



Roger N. Geiser: Kidron Friend and Philanthropist

Roger Geiser left an impressive legacy for our community, and indeed around the world. Those who knew him easily recognized his intelligence, inventiveness, focus, kindness, sense of humor, and steadfast desire to make a difference – all traits Roger carried into his life as a family man, entrepreneur, and man of God. Roger was born November 14, 1939, and died October 27, 2022.

When Roger recognized a worthwhile project, he generously tackled the need, not just with a donation, but the investment of his interest in its ongoing success. Sometimes it was a fascination with a venture, and other times he simply recognized an obvious need.

Roger and Betty, his wife of nearly 63 years, were particularly invested in the future of their beloved Kidron community. They were deeply involved in the development of the Kidron Park, the newly built Kidron Volunteer Fire Department's state-of-the-art facility on the square, as well as schools, churches, and more. The establishment of the Roger N. Geiser Family History Library included a beautiful state-of-the-art addition to the Heritage Center, which houses thousands of books, including more than 500 from Roger's collection.

The Saurer Blacksmith Shop on the Sonnenberg Village campus was also dear to Roger's heart. Floyd Saurer was Roger's second cousin once-removed. The gray clapboard building, constructed in 1906, was a firm fixture

in downtown Kidron where Floyd's smithing skills served the community from 1913 until 1967. In 2011 the structure was moved to Sonnenberg Village, where it has been restored and is functioning under the direction of Walt Mullett and his cohorts.

Following his deep interest in genealogy, Roger began amassing an astounding collection of family history books. Some were written locally and copied for family members, and others were published records. Soon he began envisioning the need for a database with names along with birth, marriage and death dates that would allow people to research their Swiss-Anabaptist ancestral heritage. Roger collaborated with several others to establish Swiss Anabaptist Genealogical Association (SAGA), a collection of 59 databases. The Kidron database with 690,000 names is included in the SAGA collection and available for research in the Roger N. Geiser Family History Library at the Heritage Center. (It can also be accessed with a SAGA membership. See [saga-omii.org](http://www.saga-omii.org) or <http://www.saga-omii.org/memberform.htm>.)

The KCHS is deeply indebted to Roger and Betty for their generosity, foresight and commitment to the success of the preservation of the Kidron-Sonnenberg heritage. But perhaps Roger is best respected for his gentle and passionate demeanor, twinkling eyes, generous heart, and his firm commitment to Jesus Christ.



Betty and Roger Geiser at the Roger N. Geiser Family History Library dedication in 2019.

2 Timothy 4:7-8: I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

The Kidron Community Historical Society is extremely grateful for Roger's involvement with the society while creating his world-wide legacy.

SAGA Annual Meeting in Kidron

The annual meeting of the Swiss Anabaptist Genealogical Association (SAGA) will be held on Saturday April 22, at the Kidron Park Community Building. Friday activities are also planned. Contact kidronheritagecenter@gmail.com for more information.

Remembering



Ada Amstutz served 163 hours at the Heritage Center. Ada died April 23, 2022 at age 93.

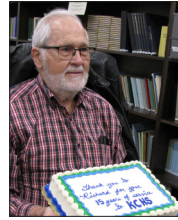


John Lehman served 186 hours at the Heritage Center. John died July 30, 2022 at age 80.



Roger Geiser served 178 hours at the Heritage Center. Roger died October 27, 2022 at age 82.

Board Treasurer Transition



After serving 16 years as the KCHS board treasurer, Richard Nussbaum recently handed the responsibilities to Joan (Ray) Nussbaum. The KCHS board thanked Rich for his service at their January meeting.



Joan has 49 years of bookkeeping experience, and has skillfully navigated the transition to new accounting software. The board anticipates the fresh ideas she will bring to their endeavors.

2022 Kidron Community Historical Society Donors

Jann Allison, Dalton
 Bob & Linda Amstutz, Smithville
 Gordon & Lorene Amstutz, Kidron
 John & Lois Amstutz, Noblesville IN
 Joyce & Willis Amstutz, Didsbury Alberta CAN
 Ken & Vonnie Amstutz, Kidron
 Linda Amstutz, Dalton
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 Sherman & Lavonne Amstutz, Dalton
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 Wilbur & Connie Bergen, Porterville CA
 David Bixler, Lakewood
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 Don & Sandy Bunker, Apple Creek
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 Eldon King, Orrville
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 Eldon & Wava Kornhaus, Kidron
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 Veryl Kratzer, Dalton
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 Village Printing - Mark Maurer, Kidron
 Larry & Karen Wald, Dalton
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 Russell & Dorothy Memorial Fund, Wooster
 Weaver Commercial Contractor Inc,
 Dalton
 Weyrauch's Pharmacy, Kidron
 Harry & Meg Wilkins, Dalton
 Yoder Family Veal LLC, Kidron
 Levi Yoder, Lovington IL
 Levi & Gloria Yoder, Lovington IL
 Glenn & Kathleen Zendt, Staunton VA

Gerber/Nussbaum, Lehman, Saurer, Moser, Zuercher Buildings

It was a busy fall in the Sonnenberg Village right up until the middle of December. The Gerber/Nussbaum Barn is finished. We have completed our obligations with the State of Ohio and have received the last grant payment from the state. In the spring we plan to have the barn painted and the area around the barn seeded.

With the help of Central Christian School students on their Community Service Day, we took the Lehman Buggy Shed apart, moved it closer to the Saurer Blacksmith Shop, and put up the frame. We were in the process of roofing it when the weather turned colder. In the spring we will complete the roofing and siding.

