussions about religion, politics, economics and morality? That was certainly a surprise for writing contest judges Joanne Lehman and Kris Nussbaum. The photo and drawing entries likewise shared a wide variety of perspectives on what fences do and mean. Judges Marv Troyer and Jennifer Shue had a difficult job to pick the winners.

Stop in at the Heritage Center to browse through the entries. Be sure to congratulate the contest winners listed below. First prize was \$100 and second was \$50.

Writing contest winners

Adults—first: Leanna Dunn, second: Meg Wilkins

High School—first: Elle Jackson, second: Allison Uhl

Photo/drawing contest winners

Adults—first: Judy Estrada, second: Kevin Engle

High School—first: Kate Elder, second: Carissa Engle

Middle School—first: Doug Fisher, second: Elise Murray



Good Fences will be joined by the Smithsonian's *Between Fences* display from October 19-November 18.

Sonnenberg Village Quarterly Update

It has been a very busy summer far for Sonnenberg Village. Before we could obtain additional building permits, we needed to satisfy the EPA regarding drainage and water control. We built a retention pond and water spillway, re-contoured the parking area, and installed an 18-inch storm sewer through the village. Work on that project should conclude shortly.

Two more families have expressed interest in relocating historic buildings to the village. Meanwhile, the Tschantz family has finished the roof on their cabin and chinked the outside walls. They are waiting for windows and doors to arrive in mid-July after which they will install them, complete the flooring and chink the inside walls. The Lehman House foundation is completed. Next year we will paint the exterior and repair the roof.

Allyson Leisy, with help from juveniles from the Juvenile Court community service program, has established a small garden with broom corn, flax and potatoes. A sign and landscaping will be added by the entrance as landscaping and grass planting continues in other parts of the village.

We welcome everyone to attend the Sonnenberg Homecoming on August 8 at 11:00. There will be music and food, as well as baseball games at 11:00 and 2:00. This will be a great opportunity to walk around and see what's been happening up close.



The newly chinked Tschantz Log Cabin.

KCHS invited to share our story at Bluffton

On June 28, Wayne and Joanna Liechty traveled to Northwest Ohio to share the story of KCHS's birth and growth with our community's "cousins" in the Bluffton-Pandora area. The Swiss Community Historical Society featured the work of KCHS in a presentation at their annual members banquet attended by approximately 125 people.

Wayne's presentation shared the origins of the KCHS, its growth as it began hosting annual displays, and finally the epic journey with Sonnenberg Village. The presentation was organized and created by board member J. Augspurger and *Bit o' Vit* editor Kris Nussbaum, who see this as a record of our story.

After returning from his journey, Wayne said, "This was a beginning of a relationship with another community. They really care about what we're doing." Wayne also invited their members to come for the CommuniTree auction and Sonnenberg Village Homecoming to see first hand what KCHS is doing.

2009 members banquet a remembering occasion

On April 28, 235 members and friends of KCHS gathered at the Kidron Mennonite Church Fellowship Hall for the 13th annual members banquet. Clayton Zuercher led the guests in a time of reflecting on the biblical importance of remembering the stories of the past.

After a meal catered by Doris Weaver, Prudy Steiner and Leora Gerber recognized the work of 46 volunteers who achieved milestones in their service hours. Prudy noted that one volunteer had served almost 1000 hours, another two were over 500 hours and several had served 200-400 hours. She also pointed out that the work of the volunteers is vital to the success of KCHS by saying, "We surely hope that these awards are not the only way you've been told you're appreciated."

KCHS President Wayne Liechty paid special tribute to the work of Roger Geiser in preserving genealogical information of our community.

Ray Leisy updated the members on the progress of Sonnenberg Village and Allyson Leisy, curator of the *Good Fences Make Good Neighbors* display, introduced the display and invited members to visit the Heritage Center after the banquet.

A note from Roger Geiser

During April's KCHS members banquet, I received a surprise tribute to the genealogy work I've been doing for the community. I'd like everyone to know whose shoulders I've been standing on.

Many individuals in our community have worked diligently over the past 200 years to record family history. E.P. Gerber was one of the first to cover most



Roger Geiser listens as Wayne Liechty recounts his contributions to KCHS.

immigrant foundation families. H. Clair Amstutz also covered and extended most of these families. Who could overlook Lila Gerber, Lillian Sommer, Ruth Moser, James O. Lehman, Leora Gerber, plus a host of people who took the time, money and energy to produce family genealogy and history books?

My small part was to take their labor of love and computerize their written efforts. Their work made my work possible. Come visit the Heritage Center to find your roots.

Welcome New Annual, Lifetime and Heritage Club Members

Dean Ab-Hugh—Apple Creek
Kelly Gerboth—Avon, Ind.
Ruth E. Martin—Goshen, Ind.
Ruby Vermilya—Cathedral City,
Calif.

