



Mildred Amstutz, our oldest member of the KCHS at 101, with Libby Wagner and Rachel Steiner, two of our youngest members at 21 and 15 respectively, attended the Members Banquet in April.

## KCHS Members Banquet

James Mast of RES Auctions led the lively bidding for a unique variety of pottery, wooden pieces, themed baskets and more at the Members Banquet on April 25. The seventeen auction items added \$3,870 to the KCHS's coffer.

Dick Wolf, director of the Heritage Center, and Wayne Liechty, president of the KCHS board, presided over the event attended by more than 200 KCHS members and guests. Kevin Himes, pastor of the Salem Mennonite Church, led the meditation and invocation. Potted begonias and service bars were given to 43 Heritage Center docents recognized for their more than 767 collective volunteer hours at the museum. In addition, volunteers donated 1,188 hours at the Sonnenberg Village. The Roy Miller Family cooked the home-style dinner sponsored by 25 local businesses.

Check [www.kidronhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.kidronhistoricalsociety.org) for the latest KCHS activities and events.

## Bit o' Vit: Wisdom or Sensible Humor

Recently Fritz Sprunger was in conversation with Celia Lehman and was intrigued by the information she recalled regarding the beginning of the Kidron Community Historical Society and more specifically, the *Bit o' Vit*.

The first *Bit o' Vit* was published in January 1989 when the board decided to print a newsletter so constituents would be informed of "... historical data, trends in our thinking, what was happening organizationally ... so you may know what's going on, key into our thinking, and we hope you react and give us some feedback what you would like to have done." [Bit o' Vit, Vol. 1:1, p.1.]

The *Bit o' Vit* moniker resulted from discussion at a board meeting when Glenn Gerber, then the youngest board member, thought the name should have a Swiss touch. When "bit of vit" was suggested, some thought perhaps it was not adequately sophisticated, but in the end they settled on *Bit o' Vit*. The Swiss meaning of "vit" is "sensible humor" or "wise sayings."

Celia Lehman served as the first editor and designed and drew the masthead/name plate. Recently Joanne at Village Printing colorized it in the form it will continue to be used in future issues.

Board members listed in the first issue of the *Bit o' Vit* were Wayne Liechty, president; Paul Neuenschwander, vice president and treasurer; Celia Lehman and Ruth Moser, acquisition committee; Leora Gerber, membership chairperson; Glenn Gerber, member; and Vera Jeanne Nussbaum, secretary. It should be noted that Liechty and Leora Gerber have served on the board since that early organizing – more than 28 years. The history and continuity they bring to the current board is immeasurable.

In that first issue of the *Bit o' Vit*, Wayne Liechty acknowledges Celia Lehman and Ruth Moser's work in accessioning the KCHS collection. "Enough can't be said for the work these two ladies do for the Society. They have set up the displays at the bank. They do the recording for items loaned or given to the Society. They identify each piece, cross reference and file the items. They attend sales to purchase in our behalf. They have traveled to other museums and archives to help them set up ours to get the best out of what we have to work with. They have visited with many people, gathering information and material to be recorded and kept for future generations. Each piece has its own history. Who made it, or wrote it, and how did it get to where it is today. This is a lot of work and they have done it willingly for a number of years." In 2016 Leora Gerber and Fritz Sprunger spent 428 volunteer hours accessioning and filing artifacts at the museum – an amazing gift to the KCHS.



Celia Lehman reviews the first issue of the *Bit o' Vit* published in 1989.

## Members Banquet

### Table Sponsors

Thank you to the following businesses that generously sponsored tables at the members banquet.

Yoder Family Veal / R & C Farms	Kidron Electric
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Weaver Commercial Contractors	Himes, Slater & Hershberger
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Logee, Hostetler, Stutzman & Lehman	Gerber Feed Service
LE Sommer	Farmer's National Bank
Kidron Auction	Everence
	Eastwood Manufacturing

## Kidron Days

### And the Winner Is ...



Fritz Sprunger (left) and Leora Gerber (right) present a copy of Paul Locher and Joe Irvin's book, *Artistry of the Cabinetmaker*, to Gene Sarchione of Alliance. He was winner of the KCHS's Kidron Days drawing. Sarchione said, "I've never won anything!" The Sarchiones came back to Kidron to pick up the book and shop at Lehman's.

## Share Your Memories

Libby Wagner is working on an oral history project inspired by her grandma's story. She would like to get together with people with memories from the 1930s and 1940s and hear their stories of family and school life, memories of World War II and more. The interviews will be voice recorded. Libby's goal is to compile the stories into a book. If you are interested in helping Libby with her project, please call her at 330-464-1293 or send an email to [ecw35@zips.uakron.edu](mailto:ecw35@zips.uakron.edu).

## Heritage Center

### They Come from Near and Far



Leora Gerber and Dick Wolf had a great time showing John and Donna Baumgartner (left) of Denver, CO., and their friends, Charles and Sue Glass of Galena, Ohio, the artifacts at the Heritage Center, genealogy database and the Sonnenberg Village. John traces his roots back to Deacon David Baumgartner. The Baumgartner ancestry book is in the Heritage Center gift shop.



Pastor George O'Reilly brought 13 students from First Mennonite Church's (Bluffton) spring catechism class. Heritage Center Director Dick Wolf gave them a one-hour tour of our Heritage Center. The group had visited the Amish and Mennonite Heritage Center in Berlin earlier in the day.