Most of our attention in the fall was centered on the Moser Building. Siding has been applied to the front and both sides of the building. New windows and doors were installed and the structure of the building was strengthened. In the spring, heating and electric will be installed, and then we will finish the interior and begin installation of printing equipment donated by Ray Norr.

Our work on the Zuercher House was interrupted by other work. We were able to complete one-half of the upstairs flooring. In the spring we will complete the flooring and install electric and heating, and then begin finishing the interior.

The Saurer Blacksmith Shop is complete and operational. Our resident blacksmiths hosted a "Hammer In" this fall for 40 fellow blacksmiths. They were impressed with the shop and the fact that blacksmithing as in times gone by is being properly preserved in a historical and functional shop.



The Moser Buggy Shop, located next to the Bixler House, will house the Norr print shop equipment.

2022 Sonnenberg Village Volunteers

Janet Eldridge	Mary Schantz	<i>Businesses/ Organizations</i>
Clair Bixler	Ben Schantz	Abe Troyer LLC
Jeannie Fry	Roger Steiner	Town and Country
Glenn Gerber	Roy Steiner	Gerber Lumber
Rachel Hofstetter and	Marv & Lorie Troyer	Gerber Wood
Jim Swartzentruber	David Tschantz	Kidron Auction
Jim Holzaepfel	Grayden Tschantz	Kidron Electric
Dakota Kerby	Brian Tschantz	Miller Roofing
Julie Kerby	Dale Tschantz	Schantz Organ
John & Kathy Klingler	Harry Weaver	Company
Cliff Lehman	Andrew & Christa Wolf	Hope Reformed
Ray & Allyson Leisy	Joe Wolf	Church
Nancy Lilburn		Trinity Church
Bob Miller	<i>Central Christian</i>	Standale Reformed
Dan Miller	<i>School</i>	Church
Walter Mullett	<i>Community Service</i>	Schloneger's Ice
Art Neuenschwander	<i>Day</i>	Cream
Ray Norr	Bob Troyer	Sonnenberg Church
Rick Ringen	Josiah Bixler	Food Service
Vic Schantz	Ilya Prytup	Wooster Brush
John Schantz	Shawn Hilliard	
Peter Schantz	Carson Hostetler	
Ben Schantz		

BEEF FESTIVAL CONTEST WINNERS

Largest Lutz Beet (11 pounds 4 oz)

Betty Weaver, Apple Creek

Largest Organic Lutz Beet (8 pounds 4 oz)

Betty Weaver, Apple Creek

Best Heirloom Beet "Bull's Blood"

Allyson Leisy, Wooster

Most Lucious Beet Organic Lutz Beet

Allyson Leisy, Wooster

Best Beet Appetizer/Side "Garlicky Beet Spread"

Shirley Geiser, Kidron

Best Beet Salad "Quinoa Three Way Beet Salad"

Tiffany Orphanides, Massillon

Best Beet Dessert "German Chocolate Beet Cake"

Judy Amstutz, Orrville

2022 Heritage Center Volunteers

Enos & Judy Amstutz	Clarence & Esther Neuenschwander
Marianne Cameron	Becky Oyer
Nancy Ganyard	Will & Sue Schloneger
Amos & Erma Geiser	Carolyn Shoup
Ron & LaVera Geiser	Fritz Sprunger
Leora Gerber	Mahlon Steffen
Max Gerber	Dean & Prudy Steiner
Glenn & Gloria Kaufmann	Ann Troyer
Nancy King	Meg Wilkins
Steve & Elaine Lehman	Andrew & Christa Wolf
Bill & Kay Medford	Sharon Wolf
Diane Miller	Carol Yoder

New Members

Don and Sandy Bunker, Apple Creek
Jeff Hamsher, Dalton
Kidron Chiropractic, Kidron

UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual Meeting & Members Banquet
Tue, May 2, 2023 | Kidron Mennonite Fellowship Hall

SAGA Annual Meeting
Sat, April 22, 2023 | Kidron Park Community Bldg

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

330-857-9111

kidronheritagecenter@gmail.com

www.kidronhistoricalsociety.org

Address Service Requested

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Organization
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Wooster, Ohio
44691
Permit No. 228

WINTER 2023



Kidron-Sonnenberg Heritage Center

13153 Emerson Road • Kidron, Ohio

OPEN APRIL through OCTOBER • SATURDAYS • 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

CLOSED NOVEMBER, DECEMBER, JANUARY, FEBRUARY, and MARCH

The Heritage Center is closed November through March, but welcomes appointments to visit the museum and 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	Art Neuenschwander	Board Member	Diane Sommer
Board Vice President	Steve Gerber	Board Member	Fritz Sprunger
Board Treasurer.....	Joan Nussbaum	Heritage Center Director	Richard Wolf
Board Secretary	Gloria Kaufmann	Sonnenberg Village Project Director	Ray Leisy
Board Member	Diane Miller	<i>Bit o' Vit</i> Editor.....	Judie Nussbaum

Kidron Community Historical Society Membership

Annual memberships are due in January and expire on December 31. Contact the Heritage Center if uncertain of your membership status.

Name _____

Address _____

Type of Membership _____ New Renewal

Membership Fee \$ _____ General Donation \$ _____

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

Individual Annual Member \$20

Husband and Wife Annual Member..... \$35

Organization Annual Member..... \$50

Individual Life Member \$300

Heritage Club Member \$1000 or more

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