**There is still time to
join for 2009!**

Thank you to our sponsors for
the 2009 Members Banquet

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Recently Accessioned

Wooden doll cradle and pair of child's shoes, donated by Dorothy Kirchhofer Hartzler

Butcher knife engraved "D.P. Gerber, Kidron, O," donated by Thomas Dunn

Framed photo of #10 Sonnenberg School, donated by Jeanie Badertscher

Apple Creek & East Union Twp Schools 1800-1968, donated by the Apple Creek Historical Society

Hand corn planter, donated by Ruth Vandersall

Pauline Miller basket, donated by Bill and Ruth Detweiler

KCHS brings history to life for Geiser's class

For about eleven years, third grade teacher Karen Geiser has been a regular visitor to the Kidron-Sonnenberg Heritage Center. Karen's visits are always a big event, because when she comes, she brings friends. Lots of them.

Karen's class visits the Heritage Center each year to explore the upstairs and downstairs displays. In the past, she has taught a social studies unit on immigration that culminated in this field trip to make-believe Ellis Island. "It was a great project. The story of Kidron's settlement by Swiss immigrants suddenly takes on new life when students are role-playing the process of starting a new life in a new country," said Kris Nussbaum, a former helper at Karen's immigrant processing center.

Karen prepared the class for the trip by helping them create documents and understand the interview process. Of course, some took this as an opportunity to get "detained" by the friendly guards which was part of the fun.

In the 2008-2009 school year, Karen's class was moved to Dalton Elementary, which means that all of the Dalton School District third graders visited the Heritage Center this spring. The third graders also visited the Dalton Community Historical Museum.

The Ohio Department of Education's standards for third grade social studies calls for students to describe how their local communities have changed over time and to compare cultural practices of groups who have lived in their community by exploring art, religion, language, and food. "The local historical societies have already done the work of preserving this information, so it's a great way to tap into a local resource," says Nussbaum.

Karen also plans to bring her 2009-2010 students to the center this fall to see the Smithsonian traveling display, *Between Fences*, which will be in Kidron October 19-November 18.

The Heritage Center welcomes school groups and encourages teachers to call ahead to arrange for a guided tour.



Inspector Fritz Sprunger interviews an immigrant mother in 2007.



In 2007, security officer Paul Neuenschwander detained immigrant Gretchen Wald when her documents fail to pass inspection.



Karen's 2008-2009 class from Dalton Elementary toured the permanent displays with Wayne Liechty and the annual display and genealogy center with Prudy Steiner. They also toured Lehman's while they were in Kidron.

Thank you to our April, May and June volunteers!

Ada Amstutz
Anna Sommer Amstutz
Judy Amstutz
Esther Falb
Anna Gehman
John Gehman
Amos Geiser
Roger Geiser
David Gerber
Glenford Gerber
Leora Gerber
Ann Groh
Glen Groh
Carolyn Haas
Gail Johnson
Nancy King
Eldon Kornhaus
Eileen Lehman
John Lehman
Shirley Lehman
Joan Martin
Myron Martin
Don Miller
Glenn Miller
Bill Moser
Clarence Neuenschwander
Curt Nussbaum
Gloria Nussbaum
Bernice Nussbaum
Bessie Nussbaum
Delvin Nussbaum
Heinz Peter
Rosa Peter
Ella Rohrer
Fritz Sprunger
Janet Sprunger
Bud Steiner
Jean Steiner
Cindy Strubbe
Meg Wilkins
Carol Yoder

Visit
kidronhistoricalsociety.org
to see past newsletters,
CommuniTree auction items,
and more about KCHS.

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July 2009



Board Members

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

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.

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!**

Name _____
 Address _____

 Type of Membership _____
 General Donation _____

Send checks to Kidron Community Historical Society • Box 234 • Kidron, OH 44636

Upcoming Events

Sonnenberg Village Homecoming
 August 8 at Sonnenberg Village
 11:00 music
 12:00 and 2:00 baseball games
 Sonnenberg Mennonite Church food trailer
 Schloneger's homemade ice cream

Fundraiser Meal and CommuniTree Auction
 October 17 at the Kidron Community Building
 5:00 meal, 7:00 auction

Between Fences Smithsonian Traveling Display
 October 19-November 18 at the Heritage Center
 Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays 10:00-4:00
 Saturdays 9:00-4:00

**Kidron-Sonnenberg
 Heritage Center**

13153 Emerson Road • Kidron, Ohio

HOURS

JUNE-AUGUST

Thursday, Friday and Saturday
 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

CLOSED JANUARY, FEBRUARY and MARCH

APRIL-MAY, SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER

Thursday and Saturday
 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

**Call 330-857-9111
 for group tours or special arrangements**