## New Members

Carl Keith Goudy, Hot Springs Village AR  
Rhoda Hartman, Dalton OH  
Beth Jones, Orrville OH  
Clarence and Esther Neuenschwander, Apple Creek OH  
Becky Oyer, Dalton OH  
Suzanne Waldron, Wooster OH

## Sonnenberg Village

### Gardens, Grass and Glass

Volunteers have been hard at work in Sonnenberg Village on two main projects since spring: the Gardens and Arboretum, and the Bixler House. All the gardens have been cleaned and rejuvenated for the summer, though most of the work has involved the Heritage Garden. Raised beds have been constructed to control the weeds and make the beds more accessible to volunteers. The old fence around the garden has been removed and a new one will be constructed during the summer.



More trees have been placed into the Arboretum, with emphasis on trees to provide a windbreak for the smaller ornamental trees. More signs have been placed near each tree with the common and botanic name on each. Visitors who like a specific tree will be able to make a note and order their favorite for their own gardens.

Kidron Electric has completed connection of wiring to the Bixler House, the overflow parking lot, the storage shed and the Blacksmith Shop. We now have electric connected to every building in the village.

The dirt pile around the Bixler House has been moved with some being taken to a low spot along Kidron Road near Kidron Mennonite Church. Seeding has taken place and a new crop of grass has begun to grow, providing a more pleasing surrounding to the Bixler House and making it easier to maintain.

Meanwhile, extensive work continues inside and outside of the Bixler House itself. The basement and first floor have been framed and windows added to the first and second floor, and the front door installed. The next project will be to begin exterior framing and siding by fall.

In the next *Bit o' Vit* look for details about the Garden House donated by the Shetler family – the old Enos Zuercher home. Work is expected to begin in September.

### Sonnenberg Village Homecoming

Our annual homecoming will be on August 12 in the Sonnenberg Village. There will be tours of the village buildings, food, ice cream, popcorn and an old-fashioned ball game. Music will begin at 10:00 and continue until 1:00 when the Smithville Stars and the Kidron Nine will begin a friendly game of baseball at 1:00 pm on the field adjacent to the village.



The Gregory Band Wagon will again be present throughout the day to create unique music in forms rarely heard.

### Heritage Center

The Heritage Center gift shop is a fine place to shop for Kidron-oriented items including T-shirts and a variety of books. Four books that were discounted for Kidron Days continue to be on sale. Stop for details.



The roofing on the Heritage Center was replaced this spring.

Daniel and Thomas Neiswander work on the trenching for the electrical connections to the new genealogy library.

### More Interviews with Kidron's Swiss-German Dialect Speakers

Thirty speakers of the Swiss-German dialect or Pennsylvania Dutch were interviewed in 14 one-hour slots by two professors and two of their students from Penn State University's German department, documenting heritage Germanic dialects in the US Midwest. Brothers Tilman, Harry and Clarence Neuenschwander, were interviewed for two hours during the sessions held May 18-20 at the Sonnenberg Village Welcome Center. Ten Mennonite churches were represented.

The research team plan to return for additional interviews and then transcribe samples of their recorded narratives and discussions into a searchable database.

The professors and students were given a tour of the Kidron Heritage Center and then continued on to Behalt to conclude their three days in the Kidron community.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

August 12 | 10:00 - 4:00  
Sonnenberg Homecoming at Sonnenberg Village

October 21 | 10:00 - 4:00  
Beet Festival at Sonnenberg Village

#### ..... Quick Reminders .....

To receive email reminders of KCHS events, email your request to [kidronheritagecenter@hotmail.com](mailto:kidronheritagecenter@hotmail.com) and you will added to the quick reminder list.

**Kidron Community Historical Society**  
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 www.kidronhistoricalsociety.org

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SUMMER 2017



## Kidron-Sonnenberg Heritage Center

13153 Emerson Road • Kidron, Ohio

**OPEN APRIL through NOVEMBER • THURSDAY and SATURDAY • 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

**CLOSED DECEMBER, JANUARY, FEBRUARY and MARCH**

The Heritage Center is closed December through March but welcomes appointments for tours and to visit the museum or Sonnenberg Village.  
 Call and leave a message at 330-857-9111 for information or to schedule an appointment.

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.

### Administration

Board President .....	Wayne Liechty	Board Member .....	Maxine Hershberger
Board Vice President .....	Steve Gerber	Board Member .....	Fritz Sprunger
Board Treasurer.....	Richard Nussbaum	Heritage Center Director .....	Richard Wolf
Board Secretary .....	Gloria Kaufmann	Sonnenberg Village Project Director .....	Ray Leisy
Board Membership Chairperson .....	Leora Gerber	<i>Bit o' Vit</i> Editor.....	Judie Nussbaum

### Kidron Community Historical Society Membership

*Annual memberships are due in January. Memberships expire on December 31 of the year on the upper right on your mailing label.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Membership \_\_\_\_\_  New  Renewal

Membership Fee \$ \_\_\_\_\_ General Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like a receipt?  Yes  No *Thank you!*

Individual Annual Member ..... \$15

Husband and Wife Annual Member..... \$25

Organization Annual Member..... \$35

Individual Life Member ..... \$250

Heritage Club Member ..... \$1000 or more

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